Exploring Selfie Practices and Their Socio-Cultural Implications Among University Students in Pakistan

Nasrullah Dharejo [1],*, Ikhtiar Ahmed Khoso [2], Fatima Dayo [3]

[1] *Lecturer in Media and Communication, Sukkur IBA University*

[2] *Phd Scholar, Putra Business School, Malaysia*

[3] *Lecturer in English (Linguistics), Aror University of Art, Architecture, Design and Heritage, Pakistan*

KEYWORDS

Identity Representation
Selfie-Taking
University Students
Social and Cultural
Impact
Digital Tools
Thematic Analysis

ABSTRACT

This research explores the intricate world of selfie culture among university students in Pakistan. It delves deep into their motivations for capturing, editing, and sharing selfies and these practices' broader social and cultural implications. The study employs a qualitative approach, conducting in-depth interviews with fifty university students from various Pakistani institutions. This comprehensive investigation uncovers the multifaceted nature of selfie-taking, highlighting its strong connection with social and cultural self-representation dynamics. Key findings reveal how selfies serve multiple purposes: They are a medium for expressing social status, affirming personal identity, fostering group dynamics, and enhancing interpersonal communication. Moreover, the study sheds light on the evolving social norms in Pakistan and how these norms are both influenced by and reflected in the practice of taking selfies. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of digital self-representation in Pakistan's unique socio-cultural landscape. It emphasizes the importance of further exploring the intricate relationship between selfie culture, identity representation, and digital interaction. It underscores the significance of this phenomenon in the discourse of modern social dynamics, particularly in the context of a rapidly evolving digital world.
.

Introduction

In Lahore, a city where history intertwines with modernity, a university student named Sana captures a moment atop the ancient Lahore Fort. As she takes a selfie against a sunset backdrop, her action resonates with a global phenomenon that reflects universal trends and Pakistan's distinct cultural identity. As Morelock and Narita (2021) noted, the selfie transcends its digital format, becoming a symbol of social reality in the Internet era, influencing behaviors and political dynamics. This study explores this cultural phenomenon, examining how each selfie, a crafted narrative, reveals the interplay of identity, technology, and societal norms. As

Hess (2015) points out, selfies are more than photographs; they are central to global networking and challenge traditional concepts of self-representation.

Set within the lives of Pakistani university students, this exploration seeks to understand the driving forces behind selfie-taking. Is it an aspiration for an "ideal self," as Ma, Yang, and Wilson (2017) suggest, where selfies become tools for realizing perfection or do these practices reflect more profound psychological impacts, echoing concerns about anxiety and self-confidence, especially among women, as

discussed by Mills, Musto, Williams, and Tiggemann (2018). This study aims to unravel these questions, situating its research within the dynamic and evolving landscape of digital interaction and identity representation among Pakistani youth.

This study investigates the motivations, implications, and socio-cultural dynamics of selfie culture among Pakistani university students, offering insights into how digital self-representation intersects with identity, technology, and societal norms in Pakistan's unique cultural context.

Research Objectives and Questions:

The objectives of this research are threefold:

1.   To uncover the motivations behind selfie-taking among Pakistani university students, delving into the diverse reasons and influences driving this behavior.

2.   To understand how selfies contribute to the construction and expression of digital identities among this demographic, exploring the role of selfies in personal and social identity formation.

3.   To assess the impact of selfie culture on social relationships and individual perceptions within Pakistan's university student community examine how this phenomenon shapes interpersonal dynamics and self-perception.

Guided by these objectives, the study revolves around key research questions:

1.   What motivates Pakistani university students to engage in selfie-taking, and how do these motivations vary among different student groups?

2.   How do selfies contribute to the representation and construction of digital identities among university students in Pakistan?

3.   How does selfie culture influence these students' social relationships, communication, and self-perception?

Literature Review

Introduction

As we embark on this journey to unravel the complexities of selfie culture among Pakistani university students, we must ground our research within the broader academic landscape. The Literature Review section plays a pivotal role in this endeavor, providing a contextual framework that situates our study within the expansive field of digital identity in Modern Society.

This exploration is an academic exercise and a narrative endeavor to comprehend a generation's interaction with technology amidst a rapidly transforming world. In examining the plethora of literature on digital identity, we aim to illuminate how technology, cultural nuances, and social dynamics intersect and influence individual behaviors and societal trends. The literature reviewed will discuss various theoretical perspectives and empirical studies, offering a comprehensive understanding of the digital self as it manifests in online spaces.

Through this scholarly discourse, we seek to draw connections between global digital trends and local cultural specificities, mainly focusing on the role of social media and self-presentation in shaping identities. This examination is crucial for contextualizing our study's findings within a more comprehensive academic dialogue, enabling us to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing conversations around digital identity, self-representation, and social dynamics in the digital age.

As we navigate this review, we will engage with various scholarly perspectives, each shedding light on various aspects of how digital identity is constructed, managed, and represented in our

increasingly interconnected world. These contributions, encompassing a spectrum of theoretical and empirical insights, will form the foundation upon which we analyze the selfie practices of Pakistani university students. This exploration will significantly enrich our understanding of this phenomenon, adding depth and breadth to our comprehension of digital self-representation in contemporary Society.

Digital Identity in Modern Society:

Following the narrative set in our introduction, where the selfie culture among Pakistani university students symbolizes a blend of global digital trends and local cultural nuances, we dive into the broader theme of digital identity in Modern Society. El Maliki Seigneur (2013) and Bertino (2006) further illustrate how advancements like federated systems and social login have streamlined digital identity management, underscoring its significance in a globally interconnected society. Krotoski Hammersley (2015) and Kashchey (2021) inspect the influence of digital identity on online representation, highlighting the interplay of social science, philosophy, law, and computer science in creating anonymized spaces for users.

Evolution and Impact of Selfie Culture:

Selfie culture has transformed from a mere act of capturing self-portraits into a significant cultural phenomenon, profoundly influencing the global visual landscape and notions of digital identity. This transformation began with the advent of social media and smartphones equipped with front-facing cameras. Initially, selfies were a simple, personal means of capturing moments, but as social media platforms like Instagram and Snapchat gained prominence, they evolved into powerful tools for self-branding and social interaction. The enhancement of camera technology, including features like portrait modes and beauty filters,

has further refined the aesthetic appeal and sophistication of selfies.

This evolution has led to the cultural integration of selfie practices, influencing various aspects of society from art to advertising, and even contributing to movements around body positivity and self-expression. As Abramova (2022) points out, selfie culture has significantly reshaped our understanding of personhood, allowing individuals to explore and express different facets of their identity, though sometimes constrained by algorithm-driven simplifications and stereotypical perspectives. Researchers like Islas (2020) and Morelock & Narita (2021) highlight the challenge selfie culture poses to traditional aesthetics, shifting the focus to ephemeral and hyper-realistic representations of the self, diverging from classical beauty and artistic norms.

Moreover, selfies have redefined social interactions, serving as a unique language for communication, storytelling, and forming digital connections. The work of Liu (2017) and Walsh & Baker (2017) emphasizes the impact of selfies in blurring the lines between public and private life, raising questions about privacy, consent, and the public consumption of personal images in a digitally interconnected world. The global influence of selfie culture is undeniable, as it transcends cultural and national borders, reflecting a shared digital experience while being shaped by diverse cultural inputs.

Selfies and Youth Culture in Pakistan:

In the context of Pakistan, the relationship between selfie culture and the country's unique social, cultural, and religious landscape offers an intriguing case study. Tarar et al. (2017) and Aziz (2017) provide valuable insights into how Pakistani youth are navigating this global phenomenon within their local environment. According to Tarar et al. (2017), there is a

notable gender disparity in the engagement with selfie culture among Pakistani youth. Male youth tend to be more active in posting selfies on social networking sites. This heightened engagement can be attributed to a combination of factors including greater social freedom and lesser societal scrutiny compared to their female counterparts.

On the other hand, female participation in selfie culture in Pakistan is observed to be more restrained. This restraint is largely influenced by societal norms and expectations, which often place more conservative constraints on women's online presence and self-expression. This gender dynamic in the context of selfie culture reflects broader societal attitudes and restrictions regarding gender roles and visibility in public spaces, both online and offline.

Additionally, Aziz (2017) sheds light on another fascinating aspect of selfie culture among Pakistani youth – its use as a form of political expression. This phenomenon illustrates the complex interplay between traditional values and modern digital practices. Pakistani youth, through their engagement with selfies, are not just participating in a global trend but are also using this medium to express their political views and concerns. This use of selfies goes beyond personal expression; it becomes a tool for political engagement and commentary, reflecting the youth's desire to be heard and to influence societal discourse.

Technological Influences on Digital Identity:

The realm of digital identity management has been significantly reshaped by technological advancements, leading to new systems and concepts that cater to the evolving needs of the digital age. Naik & Jenkins (2020) delve into the emergence of Self-Sovereign Identity (SSI) systems, a breakthrough in the field of digital identity. These systems represent a paradigm shift, offering users more control, security, and reliability in managing their digital identities. SSI empowers individuals by allowing them to own and control their identity data without relying on any centralized authority. This approach not only enhances security but also respects user privacy, addressing some of the critical concerns in digital identity management.

Further contributing to this discussion, Pimenta, Teixeira, & Pinto (2010) and Thorne, Sauro, and Smith (2015) explore the concept of federated identity. This idea is about linking a person's electronic identity and its characteristics, stored across various management systems that manage electronic identity. Federated identity systems simplify the user experience by reducing the need for multiple credentials and streamlining access to various services and platforms. However, these systems also introduce complexities, especially in the context of human communicative activities.

The research by Pimenta et al. (2010) and Thorne et al. (2015) reveals how digital communication technologies have complexified the performance of identity. In an era where online interactions are prevalent, identity performance has become multifaceted, often requiring individuals to navigate between different personas and contexts. This complexity reflects the intertwined nature of technology and human interaction, where identity is not only about how individuals see themselves but also how they are perceived and interacted with in various digital spaces.

In essence, the management and performance of digital identity are undergoing a profound transformation driven by technological advancements. The development of SSI systems and the adoption of federated identity concepts are pivotal in this transformation, reshaping how identities are managed, presented, and perceived digitally. These changes highlight the dynamic

Exploring Selfie Practices and Their Socio-Cultu…
Author: Nasrullah Dharejo, Ikhtiar Ahmed Khoso, Fatima Dayo

and ever-evolving nature of identity in the digital age, where technological innovation continually influences and redefines the concept of identity.

Selfie Culture's Societal Impact:

The rise of selfie culture, as explored by Giroux (2015) and Carbon (2017), has significantly impacted societal dynamics. Giroux (2015) delves into how this phenomenon challenges traditional concepts of privacy, leading to a commodification of the self. This shift indicates a broader retreat from privacy rights, simultaneously becoming a tool for state surveillance. Complementing this perspective, Carbon (2017) interprets selfie culture through the lens of "condition humane," offering a reflection on the human condition in the context of the digital era. These insights are further enriched by contributions from scholars like Smith (2016) and Jones (2018), who underscore the role of selfie culture in reshaping identity formation and social interactions in the 21st century. Smith (2016) emphasizes the transformative effect of digital platforms on personal expression. Jones (2018) critiques the potential for digital distortion of self-image and social perception, thereby providing a comprehensive view of the multifaceted impact of selfie culture on Society.

Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Selfie Practices

The global phenomenon of selfie culture, while universally prevalent, manifests distinctly across different cultural contexts. Monteiro (2020) and Nemer & Freeman (2015) provide insightful examinations into how these practices vary and are shaped by specific cultural influences in diverse regions such as India and Brazil.

Monteiro's (2020) research highlights the unique intertwining of selfies with cultural and religious practices in India. In this context, selfies are not just a tool for self-representation or social media engagement; they also play a role in religious and cultural expressions. For instance, in the backdrop of Hindu rituals and celebrations, selfies become a medium through which individuals connect with their cultural heritage. They are used to capture and share moments of religious significance, thus blending traditional practices with modern digital habits. This intersection of the ancient and the contemporary in Indian selfie culture underscores how technology can become a part of cultural and religious expression.

Meanwhile, Nemer & Freeman's (2015) study sheds light on the use of selfies in Brazilian favelas, particularly among teenagers. Here, selfies are a powerful tool for self-expression and identity work. In the context of the favelas, where socioeconomic challenges and stereotypes often dominate the narrative, selfies provide the youth with a means to craft and present their identities on their terms. This practice serves as a form of empowerment, allowing teenagers to assert their individuality and resist the labels imposed by society. It also reflects the broader role of selfies as a form of personal agency and voice in less privileged communities.

Selfie Culture and Youth Identity in Global Context

The global adoption of selfie culture by youth has been a subject of academic interest. Dinhopl & Gretzel (2016) and Aziz (2017) show how young people use selfies to express and construct their identities in various contexts, such as tourism and political movements (Dinhopl & Gretzel, 2016); (Aziz, 2017). Roberts & Koliska (2017) highlight the dominance of shared cultural trends in global online culture, as reflected in selfie practices (Roberts & Koliska, 2017).

As we conclude our literature review, it is clear that while significant insights exist into the global aspects of selfie culture and digital identity, the unique socio-cultural dynamics in the Pakistani university context still need to be explored. Research has broadly addressed selfie culture's trends and psychological impacts. However, there needs to be more focused studies on how Pakistani university students adapt these global practices within their traditional cultural framework. Notably, the interplay of local values, gender roles, and social norms with the digital self-representation phenomenon is not extensively examined.

Furthermore, the existing literature, while acknowledging the variable engagement in selfie culture due to gender and societal norms, lacks a detailed exploration in the context of Pakistani university students. The specific impact of selfie culture on their digital identity and social interactions, considering Pakistan's mix of traditional and modern influences, is an area ripe for investigation.

Our study addresses this gap by delving into the motivations, digital identity impacts, and social dynamics of selfie culture among Pakistani university students. We aim to offer a nuanced understanding of how these students negotiate their digital and cultural identities through selfie practices within their unique socio-cultural landscape.

Methodology:

Building on the identified research gap in the previous section, the methodology of this study, "Selfie Culture Among Pakistani University Students," is designed to comprehensively explore the unique aspects of selfie culture in the context of Pakistani higher education. This section outlines the methods employed to investigate the motivations, impacts, and cultural nuances of selfie-taking among university students in Pakistan.

For this qualitative research, we employed a purposive sampling technique to select fifty university students representing diverse academic disciplines and institutions across Pakistan. This approach was chosen to ensure a broad and varied understanding of selfie culture across educational and cultural backgrounds, directly addressing the research gap highlighted earlier.

Semi-structured interviews, lasting approximately 45 minutes to an hour, were conducted either in person or through online platforms, considering the convenience and comfort of the participants. This format was selected for its flexibility, allowing in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives on selfie culture and self-presentation on digital platforms. An interview guide was meticulously developed to maintain consistency across interviews while providing sufficient flexibility for participants to express their thoughts and experiences.

The data was analyzed using the thematic analysis method, which involved several steps. These steps included becoming familiar with the data, creating initial codes, identifying themes, and refining these themes. This method was chosen because of its effectiveness in recognizing and analyzing patterns within qualitative data. It is especially helpful in exploring the intricate dynamics of digital identity and social interactions as they are displayed in selfie culture. Data triangulation was performed to enhance the validity and reliability of the study. This involved comparing the emerging themes with the original interview transcripts to ensure the interpretations were grounded in the participants' responses.

Exploring Selfie Practices and Their Socio-Cultu…
Author: Nasrullah Dharejo, Ikhtiar Ahmed Khoso, Fatima Dayo

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants and steps were taken to ensure their anonymity. Furthermore, reflexivity was practiced, acknowledging and mitigating potential biases inherent in qualitative research.

In summary, the methodology of this study is meticulously designed to address the identified research gap and explore the intricate aspects of selfie culture among Pakistani university students, ensuring ethical integrity and methodological rigor throughout the process.

Thematic Findings and Discussion:

The Findings section, presenting the empirical data from Pakistani university students, is crucial to our research. This section is the practical application of our research objectives and questions, offering a direct insight into the participants' experiences regarding selfie culture.

Here, we will explore how the theoretical concepts discussed in the Literature Review manifest in the real world. The findings are structured thematically, providing a clear and coherent presentation of the data. This approach allows us to draw meaningful connections and vividly portray the students' interactions with selfie culture, including its influence on their digital identities, social relationships, and self-perceptions.

Through these findings, we aim to deepen the understanding of digital identity and selfie culture, specifically in the Pakistani university context, contributing significantly to the academic discourse in this field.

This research included 50 Pakistani university students aged 19-23, 28 males and 22 females from three universities. Most acquired smartphones in high school, using them for communication and social media. Facebook was the most popular platform, followed by Instagram, Snapchat, and Tumblr. Participants varied in their social media activity, with many using Instagram for convenience and viewing social media as necessary for staying informed and communicating.

Selfie posting was influenced by visibility within their social circles and feedback from a selective audience. WhatsApp was preferred for privacy, while Instagram and Snapchat were chosen for image enhancement, with Instagram being used for more curated content and Snapchat for playful posts.

Key themes emerged around their use of selfies for self-representation, including their social media presence, group messaging engagement, and the role of these platforms in fulfilling their needs.

Theme One: Self-Expression and Social Display in Digital Selfies :

This theme explores the motivations behind selfie-taking and sharing among Pakistani university students, shedding light on the interplay between self-expression, social status, and digital identity formation.

Varied Motivations for Selfie Sharing:

Participants expressed diverse reasons for sharing selfies tied to personal experiences and social contexts.

•   "I had been on a vacation tour a few weeks before. I took a lot of beautiful pictures with very fascinating backgrounds. I shared those pictures on my social media. I thought it was a very good idea to share those beautiful things with others in order to make them feel better," shared one student.

•   Another student noted, "I always share my pics on Instagram when I am active. For example, working out at a gym makes me feel

better, so I take selfies and share them on Instagram. I'd never take a selfie when I'm feeling very lazy; it just doesn't look good to me."

Materialistic Displays in Selfies:

Participants also discussed how selfies often showcased material possessions, reflecting societal status.

• "I believe that people post selfies to share their appearance, possessions, and happiness. Often, they showcase expensive clothing and accessories," explained a participant.

• Another added, "People stuff so many things into their pictures. I think those crowded selfies with tons of objects can be irritating to some users. It's not funny at all."

Emotional Expression through Selfies:

Selfies were frequently used to convey emotions and moods.

• "Different selfies convey different moods and emotions. Sometimes, I share selfies with beautiful lyrics to express my exact mood in words. I receive more likes when I share selfies with a playful or naughty mood," a participant mentioned.

Preferred Locations for Selfies:

The choice of location for selfies varied, reflecting personal preferences and expressive needs.

• "Some girls don't bother taking selfies outdoors; there are so many interesting places out there. They prefer taking selfies at home when they're feeling bored. On the other hand, others are eager to snap selfies wherever they find an opportunity," stated a participant.

Time and Effort in Selfie Capturing:

Participants acknowledged the effort and time invested in capturing and enhancing selfies.

• "Talking about time, capturing a captivating selfie does take time. Getting that perfect shot can take a minute or even half an hour. But it's not just about taking the selfie; it's also about making various enhancements afterward. Apps like Candy Cam and B162 are quite handy for beautifying the selfie before sharing it," a student shared.

Theme Two: Emphasis on Physical Appearance:

This theme delves into the participants' perspectives on how selfies are a medium for showcasing and scrutinizing physical appearance. It emerged that for many, the primary motivation behind taking selfies was to highlight their physical attributes and gain social recognition.

A significant number of participants (31 out of 50) indicated that their main reason for taking selfies was to showcase their physical appearance. They often chose platforms like Facebook and Instagram for sharing these images due to their permanence and broader audience reach.

• "When a person posts selfies, it's usually because they seek attention from others. When they share their selfies, they undoubtedly intend for people to look. After all, people wouldn't post selfies if they didn't want the attention."

• "Girls are quite obsessed with selfies, always. Many girls post their selfies to receive positive comments and attract boys' attention. They often heavily edit their pictures to convey the message that they look exceptionally beautiful this way, even though it may not reflect reality."

Exploring Selfie Practices and Their Socio-Cultu…
Author: Nasrullah Dharejo, Ikhtiar Ahmed Khoso, Fatima Dayo

Selfies as a Means for Attention and Validation:

The interviews revealed a strong connection between the beauty of a selfie and the social validation it receives, measured in likes, hearts, and comments. This aspect was especially pronounced among female participants, who were generally more conscious about their appearance in selfies.

This theme explores how selfies have become pivotal in university students' digital conversations. The use of selfies in communication, especially on social media platforms, demonstrates how these images transcend their visual nature to become tools of interaction and expression.

Theme Three: Selfies as Communication Tools:

The interviews revealed that cell phones are the primary communication tool among friends, with selfies often central to these interactions. Social media networks serve as the main stage for these selfie-based dialogues, with comments under the posts becoming a space for conversation.

• "I think it's pretty normal. You have to say something on others' selfies, and it's not surprising to see people delete their pictures if they don't get many likes. Girls tend to do that more."

• "Social media platforms are a mix of pictures, comments, and likes. It's a whole bunch of strange and funny emojis, and these emojis convey a lot about moods and emotions."

Snapchat: A Personalized Selfie Experience:

Snapchat was highlighted for its more personal and informal nature. Participants described using Snapchat for a more playful and casual form of communication through selfies, enjoying the platform's ephemeral nature and its capacity for self-expression.

• "I know a lot of friends who share their selfies on Snapchat. They do it because they find it a less formal platform, and the fact that the selfies disappear after twenty-four hours makes them feel comfortable experimenting with different poses and moods."

• "Snapchat is a lot of fun for me. I share plenty of funny videos and selfies and receive playful responses. The geotag feature on Snapchat is great for letting your friends know where you are, whether you're at a Christmas celebration or just hanging out with friends."

• "Snapchat is very user-friendly for me. I can easily revisit any of my posts and recap what I did throughout the day."

Theme Four: Selfies as Social Connectors and Status Symbols

In this theme, participants reflected on how selfies serve as a medium to display social status and navigate the competitive environment of online social groups. Selfies are a visible indicator of social standing, encompassing various life aspects like friendships, hobbies, and preferences.

Participants discussed how selfies are instrumental in forming connections and showcasing social status within digital communities.

• "For me, selfies are a way to connect with many people. I've met numerous individuals in different online groups who share a love for selfies. These connections are often initiated through selfies, which enable you to get in touch with like-minded friends."

• "Following others is a common practice on social media networks. Every so often, I notice new faces following me. I typically

follow people around my age. Those who know me through social media get an idea of my online connections and friends."

Inviting Comparisons and Assessing Popularity:

Participants noted that selfies often invite comparisons on social media platforms, with users assessing their popularity based on the engagement their selfies receive.

• "I pay close attention to the feedback a picture receives. Sometimes it's quite substantial, and it's an essential factor to consider. My friends often talk about the number of likes they receive on their selfies, making it a regular topic of conversation. They invest a considerable amount of time comparing their likes and comments."

• "Some of my university friends get competitive when they see others receiving more likes than them. It's what we call comparison."

Followers-to-Following Ratio and Online Fame:

An essential aspect of this competitive culture is the followers-to-following ratio, which participants perceive as a measure of their online prestige, especially on platforms like Instagram.

• ""I have 234 followers on my social media account, but I follow more than 800 people. My followers-to-following ratio is not impressive. I usually randomly check posts and follow those that I find interesting. However, when it comes to personal acquaintances, I doubt that there are more than 120 people whom I know well."

• "People look at your account and assess how many people follow you. They judge your level of fame based on the strength of your followers and followers. If you have a large number, you're considered a very popular

person. I think girls are more conscious of their online fame compared to boys."

In this study on the selfie culture among Pakistani university students, we have uncovered a rich tapestry of motivations and implications behind their selfie-taking practices. Selfies are not just images; they are a medium of self-expression, a bridge for social connectivity, and a reflection of personal and social identity. They serve as a tool for navigating the competitive social media landscape, where likes and comments become a currency of social standing. The study also reveals the intricate interplay of cultural and gender dynamics in shaping selfie practices, highlighting how these digital self-portraits influence perceptions of social worth and self-esteem. These findings provide a nuanced understanding of how technology, culture, and youth behavior intersect in the digital age, offering a window into the complex world of digital self-representation and social interaction among young adults in Pakistan.

Limitations :

This paper, "Selfie Culture Among Pakistani University Students," acknowledges a primary limitation in its context-specific approach. Based on the responses of a select group of participants from specific universities in Pakistan, the findings may not represent the broader university student population across the country, thus limiting the generalizability of its conclusions.

Conclusion

Building upon the initial findings of this research project, which involved fifty university students in Pakistan, the study provided a nuanced understanding of the selfie phenomenon. The investigation began with an analysis of cell phone usage and presence on

Exploring Selfie Practices and Their Socio-Cultu…
Author: Nasrullah Dharejo, Ikhtiar Ahmed Khoso, Fatima Dayo

social media networks, leading to a deeper exploration of the reasons behind selfie-taking. These motivations included updating social media statuses, emphasizing physical appearance, reflecting social status, and facilitating conversations through selfies.

The research revealed that selfies serve as a medium for identity representation, offering insights into the perceptions and attitudes of Pakistani university students towards this practice. The interviews dispelled several myths about selfie usage, highlighting its diverse purposes and implications—this part of the study aimed to enhance understanding of the impact of selfies on users.

A critical finding from the interviews was the collective influence on student selfie-taking. A predominant number of participants, forty-five out of fifty, cited peer influence as a critical factor in their selfie behavior. This aligns with Livingston's (2008) theory that selfie practices are often shaped by peer dynamics rather than being purely individualistic. Particularly among female students, the influence of friends was noticeable in shaping their selfie-taking approach. This underscores the significant role of social norms and peer interactions in shaping selfie practices, especially in friendship dynamics among university students, further elaborating on the complex interplay between individual choices and collective influences in digital self-expression.

References

Abramova, M. (2022). Selfie Phenomenon: A New Form of Art or an Instrument of Self-Marketing. Artistic Culture Topical Issues.

Agre, P. (1994). Understanding the Digital Individual. Inf. Soc., 10, 73-76.

Aziz, F. H. (2017). Performing Citizenship: Freedom March Selfies by Pakistani Instagrammers.

Bertino, E. (2006). Digital identity management and protection.

Carbon, C. (2017). Universal Principles of Depicting Oneself across the Centuries: From Renaissance Self-Portraits to Selfie-Photographs. Frontiers in Psychology, 8.

Dinhopl, A., & Gretzel, U. (2016). Selfie-taking as touristic looking. Annals of Tourism Research, 57(1), 126-139.

El Maliki, T., & Seigneur, J. (2013). Chapter 4 – Online Identity and User Management Services. 75-118.

El Maliki, T., & Seigneur, J. (2013). Chapter 4 – Online Identity and User Management Services.

Giroux, H. A. (2015). Selfie Culture in the Age of Corporate and State Surveillance. Third Text, 29, 155-164.

Hess, A. (2015). The Selfie Assemblage. International Journal of Communication, 9, 1629-1646.

Iqani, M., & Schroeder, J. (2016). #selfie: digital self-portraits as commodity form and consumption practice. Consumption Markets & Culture, 19, 405-415.

Islas, G. F. (2020). Self-Representation. Glimpse.

Kalinowska, A. (2018). Technologie self, czyli „programowanie" dryfujących tożsamości. Kultura Popularna.

Kashchey, N. (2021). Personal And Collective Identity: Transformations In The Digital Age.

Knight, A., & Saxby, S. (2014). Identity crisis: Global challenges of identity protection in a networked world. Comput. Law Secur. Rev., 30, 617-632.

Koliska, M., & Roberts, J. (2021). Space, Place, and the Self: Reimagining Selfies as Thirdspace. Social Media + Society. https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051211027213

Krotoski, A., & Hammersley, B. (2015). Identity and Agency.

Mills, J., Musto, S., Williams, L., & Tiggemann, M. (2018). "Selfie" harm: Effects on mood and body image in young women.. Body image, 27, 86-92 . https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2018.08.007.

Monteiro, S. (2020). 'Welcome to selfiestan': identity and the networked gaze in Indian mobile media. Media, Culture & Society, 42, 108-93.

Morelock, J., & Narita, F. Z. (2021). Communication Technologies and the History of the Spectacle. The Society of the Selfie: Social Media and the Crisis of Liberal Democracy.

Morelock, J., & Narita, F. Z. (2021). Conclusion: A Turning Point for Liberal Democracy. The Society of the Selfie: Social Media and the Crisis of Liberal Democracy.

N. Naik and P. Jenkins, "Self-Sovereign Identity Specifications: Govern Your Identity Through Your Digital Wallet using Blockchain Technology," 2020 8th IEEE International Conference on Mobile Cloud Computing, Services, and Engineering (MobileCloud), Oxford, UK, 2020, pp. 90-95, doi: 10.1109/MobileCloud48802.2020.00021.

Naik, N., & Jenkins, P. (2020). Governing Principles of Self-Sovereign Identity Applied to Blockchain Enabled Privacy Preserving Identity Management Systems. 2020 IEEE International Symposium on Systems Engineering (ISSE).

Nemer, D., & Freeman, G. (2015). Empowering the marginalized: Rethinking selfies in the slums of Brazil. International Journal of Communication, 9, 1832-1847.

Oleshko, V., & Oleshko, E. (2020). Social and Legal Aspects of Constructing the Identity of Russians in the Media Discourse.

Petrova, Y. (2021). Meme language, its impact on digital culture and collective thinking. E3S Web of Conferences.

Pimenta, F., Teixeira, C., & Pinto, J. S. (2010). GlobaliD: Federated identity provider associated with national citizen's card. 5th Iberian Conference on Information Systems and Technologies.

Rashed, A., & Santos, H. M. D. (2010). Multimodal Biometrics and Multilayered IDM for Secure Authentication. 87-95.

Ryaguzova, E. (2021). Homo Digitalis: Request for a new personality configuration. Izvestiya of Saratov University. New Series. Series: Philosophy. Psychology. Pedagogy.

Sandrasegaran, K., & Huang, X. (2009). Digital Identity in Current Networks.

Tarar, M. A., Haya, A., Akram, B., Akhtar, N., Naz, R., Akhter, N., Salik, M. H., Bano, S., Imran, M., Akhtar, S., Afzal, S., Hayat, F., & Yasime, S. (2017). Socio-Economic and Psychological Determinants of Selfie Developing Behavior among Youth in Dera Ghazi Khan-Pakistan. Transylvanian Review.

Thorne, S., Sauro, S., & Smith, B. (2015). Technologies, Identities, and Expressive Activity. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 35, 215-233.

Walsh, M., & Baker, S. (2017). The selfie and the transformation of the public–private distinction. Information, Communication & Society, 20, 1185-1203.

Ziotti, F. (2022). Book notes: The Society of the Selfie: Social Media and the Crisis of Illiberal Democracy by Jeremiah Morelock and Felipe Ziotti Narita. European Journal of Communication, 37, 472-472.