



Impact of Social Media, Gender and Age on Narcissistic Development among Ebonyi State University Undergraduates

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Abstract

The present study examined impacts of social media and gender in narcissistic development among Ebonyi State university undergraduates. Participants were two hundred and thirty-eight (248) comprising male (147) and female (101) students of Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki who were randomly selected among the population of students in the school. Their ages ranged between 18 to 30 years with a mean age of 24.37 years (SD = 6.80). Cross sectional design was adopted. Two instruments were used for data collection. The narcissistic personality inventory and social media affinity scale. Two hypotheses were tested. Hierarchical multiple regression was the main statistic used for data analysis. Result of Hierarchical Multiple Regression analysis showed that social media was a positively significant predictor of narcissism among students ($\beta = .56, p < .001$), accounting for 32% of the variance in narcissistic development ($\Delta R^2 = .32$). The result also showed that gender was a negative significant predictor of narcissism of students ($\beta = -.56, p < .001$), accounting for 3% of the variance in narcissistic development ($\Delta R^2 = .03$). Similarly, age was equally found to be a negative predictor of narcissism among students, accounting for 3% variance in narcissistic development among students ($\Delta R^2 = .03$). The implications of the findings are; that spending too much time on the social media results to narcissism among young people; that both gender and age are potential factors that explain narcissism among young people. The study is limited by choice of involving only one study area. It is recommended that further studies interested in same variable may consider adopting mixed method in order to gain more understanding of the links between the IVs and the DV.

Key Words: Narcissism, Social Media, Gender, Age, Personality, Undergraduates

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Introduction

Narcissism is increasingly recognized as an important complex of personality traits and processes that involve a grandiose yet fragile sense of self and entitlement as well as a pre-occupation with success and demands for admiration (Morf&Rhodewalt, 2001). As a psychological concept, Narcissism is a pattern of trait and behaviour signifying infatuation and obsession with one's self to the exclusion of all others and the egotistic and ruthless pursuit of one's gratification, dominance and ambition (Vaknin 2003). In the past few decades, sub-clinical variance in narcissism has received growing attention as a personality dimension, showing an impressive ability to predict a wide range of dependent variables, ranging from emotional reactivity to self-appraisals of performance. According to Baranger (1991), narcissism is conceptualized in several ways, including paraphilia, pathological self-love, healthy self-esteem, extreme introversion, and personality type. Hence, persons who exhibit elements described in this definition may be said to be experiencing narcissistic behaviour. Sigmund Freud, in his 1931 essay on libidinal types described a narcissist as someone who is primarily focused on self-preservation, independent, easily intimidated, aggressive, extraverted, high in activity, and unable to love or commit in relationships. Freud equally added that these people often attract a lot of admiration and attention, and readily take on leadership roles. As stated by American Psychiatric Association, (1994) and researchers Akhtar and Thompson, (1982); Westen, (1990) a narcissist is grandiose (i.e. thinks he or she is better than others or is special), eager for admiration, hypersensitive to criticism, lacking in empathy for others, and exploitative. Narcissists display a propensity to attend to the self and to distance themselves from potentially close relationships.

Psychoanalyst, Wilhelm (1933) maintained that narcissists possess an attitude of superiority, are confident, arrogant, provocative, resenting of subordination, and are mildly sadistic in their relationships. While Oltmanns, Emery, and Taylor (2006) added that narcissism is not only a pervasive pattern of grandiosity, but also possess need for admiration, and an exaggerated sense of self-importance. It is associated with positive self-views of agentic traits, including intelligence, physical attractiveness, and power. Central to most theoretical models of narcissism, is use of social relationships which is employed in order to regulate narcissistic esteem. In



support of this, however, Campbell (1997) opined that narcissists do not focus on interpersonal intimacy, warmth, or other positive aspects of relational outcomes; instead, they use relationships to appear popular and successful, and they seek attractive, high status individuals as romantic partners. Narcissism has also been described as a positive and exaggerated view of self (Campbell, Reeder, Sedikides, & Elliot, 2000; John & Robins, 1994); individuals high in narcissism tend to convey superiority and display a need for attention, as well as a sense of entitlement. Narcissists' positive self-views have been demonstrated empirically in several ways. For example, Emmons (1984) found that narcissists differentially think that they are special and unique.

Interestingly, despite their tendency to seek out many superficial, empty relationships, narcissists rarely pursue these commitments for long periods of time. Relationships are solely pursued when an opportunity for public glory presents itself (Campbell, 1997). Morf and Rhodewalt (2001) opined that Narcissism is conceptualized as a “dysfunctional” form of overly high self-esteem and a grandiose view of the self that is associated with a number of “intra- and interpersonal problems”. This means that in most cases of interaction or communication involving individuals that exhibit narcissistic tendencies, there exists a considerable level of disagreement. This is because while narcissists love the picture they have of themselves, for most people, narcissists are annoying and dislikeable because they behave in a manner that is rather selfish, overly dominant, hostile, and arrogant.

Nowadays, many parents are worried that their college students are spending too much time on Facebook and other social media sites and not enough time studying or doing other things expected of them. In support of these worries facing our present-day society, some research findings have postulated that social sites are related to some psychological disorders such as narcissism. In addressing this societal issue, therefore, the present research intends to ascertain the relationship between the social media and narcissism amongst students. According to Wickel (2015), increase in media and technologies that allow society to engage in social media has brought about an increase in the amount of narcissism expressed by millennials. Hence, social media has in recent times been branded a fertile ground for narcissism to thrive. Findings from a



number of studies have also confirmed this assertion. Research indicates that those who use these types of social networking sites (Facebook and Twitter) tend to develop their online profiles to achieve a type of social identity they wish to portray (Gabriel, 2014). In doing this, an individual will exaggerate certain character traits, and present a persona that they believe is appealing to the general public (Alloway, Runac, Qureshi & Kemp, 2014). Again, a national study conducted by Psychology professor Jean Twenge at San Diego State University found that “57% of young people believe their generation uses social networking sites for self-promotion, narcissism and attention seeking” (Van Grove, 2009). Hence, it is pertinent to ask, how is narcissism linked to social media or social networking sites?

At present, online communities may be an especially fertile ground for narcissists to self-regulate via social connections for two reasons. First, narcissists function well in the context of shallow (as opposed to emotionally deep and committed) relationships. Online relationships often appeal to narcissists, who are characteristically not able to, or unwilling, to form meaningful friendships that demand any time or emotional investment (Carpenter, 2012). Social networking web sites are built on the base of superficial “friendships” with many individuals and “sound-byte” driven communication between friends (i.e., wallposts – as on Facebook). Certainly, individuals use social networking sites to maintain deeper relationships as well, but often, the real deal is the ability to maintain large numbers of relationships (e.g., many users have hundreds or even thousands of “friends”). Second, social networking web pages are highly controlled environments (Vazire & Gosling, 2004). Owners have complete power over self-presentation on web pages, unlike most other social contexts. In particular, one can on social media network select attractive photographs of oneself or write self-descriptions that are self-promoting. Past research shows that narcissists, for example, are boastful and eager to talk about themselves (Buss & Chiodo, 1991), gain esteem from public glory (Wallace & Baumeister, 2002), are prevalent on reality television (Young & Pinsky, 2006), and enjoy looking at themselves on videotape and in the mirror (Robins & John, 1997). These social media platforms present a very similar opportunity for self-promotion.



Gender is an important factor in the expression of narcissism (Philipson 1985; Richman & Flaherty 1990). Research suggests that, just as an individual's relative experience as a member of a familial system can influence the development of the self and specifically narcissism, so is the individual's gender. There are a variety of suggestions in studies that point to the relevance of gender in the development of the self and Narcissism. Many studies have found that men may be more likely than women to express narcissistic behaviour and this may be because of their inherent nature to appear as figure heads in any social setting including social media networks. The gender of an individual which to a large extent is a determinant of their character, plays a major role in the outcome of their behavioural patterns. Men have been found to be more assertive and have greater desire for power (Feingold, 1994). Considering that narcissism is a psychological trait associated with important outcomes, it therefore follows that gender differences in narcissism might help to explain observed gender disparities in these important outcomes, for example aggression (Eagly & Steffen, 1986a), leadership emergence (Eagly & Karau, 1991), and academic cheating (Whitley, Nelson, & Jones, 1999).

Philipson (1985) writes that narcissism is not gender-neutral, rather, society tends to encourage narcissistic characteristics in men. In modern society, men are encouraged to be aggressive, feel entitled, dominant, appear independent, and avoid showing empathy for others. On the other hand, society encourages women to be empathic, maintain social ties, and be nurturing. In particular, women often receive harsh criticism for being aggressive or authoritative, which creates pressure for women, more so than for men, to suppress displays of narcissistic behaviour." (Grijalva et al, 2015). From the foregoing, it is understood that because men receive criticism for authoritative or aggressive behaviour a lot less than women do, prevalence of narcissistic behaviour is considerably higher in the former than in the latter. Narcissism begins in the teenage years or early adulthood. Several cross-sectional studies have tested for age differences in narcissism. Overall, these studies suggested that older adults show lower levels of narcissism compared to younger adults and adolescents (Kawamoto et al., 2020; Weidmann et al., 2023).



The following research questions were stated to guide the study:

1. Will Social Media play a significant role in Narcissistic development among Ebonyi State University Students?
2. Will Gender play a significant role in Narcissistic development among Ebonyi State University Students?

The purpose of the study is to determine whether:

1. Social Media will play a significant role in Narcissistic development among Ebonyi State University Students
2. Gender will play a significant role in narcissistic development among Ebonyi State University Students

Literature Review

Narcissism Development

Narcissism is a self-centered personality style characterized as having an excessive preoccupation with oneself and one's own needs, often at the expense of others (American Psychological Association, 2021). Narcissism exists on a continuum that ranges from normal to abnormal personality expression.^[31] While many psychologists believe that a moderate degree of narcissism is normal and healthy in humans, there are also more extreme forms, observable particularly in people who are excessively self-absorbed, or who have a mental illness like narcissistic personality disorder (NPD), where the narcissistic tendency has become pathological (Nazario, 2022) leading to functional impairment and psychosocial disability (Caligor, Levy, & Yeomans (2015). Narcissism is a multidimensional construct that embodies a broad range of characteristic expressions, behaviors, and self-regulatory tendencies (e.g., Aslinger et al., 2018). In more recent years, a preliminary consensus has been reached among scholars that individual differences in narcissism can be understood from a trifurcated perspective (Miller et al., 2021). As such, narcissism includes agentic (also called narcissistic admiration), antagonistic (also called narcissistic rivalry), and neurotic (or vulnerable) aspects of narcissism (Miller et al., 2021). These three aspects can be situated in the Five Factor Model of Personality, in that the agentic aspect is associated with higher extraversion, the antagonistic aspect is associated with lower agreeableness, and the neurotic aspect with higher neuroticism (e.g., Miller & Maples,



2011). The former two (i.e., agentic and antagonistic narcissism) also represent more overt forms of narcissism and can be subsumed into a grandiosity factor of narcissism (e.g., Wink, 1991). Grandiose narcissism reflects a tendency toward thoughts and behaviors characterized as egotistical, assertive, dominant, and self-enhancing (i.e., agentic narcissism), and manipulative, malignant, self-protective, and arrogant aspects of behavior (i.e., antagonistic narcissism) (Back, 2018). Neurotic narcissism (also referred to as vulnerable narcissism) reflects a tendency toward being anxious, defensive, contact-shunning, hypersensitive, discontent, and stems from a concern with one's adequacy (Cain et al., 2008). Using this broad definition, researchers have worked using these distinctions to try to characterize how narcissism might differ across the lifespan.

Social Media

Social Media are interactive technologies that facilitate the creation, sharing and aggregation of content, ideas, interests, and other forms of expression through virtual communities and networks (Obar, & Wildman, 2015). Social media refer to new forms of media that involve interactive participation. While challenges to the definition of social media arise (Aichner, Grünfelder, Maurer, & Jegeni, 2021) due to the variety of stand-alone and built-in social media services currently available, there are some common features (Obar, & Wildman, 2015). Social media apps are online platforms that enable users to create and share content and participate in social networking (Fuchs, 2017). User-generated content—such as text posts or comments, digital photos or videos, and data generated through all online interactions—is the lifeblood of social media (Obar, & Wildman, 2015). Users create service-specific profiles for the website or app that are designed and maintained by the social media organization (Obar, & Wildman, 2015). Social media helps the development of online social networks by connecting a user's profile with those of other individuals or groups (Obar, & Wildman, 2015). The term social in regard to media suggests that platforms are user-centric and enable communal activity. As such, social media can be viewed as online facilitators or enhancers of human networks—webs of individuals who enhance social connectivity (Dijk, 2013). Users usually access social media services through web-based apps on desktops or services that offer social media functionality to their mobile devices (e.g. smartphones and tablets). As users engage with these online services, they create highly interactive platforms in which individuals, communities, and organizations can share, co-



create, discuss, participate, and modify user-generated or self-curated content posted online (Aichner, Grünfelder, Maurer, & Jegeni, 2021). Additionally, social media are used to document memories, learn about and explore things, do self promotion and form friendships along with promotion of ideas through blogs, podcasts, videos, and gaming sites. The change in relationship between humans and technology is the focus of the emerging field of technoself studies (Dennis, 2017).

Some of the most popular social media platforms, with more than 100 million registered users, include Twitter, Facebook (and its associated Messenger), WeChat, ShareChat, Instagram (and its associated app Threads), QZone, Weibo, VK, Tumblr, BaiduTieba, and LinkedIn. Depending on interpretation, other popular platforms that are sometimes referred to as social media services include YouTube, Letterboxd, QQ, Quora, Telegram, WhatsApp, Signal, LINE, Snapchat, Pinterest, Viber, Reddit, Discord, TikTok, Microsoft Teams, and more. Wikis are examples of collaborative content creation. Social media outlets differ from traditional media (e.g. print magazines and newspapers, TV, and radio broadcasting) in many ways, including quality, reach, frequency, usability, relevancy, and permanence. Additionally, social media outlets operate in a dialogic transmission system (i.e., many sources to many receivers) while traditional media outlets operate under a monologic transmission model (i.e., one source to many receivers). For instance, a newspaper is delivered to many subscribers, and a radio station broadcasts the same programs to an entire city. Since the dramatic expansion of the Internet, digital media or digital rhetoric can be used to represent or identify a culture. Studying the rhetoric that exists in the digital environment has become a crucial new process for many scholars. Observers have noted a wide range of positive and negative impacts when it comes to the use of social media. Social media can help to improve an individual's sense of connectedness with real or online communities and can be an effective communication (or marketing) tool for corporations, entrepreneurs, non-profit organizations, advocacy groups, political parties, and governments. Observers have also seen that there has been a rise in social movements using social media as a tool for communicating and organizing in times of political unrest. Social media can also be used to read or share news, whether it is true or false.



Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Otto Kernberg Theory on Narcissism. Otto Kernberg's theory on narcissism was developed and named after the developer Kernberg (Kernberg, 1984). The theory focuses on the effect of 'object-relations' on self-esteem. According to the theory, object-relations refer to relationships between people, particularly within a family and especially between the mother and her child. In theory, object-relations holds that we are driven to form relationships with others and that failure to form successful early relationships leads to later problems. Kernberg in his theory refers to narcissism as a basic structure of typically developing individuals. He defines it as libidinal investment of the self. Practically, it refers to the way in which self-esteem is regulated. Building on this construct, he identified two types of narcissism:

- Normal adult Narcissism: This form of Narcissism is characteristic of typically developing individuals. It is a normal self-esteem based on normal structures of the self. This stage is achieved due to the existence of healthy object relations. Individuals experience positive relationships with early caretakers and thus internalize positive mental concept of self. Such individuals have solid moral system, and their superego is fully developed and individualized.
- Normal infantile Narcissism: In this type of narcissism, regulation of self-esteem occurs through gratifications related to the age, which include or imply a normal infantile system of values, demands or prohibitions. As children develop, their object relations and self-concept are not yet fully integrated. Therefore, their regulation of self-esteem is partly focused at external gratification. In order to feel good about themselves, they need others to admire them or their possessions.

Pathologically speaking, Kernberg also further identified three subtypes:

- Regression to the regulation of infantile self-esteem: The ideal ego is dominated by infantile pursuits, values and prohibitions. The regulation of self-esteem is overly dependent on expressions or defences against infantile pleasures, which are discarded in adult life. This is the mildest type of narcissistic pathology.



- Narcissistic choice of object: This type is more severe than the first, but more rare. The representation of the infantile self is projected on an object and then identified through the same object. Thus, a libidinal association is generated, where the functions of the self and the object have been exchanged.
- Narcissistic personality disorder: This type is different from the other types discussed above. It is the most severe and is suitable for psychoanalysis.

Methodology

Two hundred and forty-eight (248) undergraduate students comprising (males 147) and (females 101) drawn from Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki participated in the study. Participants were drawn using convenient sampling technique. Participant's age ranged from 16 years to 35 years with a mean age mean 20.85 years. A questionnaire form comprising two instruments and demographics was used. The instruments include 16 item Narcissism Personality Inventory (Millon's 1982) and social media affinity scale (Gerlich, Browning, & Westermann, 2010).

Narcissism Personality Inventory: The NPI-16 items are drawn from across the dimensions of Raskin and Terry's (1988) 40-item measure. The 16-item Narcissistic Personality Inventory, captures a narcissistic tendency of personality construct. The NPI-16 score was computed as the mean across the 16 items, with narcissism-consistent responses coded as 1 and narcissism-inconsistent responses coded as 0. The NPI-16 showed satisfactory internal consistency and cronbach's alpha coefficient of .72. In sum, the NPI-16, correlated strongly with the 40-item NPI, exhibited correlations to Big Five constructs that is very similar. The 16-item scale correlated with the remaining 24 items from the NPI-40 at $r = .71$. Response options were "YES" and "NO". Sample items includes, "I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so"; "I find it easy to manipulate people"; "I usually get the respect that I deserve". The instrument was subjected for pilot test for the present study and a cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .68 was found. Social Media was measured using the Social Media Affinity Scale developed by Gerlich, Browning, and Westermann (2010). It is a 13 - item instrument developed to measure respondent beliefs about social media sites in general. Out of the 13 items, nine were stated in the positive, and four in the negative. These four were re-coded in the subsequent analysis. The instrument consists of five Likert-scale response formats. The response options are



as follows: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree 3 = I'm in Between, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree. Sample items includes "Social networks are a great way for people to stay in touch with one another", "Social network sites are a waste of time"; "Social networks allow people with similar interests to stay connected" As stated by the developers, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient reliability for the instrument is .88. However, in a pilot study conducted for the present study to test its reliability in our present setting indicated that the instrument has reliability coefficient of .84, indicating that the instrument is a good measure of social media.

The researcher approached the participants at their various class rooms after taking permissions from the class representatives of the various classes used for the study. Afterwards, the researcher recruited two students to assist as research assistants in administering the questionnaires. The research assistants were properly educated on the modalities of administering, filling and collecting the questionnaires. Before administering the questionnaire, the researcher created rapport with the participants, in which case the participants were told that the exercise is purely for academic research purpose. Participants were equally assured that their responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and that participation in the study was voluntary. However, each participant before filling the questionnaire signed a consent form to show that the participant accepted voluntarily to be part of the study.

The questionnaires were collected back from the participants after they were filled. Three hundred (300) questionnaires were distributed. At the end of administering the questionnaires, two hundred and sixty (264) questionnaires were returned. The returned questionnaires were cross checked after they were collected back from the participants. After cross checking the questionnaires, only two hundred and forty-eight (248) questionnaires were found to be properly filled and were used for data analysis.

Cross-sectional research design was used for the study. Analysis of data was done using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 software.



Result

Table 1: Table of Mean, Standard Deviation, correlations of social media, gender, age and Narcissism among undergraduates

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1 Narcissism	10.13	2.91	-	.32***	-.04	-.16**
2 Social Media	44.10	9.98		-	.09	-.04
3 gender	1.42	.50			-	-.15**
4 Age	21.67	2.87				-

*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05.

Table one above showed the means and standard deviations of the studied variables and demographic variables. Correlation result indicated that social media was positively significantly associated with narcissism among students ($r = .32$, $p < .001$). This finding implies that the more a student dedicates time on social, the higher the student becomes in characteristics of narcissism. Gender was found to be a non-significant negative predictor of narcissism among undergraduates. This implies that narcissistic behaviour amongst undergraduates is a function of both males and females, and not just a particular gender. But, the correlation result indicated that age was significantly negatively associated with narcissism among undergraduates ($r = -.16$, $p < .01$). The findings imply that although older and younger undergraduates can be narcissistic, older undergraduates are more likely to portray elements of narcissism.



Table 2: Hierarchical multiple regression predicting narcissism from social media, gender and age.

	R	R ²	R ² Δ	B	Beta(β)	T
Step 1	.32***	.10***	.10***			
Social Media				.09	.32***	5.21
Step 2	.37*	.13*	.03*			
Gender				-.55	-.09*	-1.50
Age				-.16	-.16*	-2.58

***p< .001, **p<.01, *p<.05

The regression results above showed the prediction of undergraduates' narcissism from social media, gender and age. Regression coefficient result showed that social media ($\beta = .32$, $t = 5.21$, $p < .001$) entered in step 1 of the model significantly predicted narcissism among undergraduates. It however accounted for statistically significant 10% variance as a predictor of undergraduates' narcissistic behaviour ($R = .10$, $p < .001$). Thus, undergraduates who spend more time on social media portray more characteristics of narcissism. Also, social media proves to be implicated in making some undergraduates to express more self-love to their selves. Like social media, gender ($\beta = -.09$, $t = -1.50$, $p < .05$) entered in step 2 of the model was shown to be a significant negative predictor of undergraduates' narcissistic behaviour. It however accounted for statistically significant 3% variance as a predictor of undergraduate's narcissism ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p < .05$). This could imply that behaving or developing/portraying characteristics of narcissism among undergraduates is almost at equal range between males and females; it negatively influences both gender however making them to exhibit selfishness as much time is dedicate in ensuring self-love. This finding equally implies that negative or positive effects of narcissism are felt by both males and females and not just one particular gender. Age was equally entered in step 2 of the model. Regression coefficient result indicated that age ($\beta = -.16$, $t = -2.58$, $p < .05$) is a significant negative predictor of narcissism among undergraduates. Like gender, age accounted for statistically significant 3% variance as a predictor of undergraduate's narcissism ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p < .05$).



Discussion of Findings

This study examined role of social media and gender in narcissistic development among Ebonyi State university students. The finding of the study showed that social media is a positively significant predictor of students' narcissism. Thus, the more time a student spend in social media, the more likely such a student will portray narcissistic characteristics. Also, social media proves to be implicated in making some student develop narcissism. This finding did not confirm the first hypothesis that social media will not statistically significantly predict narcissism among students of Ebonyi StateUniversity. However, the finding is consistent with previous empirical studies (e.g., Leung2013; Williams 2013; Rosen 2011) indicating that the people who used Face book the most tended to have narcissistic or insecure personalities. And that a presentation at an annual convention of the American Psychological Association, showed how teens that spend too much time on Face book are more likely to show narcissistic tendencies and display signs of other behavioural problems.

The second finding of the study showed that gender was a significant negative predictor of undergraduate's narcissism, accounting for 3% of the variance in students' narcissism. Remarkably, the present finding implies that any negative or positive effect from narcissism affects both male and female at almost equal range. The finding did not confirm the second hypothesis that gender will not statistically significantly predict narcissism among students of Ebonyi StateUniversity. The finding is also consistent with previous empirical studies (e.g., Philipson 2006;Tschanz, Morf and, &Turne 1998) which showed that a particular form of family structure underlies the development of narcissism in men and cultivates asymmetrical yet intersecting problems in women. Also, the gender bias ingredient in the term "narcissism" must be recognized and diagnoses, descriptions, and etio-logical explanations of the narcissistic personality should reflect such recognition. Similarly, that exploitive tendencies and feelings of entitlement are less central to the construct of narcissism among females than they are among males.



Implication of the study

The results of this study have some practical implications especially on the growing field of Internet, social media research as well as use. Social media continues to grow especially for adolescents and young people and the findings of the study have shown that social media is a positively significant predictor of students' narcissism. This means that with more time spent on social media, students are more likely to develop and in turn, exhibit narcissistic characteristics. Taking this into consideration, it is important for students to place a limit to their exposure to, and time spent on social media as this would reduce the chances of developing narcissistic behaviour. As for the findings of the study, this goes for both genders since there exist negligible difference in the effect (negative or positive) from narcissism as it affects both male and female at almost equal range. Again, because many of today's adolescents are spending most of their lives connected to social media, it is very important for researchers to discover how this effect that this exposure has on adolescent narcissism. It would also be interesting to also discover if social media use is correlated to any specific psychological disorders such as narcissistic personality disorder.

This research work is not without limitations. The sample size for this study was limited. Larger sample size may be necessary to allow for more generalization and possible conclusions. Another limitation is the choice of using only students of Ebonyi State University out of numerous higher institutions in the country. Although the study targeted at undergraduates as participants of interest for the study; the use of students of other institutions from other locations especially other regions of the country may be efficient. The researcher also encountered difficulties in getting the participants to participate in the study because of their busy schedules.

In view of these limitations given above, the researcher makes the following suggestions for further or future research. Future researchers interested in this dependent variable should look at other variables like parenting style, goal orientation, cognitive engagement and Social support as factors of and their link with narcissism. The inclusion of larger sample size is necessary to give room for more generalization and conclusion. Samples sizes involving undergraduates of other geographical regions in Nigeria can be used for better generalization of findings.



Conclusion

Given the recent transformation of the world media space from an essentially traditional structure to a more advanced and remote structure, both mass communication and connectivity has radically changed. This has given rise to a number of platforms with which individuals can disseminate information, as well as connect and communicate with one another, collectively referred to as the Social Media. The social media has since become a major media section commonly utilised by adolescents and young adults in interconnectivity and information seeking. The social media, being home for a large number of users who are heterogeneous in character; and a myriad of content characterised with diverse ideas and possessing the power to influence has been by the findings of this study, implicated in the narcissistic development among students. It was discovered that students that spend more time on social media were more likely to develop narcissistic behaviour. The study also revealed that media influence as to the development of narcissism occurs among both genders at an almost equal range. The study therefore recommends that social media users should be wary of the time they spend on social media as they risk getting influenced into developing narcissistic behaviour if their activity on the same is left unchecked.

Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations:

- (1) University managements should regularly hold programmes that teach students the dangers of developing narcissistic personality disorder following too much use of social media.
- (2) Students should be taught the need to utilize social sites that are relevant for their educational training other than engaging in many social sites that cause havoc for them.
- (3) There should be social media use awareness by governmental and media agencies for people particularly youths to understand that males and females, as well as young and old can be victims of unnecessary prolonged use of social media.
- (4) Young people as students should be taught that the best way to utilize social media is not to stay on it for too long rather by having efficient time management of it and self-discipline.



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