



# **SOCIAL MEDIA NARCISSISM: A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The rise of social media has led to an increase in narcissism among users. It is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between genuine self-expression and self-promotion on social media. Social media has been a popular platform for people to express themselves and show off their accomplishments. However, with this rise in self-promotion, many have begun to ask the question: is social media to blame for the rise in narcissism? In this article, we will explore the sociological perspective on the role of social media in the rise of narcissism. We will look at how it affects our relationships and how it has changed our perception of self-image. We will also discuss potential solutions for this problem, such as setting boundaries around social media usage and encouraging meaningful connections with others.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Social media use has grown to be an ordinary part of the day-by-day lifestyles for a big part of the populace [1]. The net gives an array of content material that may be absorbed speedy and effectively, each via text, consisting of acquiring facts via articles and blogs, and via a visible format, along with snapshots, films, and images. The creation of such state-of-the-art generation to everyday lifestyles has created new norms of the way humans gift themselves online, via flaunting glamorous lifestyles, flattering self-snap shots, and countless deliver of self-love quotes that have fashioned the premise for a type of celebrity and novel professions termed "influencers" [2]. While the motives for the use of social media vary , a few people use the net for self-enhancement and to give an idealized model of themselves. This is wherein persona elements consisting of narcissism can also additionally play a role , mainly due to the fact people excessive in narcissism have a formerly hooked-up tendency to magnify favoured qualities, they have unrealistically effective self-views , and might consequently use the net for substantial styles of self-enhancement. Narcissism is associated with entitlement, selfishness, self-importance, and grandiose expectations The tendency towards oneself and self-improvement [3]. Most well-studied subtype The most distinctive feature of narcissism is spectacular agent narcissism (hereafter referred to as agent narcissism).Vulnerable narcissism, a subtype of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (called overt narcissism and covert narcissism) . People with high agent narcissism Exploitative, extroverted, attention-seeking, and domineering. Through arrogance, entitlement, and high apparent self-esteem and self-aggrandizement. Individuals who suffer severely from vulnerable narcissism share many traits with agent narcissism But when it comes to arrogance, entitlement, and superiority, narcissists are vulnerable. More introverted and anxious, hiding their feelings and exploitative behaviour Deceptive, defensive, false humility, and caring for others. high individual Agent narcissists

generally do not engage in such subtleties. That being said, the introduction of the agency–communion model of grandiose narcissism distinguished between communal and agentic self-enhancement, explaining how grandiosity, arrogance, entitlement, and perceived superiority can also exist in a communal domain. While communal narcissism is a grandiose manifestation like agentic narcissism, it differs from agentic grandiosity as individuals high on communal narcissism value power and grandiosity in a communal domain, by seeking admiration for being a “saint”. Individuals high on communal narcissism rate themselves high on traits such as altruism, benevolence and warmth towards others, but are extremely driven by the need to validate power. Their benevolent self-image does not characterize their objective communal behavior, and others often rate them low in actual communion. Therefore, while individuals high on communal narcissism seek different means of acquiring power and admiration than agentic narcissists [4], factors of self-importance, unrealistically positive self-views and entitlement are shared facets of communal narcissism, vulnerable narcissism and agentic narcissism.

## THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN MAKING US MORE NARCISSISTS

First let's talk about NARCISSISTIC. It means a person who has an excessive interest in or admiration of themselves, and an exceptional interest in or admiration for oneself, especially their physical appearance. And there is a history behind this word, a boy whose name was narcissus, we was a self obsessed person and well known for his beauty, he fell love with his own reflection in the pool without realizing that it was merely an image.

According to the research people spend more than 6 hours on social sites like facebook, twitter, instagram which encourage self-promotion and as a result of this new found connection are ultimately changing our social networks at home and in public, even when you are with friend or relative, people prefer mobile phone rather than to talk with others and become unrealistic in their own accomplishments and distort connections with people resulting circumstances in their lives, and most of people getting mentally self-obsessed and people are always busy in talking selfies and putting caption like my life my rules, just simply shows that they just feel there is no one like them, more than 8 million people post their pictures on instagram just for the sake of attentions and where a person is judged and rewarded based on their looks and not their brain or actions and people use these sites just to get attention, even though they might be living in a dream and don't even focusing on their goal and just want to live their social life, if you'll go for a vacation and you've a beautiful view or atmosphere people choose taking pictures rather than enjoying and having fun they make videos and take picture and post it for the sake of likes and even likes on picture is more important than enjoyment and even there are many people who just go on vacations just for the pictures, some people who can't afford vacations and other expensive things they feel a sense of inferiority and losing their self confidence and start getting jealous of others in fact most of the people show off their social life and embarrass others. People update their practical even update their every single moment on a platform like snapchat instagram facebook, people first check in their address and then visit, even if they don't upload any picture they get mentally disturbed and just desperately want to post any picture and even on snapchat people post their every single activity even every single meals, and care too much what to wear, eating and doing things which can make gossips about these things and get attention. The ego-validating likes. The comments. These things making person more narcissus, and our selfie addiction can push us to gain confidence in our physical appearance, although there's a thin line between gaining confidence and becoming on the incompetent social media platforms to exhibit our worth, and if it goes too far, we may become narcissistic, and selfie camera making our generation to believe that an Instagram following is all you need in life, likes, shares, and retweets is somehow biologically activating the dopamine centers in our brains to make us feel happier. It's getting to the point that we're rebuilding a society around technology rather than using to improve our daily lives. And how much time people spending and worrying about their digital self image. It's probably too much. Be aware, and don't be so narcissistic [5].

## EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON SELF-ESTEEM

Social media has been shown to have significant effects on the self-esteem of its users. Psychologists have extensively studied the need to belong, and some postulate that social media provides a convenient way to fit in with others. Belonging to a group encourages the development of collective self-esteem which is described by social psychologists as the "...aspect of the individuals' self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership in a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership". In that respect, social media use could arguably increase self-esteem levels. However, several studies have shown that social media use increases narcissism and negatively affects self-esteem. Certain traits have been found to be correlated with social media use including extraversion and unconscientiousness; these traits are often connected to narcissistic behaviour [6]. In one study, researchers found that narcissism was the highest predictor of social media activity out of all of the factors studied which indicates that narcissistic behaviour and social media use are strongly correlated [7]. In another study using undergraduate participants, those with higher levels of narcissism were more active on social media [8]. Narcissists tend to prefer shallow relationships, and social media provides a method of obtaining hundreds or thousands of superficial "friends." In addition, social media profiles allow the user to create an inflated, grandiose self-image that aligns with a narcissistic viewpoint [9].

## SELF COMPARISON

Another factor of interaction with others is the inherent need to compare oneself to one's peers. Self-comparisons are helpful in many daily tasks including dealing with emotions, making decisions, and receiving ideas from others. Social comparisons are either upward or downward; in the former case, a person compares him/herself to others whom they perceive as superior, and in the latter case, a person compares him/herself to others who they perceive as inferior. Social media widens the circle of social comparison – instead of comparing oneself to those physically near, one can compare oneself to people from around the globe. In addition, self-comparisons become even more troubling because social media often promotes self-image inflation and distortion in order to impress other users of social media. In a study where subjects were exposed to profiles designed to facilitate upward social comparisons, subjects were found to have lower self-esteem [10].

## SOCIAL MEDIA FUELS NARCISSIST'S WORST DESIRES

Many of us feel the harmful effects of social media even though we enjoy its benefits. The natural tendency to harden your stance after being subjected to a barrage of abuse from people on the other side. The appeal of reading and liking content that supports rather than challenges your own beliefs. We know that a lot of your motivation is to give when you share these vacation snaps...but it's helpful to talk about the damage of social media as if your users were a homogenous group. Not everyone is equally vulnerable, and a new base of research points to traits like low self-esteem, anxiety, and insecurity, making some people more vulnerable to the darkest corners of social media. There is likely to be. Radicalization of ideologies such as the far right, Islamic extremism, and violent misogyny. the social contagion of self-harm; and the conspiracy theories that underpin contemporary anti-vaccine sentiment.

But this alone is not enough to comprehend the harm wrought by social media. One of the most worrisome aspects of the polarization of political discourse is its interaction with psychological traits not usually associated with vulnerability. narcissism. People with narcissistic traits tend to exaggerate their self-esteem and entitlements, crave praise, expect special treatment, do not take criticism well, and lack compassion. appear in one form. Grand narcissism, represented by charming and charismatic extroversion, and Vulnerable narcissism, characterized by fear, hypersensitivity to others' perceptions, insecurity, and shyness. In its most extreme form, it is a personality disorder. A little over-the-top narcissism in our public is not a bad thing. Holyness is a rare trait. The best things in the world are achieved as a result of a mixture of motivations.

People want to do good because it makes them feel good and what it means to their status and to others. But social media has elevated narcissism far beyond sanity.

Social media is a narcissist's playground. Through likes and shares, they turn their social feedback loops into the shallow ones they thrive on, inspire superiority and reward manipulative tendencies. Perhaps it's no wonder that narcissists are more likely to rely on social media. Interestingly, research shows that right-sided narcissists are more likely to seek credential, while left-sided narcissists are more likely to be exhibitionists who crave validation. Narcissists, perhaps unsurprisingly, also actively engage in online bullying. For those who profess to be there for moral reasons, the ends justify the means. There is also evidence that platforms like Facebook themselves increase people's narcissistic tendencies. This online surge of narcissism has serious real-world consequences. People with narcissistic traits are always more politically involved. Social media amplifies these influences, influencing who dominates the public discourse within political parties and media debates. The ability to get a large number of likes is often considered a reliable indicator of a person's level of knowledge and potential contribution. On the left, we are influencing the looming divide on how to bring about progressive social change. One way is to build solidarity between different groups in a way that emphasizes common affiliation and makes people happy to participate in socially just causes[11]. The other is to make imperfect humans feel guilty and ashamed of their moral impotence, their inability to see the world through the right lens. Social media narcissists have the wrong idea. It draws a left-leaning movement toward the latter model of hatred of people believed to be. This disrupts social change, but far more exciting than a boring, old-fashioned job. Winning means people are humiliated and bullied for minor or non-existent transgressions instead of winning hearts and minds. Whether the punishment far outweighs the crime: The narcissist's moral convictions dehumanize those who conflict with their beliefs.

## **IMPACT OF DIGITAL NARCISSISM ON SOCIETY**

Digital narcissism is the tendency to have an inflated or grandiose view of oneself, one's capabilities, and one's importance, expressed through the use of various forms of social media and technology. The rise of digital narcissism is having far reaching effects on society, from our interpersonal relationships to our economic and social lives.

On an interpersonal level, digital narcissism has caused an increase in conversations that are superficial and performance-oriented. Rather than engaging in meaningful conversations with one another, people are performing for the camera, editing their photos and videos to present only their most attractive version of reality. This has created an atmosphere of competition and illusion where individuals strive to present themselves as more attractive, successful and interesting than is reality, causing further disconnection amongst people and creating a false disconnect between who someone is online and who they are in real life.

Digital narcissism also leads to an increase in loneliness as individuals become obsessed with presenting themselves as they perceive they should be, as opposed to focusing on their true interests, desires, and dreams. By investing a disproportionate amount of time, energy and mental effort in the pursuit of perfection on social media, individuals neglect the development of authentic relationships with those around them and can easily become isolated, leading to a feeling of loneliness and inadequacy.

On an economic level, digital narcissism encourages consumerism and the conspicuous display of wealth. People feel pressure to display their economic success to their social media followers, often leading to debt or overexertion. It's unsurprising that, in a recent survey of millennials, 74% reported feeling that social media had caused them to make financial decisions they later regretted.

The growing trend of digital narcissism not only affects us on a personal level, but it is also having an impact on society more broadly. Research indicates that increases in online narcissism are linked to increased anxiety, self-objectification, body dissatisfaction, and mental health problems. It seems that narcissism online can spur negative psychological effects, as evidenced by the growing numbers of individuals struggling with mental health issues ranging from depression and low self-esteem to eating disorders.

From its effects on interpersonal relationships and loneliness to its impact on mental health and social structures, digital narcissism is having an increasingly negative influence on contemporary society. Whether this will continue or can be reversed remains to be seen, but it's clear that the effects of digital narcissism are a cause for concern.

## CONCLUSION

When analyzing social media narcissism from a sociological perspective, it is important to recognize the shifting roles of gender and power. The prevalence of heavily edited and staged images, coupled with a near-constant focus on beauty and physique, is indicative of deeply ingrained sexism, further perpetuating and legitimizing the compression of the female body. Similarly, the preoccupation with 'likes' and followers has been found to indicate a desire for validation and affirmation, while often leading to detrimental consequences in terms of decreased self-esteem and increased anxiety.

In conclusion, social media narcissism is a phenomena that must be taken into consideration when discussing our current digital age. Its ties to distributed agency, gender differences, and power dynamics make it a complex issue to understand. By applying a sociological lens when analyzing this behavior, we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of how social media impacts our lives and those of the people around us.

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