The Effect of Personality Styles
(Level of Introversion- Extroversion)
on Social Media Use

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Abstract

This research paper details a study of social network users personality style and their consequent social media use on the popular social networking site (SNS), Facebook. The self-reported level of extroversion amongst other personality traits served as the central delineation of personality style. The amount of social media usage was determined based on basic behaviors and motivations for using the site (e.g., time spent, purpose, etc.). The objective of this study was to determine if and how a relationship existed between Facebook use and personality type in that one personality type would use Facebook more often and for different reasons than the other, unrepresented personality type. The results indicated that heavy Facebook users, who spend more than two hours daily on the site, are seen by themselves and others as more outgoing and extroverted.

I. Introduction

The conceptualization of the Internet has been undeniable, affecting the way millions of people today communicate, interact and gather information.[1] People use the Internet to "send e-mail, check news, research, play games, download music or movies, keep in touch with family and friends, seek similar others, buy products, and engage in numerous other activities."[2] Additionally, the Internet is used to conduct business, keep in touch with family and friends, seek emotional support, and search for romantic partners.[3] The Internet we know today has come about not in the form of a replacement for the real world, but rather as a part of it in our present society, and this is just the beginning. The ability of the Internet to touch almost every aspect of our life is likely to increase over the next few years.[4] This gives the Internet a great influence over the ability it has to shape our lives, now and for generations to come.

1 Tel Amiel and Stephanie Lee Sargent, "Individual Differences in Internet Usage Motives," *Computers in Human Behavior* 20 (2004): 712.

2 Vikanda Pornsakulvanich and Paul M. Haridakis, "The Influence of Dispositions and Internet-use Motivation on Online Communication Satisfaction and Relationship Closeness," (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the NCA 93rd Annual Convention, Chicago, IL, January 24, 2010), 2.

3 Ibid.

4 Hamburger, "Internet and Personality," 2.

With the advent of a new form of communication comes both positive and negative feedback. The Internet has been said to have created a new, different approach towards interpersonal interaction improving individuals' lives, while it has also been said to have eroded psychological well-being (by increasing loneliness and depression), weaken real-world ties and reduce any sense of community involvement.[5] No matter how important the advantages or disadvantages of this new form of communication, it is still a fact that 80 percent of U.S. adults go online, whether at home, work or elsewhere.[6] There are different types of Internet use, including non-interpersonal communication use (e.g., entertainment) and interpersonal communication use (e.g., email and social media use). Of those Internet users, the average user spends 13 hours per week online.[7] Of these 13 hours, the average user around the world spent more than five and a half hours on social networks in December 2009, up 200 percent from the same month in 2008.[8]

Social networks are defined as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system."[9] Social networks offer users to become part of a network of online friends that allows them to keep in touch with current friends, reconnect with old friends and/or create real–life friendships by joining groups/ forums of those who share similar interests.[10] Additionally, some social network sites (SNS) offer users the opportunities to find a job or establish business contacts.[11] Most SNS also offer further features. In addition to blogs and forums, users can express themselves by designing their profile page to reflect their individual personality.[12] For these reasons and more, 110 million Americans, or 60 percent of the online population, use social networks.[13] Among all sites and applications on the Internet, social networks and blogs proved to be the most popular, followed by online games and instant messaging.[14] The average social networker visits a social site five days a week and checks in about four times daily for a total of an hour each day.[15]

"Boasting 206.9 million users in December, 2009 [now more than 400 million as of April, 2010], Facebook was the top SNS, according to Nielsen Media Research, grabbing 67 percent of social networking users throughout the world," according to Lance Whitney.[16] Founded in 2004, Facebook is a social networking site (SNS), which provides users with a platform to create a personal profile page, add 'friends', and send messages. "The average Facebook user is more likely to be married (40 percent), Caucasian (80 percent) and retired (6 percent) than users of the other social networks. They have the second-highest average income of other SNS, at $61,000, and an average of 121-130 connections."[17]

One statistic that is left out here is the average Facebook user's personality style and consequent motivation for choosing to communicate in this way and on this particular SNS, Facebook, specifically. Not much research has been conducted in this area. The little that has proved inconsequential evidence or evidence that includes other extraneous variables. The current researcher is interested in answering the following questions:

5 Ibid.

6 Lance Whitney, "Average Net User Now Online 13 Hours Per Week," *Cnet news Online,* December 23, 2009, http://news.cnet.com/8301-1023_3-10421016-93.html (February 28, 2010).

7 Whitney, "Average Net User Now Online 13 Hours Per Week."

8 Lance Whitney, "Twitter, Facebook Use Up 82 Percent," *Cnet news Online,* February 22, 2010, http://news.cnet.com/8301-1023_3-10457480-93.html?tag=mncol;posts (February 28, 2010).

9 danah m. boyd and Nicole B. Ellison, "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication 13* (2007).

10 "Social Networking Websites Review," *Top Ten Reviews,* http://social-networking-websites-review.toptenreviews.com/ (March 20, 2010).

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 "What Social Networks Reveal About the User," *Advertising Age,* July 8, 2009, http://www.lookingfit.com/articles/what-social-networks-reveal-about-the-user.html (March 29, 2010).

14 Whitney, "Twitter, Facebook Use Up 82 Percent."

15 "What Social Networks Reveal About the User."

16 Whitney, "Twitter, Facebook Use Up 82 Percent."

17 What Social Networks Reveal About the User."; "Facebook Statistics."

- R1: What personality characteristics does the average Facebook user possess?

- R2: Does his or her amount of personal use differ due to their personality?

- R3: Is the typical Facebook user extroverted or introverted?

- R4: What is his or her main purpose and motivation in maintaining membership on Facebook?

In attempting to answer these questions, past researchers have looked to behavior motivations, most specifically, personality traits that cause and influence our actions online. This is because personality traits influence peoples' motivation and behavior during social interaction, both online and offline. [18] This study will delve more into this area and seek to understand why and how individuals' personality traits, mainly the level of extroversion, affect one's social media use (primarily Facebook).

II. Literature Review

A great deal of past research has sought to find out the many ways that personality may affect individuals' media use patterns, particularly on the Internet or online.[19] This is because people are different in their social and psychological circumstances, which may affect how and why they use the differing forms of media to fulfill their personal needs.[20] These personality characteristics rely on several models differing between three and five total dimensions accepted as the universal, comprehensive elements of human personality including extroversion, neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.[21] It is important to note that the expression of one personality factor may depend on where an individual stands on another factor, which suggests that personality characteristics interact to shape ones online behavior.[22] It is widely known that exposure to specific online media outlets is expectedly associated with an individuals' personality characteristics, inclusive of many background variables that can contribute to why individuals chose to interact online, "such as loneliness, unwillingness to communicate, psychological variables such as locus of control and need for cognition, and personality or temperament factors including need for activation, shyness, sensation seeking, task orientation, and tendency to approach or withdrawal from new stimuli."[23]

For the purpose of this study, the level of the extroversion personality trait has the greatest effect on an individual's online social media outlet tendencies. This is because extroversion relates to an individuals' ability to engage with the environment.[24] Sociability, social contact and a preference for companionship are likely to be pursued by those high in extroversion.[25] Those high in this trait, accordingly, tend to be lively, assertive, active, carefree, outgoing and enjoy surrounding themselves with others mainly, while those lower in the extroversion trait are more likely to be shy, introspective and less likely to seek external social stimulation.[26] The extrovert also desires excitement, takes risks and acts impulsively at times, while the introvert is a quiet, reflective person who prefers time alone, does not crave excitement and can be seen as distant by others at times.[27]

18 Katelyn Y.A. McKenna and John A. Bargh, "Plan 9 From Cyberspace: The Implications of the Internet for Personality and Social Psychology," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 4 (2000): 63.

19 Alice Hall, "Audience Personality and the Selection of Media and Media Genres," *Media Psychology* 7 (2005): 368.

20 Pornsakulvanich and Haridakis, "The Influence of Dispositions and Internet-Use Motivation," 2.

21 Leman Pinar Tosun and Timo Lajunen, "Does Internet Use Reflect Your Personality? Relationship Between Eysenck's Personality Dimensions and Internet Use," *Computers in Human Behavior* 26 (2010): 162; Hall, "Audience Personality," 378.

22 Hall, "Audience Personality," 382.

23 Ibid., 378.

24 Amiel and Sargent, "Individual Differences in Internet Usage Motives," 713.

25 Hall, "Audience Personality," 370.

26 Ibid., 380; Hamburger, "Internet and Personality," 6; Amiel and Sargent, "Individual Differences in Internet Usage Motives," 713; Tosun and Lajunen, "Does Internet Use Reflect Your Personality?," 162.

27 Hall, "Audience Personality," 382.

Research has noted that extroverts experience more successful social interactions online than introverts.[28] Thus, it would seem that extroverts use social media more often because of their success. The statistic found by Myers-Briggs researchers only supports this idea in saying that extroverts use social media more often, because it is hypothesized that roughly two-thirds of any population is composed of extroverts, with the remaining one-third introverts.[29] It would then make sense that because the general population is made up mostly of extroverts, that extroverts would be heavier users on SNS than introverts. Specifically, the online environment is a place where individuals (both extroverts and introverts) can maintain existing relationships with one another and/or solidify offline contacts.[30]

Similarly, extroversion was positively related to online use for supplementing the relationships previously established in face-to-face relationships.[31] This phenomenon, also known as the social enhancement hypothesis, states that extroverted and outgoing individuals are motivated to add online contacts to their already large network of offline friends.[32] These results are important because they show that personality is a highly relevant factor in determining online behavior.[33] However, social media use, particularly for purposes of interacting with others, may be higher among those who rank lower in extroversion for the following reasons.[34]

Research has found that introverts are quite successful in social interactions online, find it easier to express themselves online and, in turn, oftentimes prefer it.[35] This is because introverts feel a need to control the amount of social interaction they subject themselves to and the online world is a place where they have this ability.[36] Facebook has been described as the "ultimate communication platform for people who are more introverted because they can be connected with their own world online and be by themselves at the same time."[37] It has been said that Facebook offers introverts the opportunity and comfort to prescreen their friends as they choose and present themselves in the way that they choose.[38] In other words, Facebook offers introverts a painless, promising alternative to face-to-face interactions.

Researchers also note that introverts may be drawn to the Internet for the social interactions lacking in their offline or 'real' lives.[39] In doing so, these introverts may adopt a more extroverted character online.[40] "Introverts are able to construct and reconstruct their identity in numerous ways on the Internet—something not possible for the average individual offline."[41] Consequently, it has been said that people, both introverts and extroverts, may have changed their personality in the process of social interaction online. Compared to

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28 Xun Liu and Robert Larose, "Does Using the Internet Make People More Satisfied With Their Lives?" (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Dresden, Germany, May 25, 2009), 6.

29 Anne Baxter, "Are Social Networking Websites Better for Introverts or Extroverts?," *Associated Content,* February 12, 2009, http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1453268/are_social_networking_websites_better.html?cat=9 (March 29, 2010).

30 danah m. boyd, and Nicole B. Ellison, "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication 13* (2007).

31 Tosun and Lajunen, "Does Internet Use Reflect Your Personality," 163.

32 Jolene Zywica and James Danowski, "The Faces of Facebookers: Investigating Social Enhancement and Social Compensation Hypotheses; Predicting Facebook and Offline Popularity from Sociability and Self-Esteem, and Mapping the Meanings of Popularity with Semantic Networks," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 14 (2008): 5.

33 Hamburger, "Internet and Personality," 6.

34 Liu and Larose, "Are You a Different Person Online," 11.

35 Ibid.

36 Baxter, "Are Social Networking Websites Better."

37 Barclay, "Is Social Networking an Introverted or Extroverted Activity," *Introvert Retreat*, May 20, 2009, http://www.introvertretreat.com/?p=195 (February 27, 2010).

38 Baxter, "Are Social Networking Websites Better."

39 Liu and Larose, "Are You a Different Person Online," 9.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid., 7.

their behavior in real life, some Internet users behave differently while they are online.[42] In other words, they are using a different or more perfected 'version' of their personality while online, which is something that cannot be done offline.

Furthermore, the level of extroversion may influence media use in that extroverts and introverts will differ in viewing the Internet as either an extension or a substitute for social interaction, respectively.[43] Introverts may be more likely than extroverted individuals to use the media as a replacement or alternative for interpersonal face-to-face interaction, past research has shown.[44] Research has been found demonstrating that those who have difficulties in face-to-face interactions or who are communication-avoidant may also communicate better and prefer online interactions more than in person.[45] This is due to a slew of advantages of the Internet including "anonymity, control over self-presentation, intense and intimate self-disclosure, less perceived social risk, and less social responsibility."[46]

This also suggests that a higher level of extroversion can be negatively related to those media outlets that serve more so as a substitute for interpersonal interaction.[47] This is known as the social compensation hypothesis, which demonstrates that "introverts and socially anxious individuals, having difficulty developing friendships, are more likely to use the Internet because they substitute online contacts for an undesirable offline social network."[48] However, the Internet allows the introverts positive relationships to take a new form because they are able to participate in more sociable activities that are missing in their daily offline lives with others.[49] The Internet is an appealing and accessible alternative of gratifying the desires for socializing that the introvert does have.

The Internet fulfills the desires for communication and interpersonal interaction for both the typical introvert and extrovert. Both personality styles are drawn towards the Internet and towards online communication, but for different reasons. Individuals' tendencies to use a particular communication medium to fulfill their needs are shaped by the alternatives they have available, explained more by the Uses and Gratifications theory.

Uses and Gratifications Theory:

The uses and gratifications approach has been used to give great insight into why individuals chose the various media outlets that they do and why they interact with others the way they do.[50] The uses and gratifications theory explains media exposure that has been applied to a wide range of conventional mass media as well as interpersonal communication and now, to the Internet.[51] This theory demonstrates that "individuals have unique sets of psychological and social needs as well as specific expectations relating to how a particular media outlet can fulfill those needs."[52] These exact needs and expectations of individuals contribute to the reasons behind why certain individuals chose to participate in different media outlets.[53] Researchers found eight reasons or gratification factors for Internet use including: "to keep informed, diversion and entertainment, peer identity, good feelings, communication, sights and sounds, career, and 'coolness.' "[54]

The uses and gratifications theory believes that "individuals are active, goal-directed, and motivated

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42 Ibid., 2.

43 Amiel and Sargent, "Individual Differences in Internet Usage Motives," 715.

44 McKenna and Bargh, "Plan 9 From Cyberspace," 63; Hall, "Audience Personality," 378.

45 Tosun and Lajunen, "Does Internet Use Reflect Your Personality," 163; Pornsakulvanich and Haridakis, "The Influence of Dispositions and Internet-use Motivation," 2.

46 Liu and Larose, "Are You a Different Person Online," 2.

47 Hall, "Audience Personality," 380.

48 Zywica and Danowski, "The Faces of Facebookers," 5.

49 Liu and Larose, "Are You a Different Person Online," 9.

50 Hall, "Audience Personality," 377.

51 Robert Larose, Dana Mastro and Matthew S. Eastin, "Understanding Internet Usage: A Social- Cognitive Approach to Uses and Gratifications." *Social Science Computer Review* 19 (2001): 397.

52 Hall, "Audience Personality," 377.

53 Ibid.

54 Larose, Mastro, and Eastin "Understanding Internet Usage," 399.

in selecting their media for consumption."[55] In other words, mass media is purposeful and targeted.[56] Additionally, "people select and use the appropriate channels of communication to gratify their needs and wants."[57] Specifically, much initiative in linking need gratification and media choice lies with the individual.[58] The uses and gratifications theory offers that "different people have diverse communication behaviors, which are based upon social and psychological factors."[59]

Accordingly, "social and psychological situations influence how well and appropriately media can serve and satisfy people's needs and wants."[60] This is applicable to the personality styles mentioned above because people are goal-oriented in their preferences for communication channels; thus, people chose to use certain communication channels over others.[61] It is widely known that media compete with other sources of need satisfaction.[62] Accordingly, people use the Internet for gratification of their needs for which they have difficulty "completing through their other communication" techniques (especially face-to-face interactions).[63]

By directly applying these assumptions to mass media in terms of social media outlets (such as Facebook), a few customized observations can be made. First, the average user is active, as the individual has willingly created an account and holds a membership on the site. Next, the user chose Facebook as a means to fulfill their wants and needs over the many other possible media outlets. Essentially, the Facebook user came to the site for a unique purpose that the other social media outlets could not provide. Thirdly, methodologically speaking, many of the goals of media use are supplied directly from self-report data provided by audience users themselves.[64] The uses and gratifications theory simply represents an attempt to explain why individuals chose certain media outlets among other resources and alternatives in their environment, to satisfy their needs and to achieve their interpersonal communications goals.[65]

Social networking encompasses a certain media outlet that is broadly targeted to all individuals who want to interact and be involved in interpersonal relationships. Thus, social networking cannot be more equip or more satisfying for any certain personality type because it is human nature to want to be involved in many relationships in ones lifetime. What differs is the amount of time spent on these SNS and what the users motivations are. SNS are seen as the "middle ground" between introverted and extroverted activities, because "it provides introverts an opportunity to network with others, on a business or personal level, while remaining in their own comfortable world, while, simultaneously allowing extroverts the ability to stay connected with the outside world at times when they would otherwise be alone."[66]

Though research in the area of personality and online media preferences has been limited, past studies have attempted to understand the relationship between the two. Because online media, most specifically, the relationships in this form of media and interpersonal communication is such an area that is untouched, researchers have to use results from traditional media. These encouraging results in prompt the overarching question to be addressed in this study, which is: why and how do individuals' personality traits, mainly the level of extroversion, affect their social media (primarily Facebook) use.

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55 Pornsakulvanich and Haridakis, "The Influence of Dispositions and Internet-use Motivation," 2.

56 Elihu Katz, Jay G. Blumler, Michael Gurevitch, "Uses and Gratifications Research." *The Public Opinion Quarterly 37* (1974): 510.

57 Pornsakulvanich and Haridakis, "The Influence of Dispositions and Internet-use Motivation," 2.

58 Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, "Uses and Gratifications Research," 512.

59 Pornsakulvanich and Haridakis, "The Influence of Dispositions and Internet-use Motivation," 2.

60 Ibid.

61 Tosun and Lajunen, "Does Internet Use Reflect Your Personality," 163.

62 Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, "Uses and Gratifications Research," 512.

63 Tosun and Lajunen, "Does Internet Use Reflect Your Personality," 164.

64 Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, "Uses and Gratifications Research," 512.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

III. Method

To address this question, journals, online articles and papers presented at conferences comprised the secondary research for the current study. Because Internet use and personality is somewhat of an untouched market, some primary sources that could have been used in the research were not available. From there, an analysis of the past studies and results and hypotheses and research questions were framed. Then, a survey was formulated based on a set of mainly close-ended questions investigating individual social media use and personality style. Past research shows that a survey of an undergraduate student sample is a relevant and significant group, because college students fit the demographic of most social network site users (mainly Facebook).

The survey was conducted using the Survey Monkey host where users can create their own web-based surveys (www.surveymonkey.com). To maximize the potential for a large quantity of participants, Facebook itself was used for maximum, quick, and fast exposure, where the researcher created an 'event' which included a brief description of the research and a link to take the survey. The researcher invited all of her 'friends' on her Elon Facebook network. Additionally, the researcher sent out a similar brief description and link to her spring semester courses and organizations. Because the researcher is female, the organizations were more targeted towards females (e.g. sorority and volunteer organizations), thus, skewing the population size, which primarily consisted of females. The participant's results were analyzed based on their anonymous survey responses.

The survey consisted of 10 questions, including three major sections: (1) Facebook Use, (2) Personality Type, and (3) Demographics [See Appendix A]. In the first section, participants answered questions about their daily Facebook use, main purpose in using Facebook as often or seldom as they do, and how often they change their content on their Facebook profile. The second section consisted of questions ranking from strongly disagree to agree about their preference for Facebook versus offline interaction, their communications successfulness and sincerity on Facebook versus offline, and their Facebook use as a way to be a different person or the person they are not in the 'real world'. Additionally, participants answered questions placing themselves into introvert or extrovert categories based on their own self-perception and outsiders' perceptions of themselves. The third section of the survey consisted of close-ended demographic questions that participants answered regarding their year in school (e.g. freshman, sophomore, etc.) and gender. In the first two sections (Facebook Use and Personality Type), I included an optional open-ended question 'Why?' so that I could receive personal feedback from participants in their own words.

IV. Findings

The goal of the current study was to see if a valid relationship existed between Facebook use and personality types in that one personality type (for example the typical introvert) would use Facebook more often and for different reasons than the other personality type (the typical extrovert). Each section of the survey provided the participant the opportunity to honestly and openly express his or her behavior, perception and give specific rationale for why they feel they way they do.

Demographics/ Participants:

Participants were college students enrolled at Elon University in North Carolina consisting of 4,995 undergraduate students; 59% female, 41% male.[67] A total of 405 subjects participated in this study. Out of the total number of participants: 77.4% were female and 22.6% were male. For year in college, 19.9% were freshman, 25.0% were sophomores, 21.8% were juniors, and 33.2% were seniors.

Facebook Use:

In answering the question, " How much time do you spend on Facebook daily?" most participants (31.6%) answered between 30 and 60 minutes, while 25.2% answered less than 30 minutes, followed by 22.6% for 60-90 minutes, 9.2% for 90-120 minutes, and 11.4% for more than 120 minutes. This is meaning-

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67 "About Elon University," 2010, http://www.elon.edu/e-web/visit/about_elon.xhtml (March 3, 2010).

ful because close to 50% stated that they spend 60 minutes or less a day on Facebook. Those that used it for 60 minutes or less answered the optional open-ended question of 'Why?' by stating that they are too busy and have more important uses for their time than Facebook, it is uninteresting to them, and they only check it when they get an email notification. A very light user even mentioned, "it makes me sad that so many of my peers waste so much of their lives on Facebook."

Then, there is the other extreme that spends more than 120 minutes on Facebook. These individuals use Facebook for many reasons including: out of habit, procrastination, distraction (during classes, spare and homework time), boredom, entertainment, and to be social (especially with friends not close in proximity: home, studying abroad, etc.). These heavy users noted that they sign on to Facebook every time they are on their computer and often just keep it up and open. They state that Facebook is "addicting" but also a "mindless way to unwind."

It was interesting to note that both those students that use Facebook often and seldom state busyness as an important factor. Light users do not use Facebook because they do not have time, while heavy users say that Facebook is a great alternative to not having to spend an hour on the phone calling others when they can keep up and catch up with friends on Facebook. Facebook is a main source of communication for some heavy users because they note that Facebook is easier than email because people get on Facebook more often than they check their email.

In answering the question, "What is your main purpose of using Facebook this often?" most participants (59.0%) chose time-passing entertainment, while 7.3% chose information, 0.2% chose relationship development, 33.0% chose relationship maintenance, and 0.5% chose trend-following. This shows that the entertainment factor is the most common motivation for being on Facebook. Ranking second is relationship maintenance, which factors in maintaining relationships and wanting to stay in touch with people.

In this explanation of 'Why,' participants mentioned that they wanted to rank both time-passing entertainment and relationship maintenance first but they could not choose both so they gave their reasons why they chose one over the other. One participant noted, "I don't need Facebook to build relationships … however, Facebook is a way to distract myself from harder, more difficult aspects of life." I found this interesting, as it seems this particular user uses Facebook as an escape or alternative to communicating in the other ways, which aligns with past research. Others that ranked Facebook use as a time-passing alternative said that, "If I have a lot of work to do, I try to use Facebook as motivation. I'll tell myself I'm allowed to check Facebook after I get an hour's worth of work done."

It was interesting to note that those participants that mentioned they had studied abroad ranked relationship maintenance higher than time-passing entertainment because they saw Facebook as more beneficial for this factor than the other. Participants noted that Facebook is a great way to communicate with those who he/she values the most: his/ her friends and family. They note, "If someone has impacted me, I want to maintain that friendship." Also, those that ranked relationship maintenance higher than time-passing entertainment showed how great and effective Facebook is at connecting with people not close in proximity. Participants stated, "Besides texting, Facebook is the second way I can get in touch with people."

For the question asked, "How often do you change the content and/ or features of your Facebook profile (e.g. update your status)?" most participants (43%) said that they change their personal content sometimes/ almost weekly, while 9.5% make changes often/ almost daily, 31.6% rarely/ almost monthly, 15.5% never/ almost yearly, and 0.5% do not know how often they change features of their Facebook profile. In answering 'Why,' those participants that changed their content often mentioned that they like to let others know what they are doing, especially if it is something important or worthwhile in sharing (events, travelling, music lyrics, quotes, etc.). Those that rarely change their content say, "It's not everyone's business what I'm doing all the time!" and show their dislike when others change their status in saying, "I hate when people think that I care what they are doing for every second of their day because I do not care if and when they are showering, shopping, etc." They also mention that status updates are what Twitter is for.

Personality Type:

This section used three Likert scale questions ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree as well as two questions asking about self and outsiders' perceptions of personality. In answering the question, "Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Sometimes, I enjoy Facebook (and online) interactions more so than face-to-face interactions (offline)," most participants (39.7%) noted that they disagree with

the statement, while 26.4% noted that they strongly disagree, 17.5% were undecided or neutral, 14.6% noted that they agree, and 1.6% noted that they strongly agree. Past research shows that Facebook interactions are well suited for those who are introverted so this is what the current researcher expected. The current study brought about interesting results. Almost 60% showed that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that they sometimes enjoy Facebook interaction more so than face-to-face interactions. These participants mentioned that they prefer face-to-face interactions because "they are more rewarding" and "online interactions mean nothing." They stated that "nothing is substitute" for face-to-face interactions which are more sincere, worthwhile, entertaining, and the stage where you make meaningful memories.

There were also participants that voted undecided and/or neutral because they mentioned that they like both types of interactions with different people: "face-to-face with better friends, online/ on Facebook with random people." Other participants mentioned busyness once again stating that because they are busy college students; "Facebook is sometimes the best I can do to connect with people." One participant mentioned, "I'd rather interact with people face-to-face, but when that isn't possible due to time, distance, etc. Facebook is a more valid option."

Those that voted undecided to strongly agree mentioned interesting and different reasons in why they voted this particular way. Participants noted that sometimes communication on Facebook is easier, more convenient, less stressful, and less awkward (especially with people you do not know as well such as people you are in classes with and not necessarily friends with). A participant honestly stated that there are "some occasions when the digital wall lets me overcome shyness to jump-start a conversation that I wouldn't in person." Another participant mentioned that "there are a few people I converse with online only." For those that have a difficult time in interpersonal interactions or are intimidated, Facebook is beneficial because they have more time to think online; a participant noted their "slow processor," and another mentioned their anxiety disorder, which predisposes them towards preferring online interactions more than face-to-face.

There could be a self-report bias involved in answering this question because multiple participants mentioned that they sometimes enjoy Facebook interactions more so than face-to-face. This is known because these participants mentioned the easiness and convenience in their answer to 'Why', but then disagreed in the actual question because they didn't want to or were too embarrassed to admit the truth.

To answer the question, "I feel I communicate and represent myself better on Facebook (online) than offline (face-to-face) with others," most participants (49.1%) noted that they disagree with the statement, while 30.8% noted that they strongly disagree, 12.8% were undecided or neutral, 5.5% noted that they agree, and 1.8% noted that they strongly agree. For the communication aspect of the question, there were those who stated that they communicate much better in person than online because of the non-verbal cues, tone, etc. that only occur in face-to-face interactions. These participants mentioned that "words can be misconceived and/ or interpreted in many different ways."

Those who agreed with the statement stated that they have an easier time communicating on Facebook in that "I have time to compose my thoughts before sharing them, unlike in face-to-face conversations." They also agreed that they represent themselves better online because online interactions are more truthful because they actually type out their words versus saying them without realizing what they are saying. One participant stated, "Sometimes my status shows how I'm feeling when normally, I wouldn't tell anyone face-to-face."

For those that disagree with the second half of the statement in that they represent themselves better in person than online, "because it is more complex and meaningful." Additionally, conflicting with above response, a participant noted people are better represented in person because "a lot of times people put up inaccurate information on Facebook." Another participant believes, "I'd say my Facebook profile is a really accurate representation of myself," disagreeing that they represent themselves better in person.

On the other hand, there are those that agree with the idea that they represent themselves better online than in person. One participant mentioned they represent themselves better online, "because I have time to change myself on Facebook and can think about what I want to have known about me." Another participant noted, "I may present myself better because I can think about what is on my Facebook page, but it doesn't necessarily represent me at all. It represents the perfect, ideal me." Thus, conflicting results come about in answering this question because some participants feel they communicate and represent themselves in a more positive light while others do not feel this way.

The question stating "I use the Internet and the online world to become the person I'm not offline or in

the 'real world'." produced interesting results in that 68.9% of respondents noted that they strongly disagree with the statement, while 24.8% noted that they disagree, 3.9% were undecided or neutral, 1.6% noted that they agree, and 0.8% noted that they strongly agree. This question brought back the strongest results with almost 70% answering in one way. The participants that answered strongly disagree voiced that they are the same person both online and offline. They mentioned, "I wouldn't want to be two people … that would be exhausting." Another mentioned, "Because I like who I am; I don't feel any need to be who I'm not while online."

Those that answered strongly agree felt as though they can be "more of myself and/or who they want to be online"; in other words, they can be two different people. One participant even noted that online, they can be who they want to be in that "I am whoever people need me to be (funny, witty, intelligent) online, while offline I am myself." Another participant noted their admiration more so of the person they are online in that "I look perfect on Facebook. I am not perfect in real life (offline), but I would never post my flaws."

Self-report bias might come into play in this question as well because participants rated that they strongly disagreed with the statement, but then had conflicting rationale in their answer to the 'Why' portion of the question. For example, one participant rated that they strongly disagreed with the idea but then in their rationale they stated, "in some ways, yes, but overall, no." Thus, they do not actually disagree with the statement because they voice that at sometimes the online world is used as an escape or outlet to express a different side of oneself. Additionally, there are individuals that report that for the most part, they are the same person online as they are offline, when, in actuality, researchers know this cannot be true. Thus, there were participants who were torn and answered that they strongly disagreed but in their rationale voiced their truthful answer: "Although I would like to strongly disagree with this statement, I think that it is idealistic and maybe even unattainable to be the exact same person both online and offline. Online and offline behavior are simply different, and it would be impossible to act the same in both of these scenarios." Additionally, one participant voted that they strongly disagreed with the statement but consequently mentioned, "People say I talk differently online than in person. Also, I know that I am a shy person, but online I am more outgoing and step out my shell."

The remaining questions had to do with individual perceptions from the participant and of what they believe others would classify them as, whether more introverted or extroverted. In answering the question, "Which of the following statements do you most identify with?" most participants (37.6%) noted that they are mostly outgoing and enjoy using Facebook as an outlet to fulfill their desire for continuous interpersonal engagement, while 1.6% noted that they are shy but enjoy using Facebook because they are in control of their interactions with others, 8.4% noted that they are somewhat shy and sometimes enjoy using Facebook as an alternative for face-to-face interactions, 25.6% noted that they are neither shy nor outgoing and enjoy using Facebook both as an alternative and a supplement for face-to-face interactions, and 26.9% noted, "I am very outgoing and enjoy using Facebook to add to my offline (face-to-face) interactions."

Of those who answered the 'Why' portion of this question, they stated that for them, "Facebook is really useful in communicating with those people that I would not be outgoing enough to contact in person or that I simply don't have regular contact with in person." For those who self-reported that they were outgoing and/or extroverted, they said that they don't use Facebook to fulfill any desires; but mainly "just use it to keep in touch with people who are too far away to see regularly." Even for those who self-reported that they were shy agreed noting, "I feel I'm not very outgoing, but I use Facebook as a supplement … not as an alternative." Thus, both introverts and extroverts noticed that they don't use or don't want to use Facebook as an alternative but an extension.

To answer the question of "Others would describe me as … ," most participants (41.5%) believed they'd be described as someone who is talkative and seeks external face-to-face interactions oftentimes, while 2.6% believed they are someone who is reserved and enjoys being alone most of the time, 3.1% believed they are someone who sometimes seems distant and inhibited in face-to-face interactions, 32.9% believed they are someone who is neither shy nor outgoing but enjoyable to be around in face-to-face interactions, and 19.8% believed they are someone who is very outgoing and enjoys being always surrounded by others.

For those who self-reported that they were seen by others to be more of an introvert, they duly noted that they still enjoy face-to-face interactions. Additionally, one participant noted, "I'm shy and enjoy the time I have being by myself … it's quiet." Another participant stated, "Being around people is a good way for me to relieve stress, but I do like being alone oftentimes." There were also those that coined themselves extroverts as one participant mentioned that they love spending time with friends and being social but mentioned, "I

definitely need alone time to re-coup."

V. Discussion

From these findings, I decided to filter the responses of the lightest Facebook users to the heaviest Facebook users and see if their self-perceptions and others' perceptions of their personality styles delineated at all.

For the lightest Facebook users (those that spend less than 30 minutes daily), 31.7% self reported that they are very outgoing, while 2.0% described themselves as shy, 6.9% described themselves as somewhat shy, 30.7% described themselves as neither shy nor outgoing, and 28.7% described themselves as mostly outgoing (Table 1 in Appendix B). For the heaviest Facebook users (those that spend more than 120 minutes daily), 33.3% self reported that they were very outgoing, while 4.8% described themselves as shy, 11.9% described themselves as somewhat shy, 21.4% described themselves as neither shy nor outgoing, and 28.6% described themselves as mostly outgoing (Table 2 in Appendix B). This is important because those that used Facebook the most often self-reported themselves as the most outgoing and extroverted factor while those that use Facebook the least often were seen as the middle factor between shy and outgoing. In comparison of the heavy to light Facebook users, it is interesting to note that heavier users rank themselves more outgoing and extroverted than the lighter users. This is a result that was suspected but not proved through past research.

The lightest Facebook users were perceived by others to be mainly someone who is neither shy nor outgoing with 38.6%, while 4.0% were described as reserved, 3.0% were described as distant in face-to-face interactions, 34.7% were described as talkative, and 19.8% were described as very outgoing (Table 3 in Appendix B). The heaviest users were perceived by others to be mainly someone who is talkative and seeks face-to-face interactions with 35.7%, while 0.0% were described as reserved, 7.1% were described as distant in face-to-face interactions, 31.0% were described as neither shy nor outgoing, and 26.2% were described as very outgoing (Table 4 in Appendix B). This is important because those that used Facebook the most often were perceived by others to be more outgoing and extroverted ranking on the 4th most outgoing factor (talkative and interaction seeking), while those that use Facebook the least often were seen by others as those that placed on the middle factor between shy and outgoing again (similar to their self-reported perceived personality type). In comparison of the heavy to light Facebook users, it is interesting to note that heavier users are ranked by others as more outgoing and extroverted than the lighter users. Again, this is a result that was suspected but not proved through past research.

Thus, the current researchers findings conclude that it is applicable to say that those who use Facebook more often or heavily are recognized as more outgoing or more extroverted. This is important because past research has delineated how and why introverts would be more heavy users of Facebook for many reasons in that they seek to be a different person online and a comfort factor is found online and in online interactions. A great deal of past research has attempted to make this assumption come to life stating that introverts would be heavier users of Facebook because of the alternatives it offers to face-to-face communication. However, current research has found that Facebook and SNS, in general, offer the extrovert an outlet and a new platform for which they can interact with others at times that they would not be able to and would otherwise be alone.

VI. Conclusion

This study took a critical look at the impact and affect of personality type, specifically extroversion, on social media, specifically Facebook, use. As of now, the only conclusive data that was found through the current study is that heavier users of Facebook tend to be more extroverted individuals. This is because these extroverts constantly seek interaction with others and the internet, specifically SNS, offers extroverts the ability and platform for which they can maintain and also create relationships with others both in their offline world and those that are not yet a part of their online world. In other words, the Internet is an extension to the extroverts' interaction with the outside world. Although it seems as if SNS fulfill the needs of the typical extrovert

more than the introvert, this is not the case, because the introvert enjoys the online interaction just as much as the extrovert. This conclusion directly relates to the uses and gratification theory mentioned in the literature review in that the expectations of SNS users contribute to their actual use and rationale.

This study was limited because the sample size consisted primarily of women (77.4%) because it was a convenience sample of college students rather than random sample. This was due to the lack of time to collect the survey responses, thus, the researcher had to gather responses based on her social outlets (e.g. sorority, campus organizations and courses), which consisted primarily of females because the researcher is female. This was even more compromised because the current researcher, who readily defines herself as an extreme extrovert, is involved in organizations that consist mainly of extroverts because her interests are ex-troverted, in nature. These results should be replicated with a more diverse population encompassing larger school populations and equal male/female ratios for a more accurate representation and generalizability to the public. Another limitation is that this research used retrospective self-reports of media behavior and online usage, which is an approach that is frequently criticized as being unreliable and biased. When necessary, the researcher attempted to present this to the audience effectively. This study relied on self-reported measures of usage and perceptions of usage motivations and behaviors, which have the potential to not reflect actual behavior and usage patterns. Further research should use other alternatives in gathering information on on-line media usage.

In order to further understand the existing relationship between SNS personality type and usage, more research should be conducted. It would be beneficial to investigate a different Internet user base, such as Internet newcomers and different age groups or demographics, in order to verify the replicability of these results. Another alternative could include diaries used to record daily Internet use. Another limitation to the current study is that more open-ended questions should have been asked. Also, the way the questions were asked could have skewed the results in that starting with strongly agree and moving to strongly disagree could change participants' responses. Additionally, it would have been beneficial to ask the participants to answer the survey questions as honestly and accurately as possible throughout the survey.

The goal of the current study was to see if a relationship exists between Facebook use and person-ality types in that one personality type would use Facebook more often and for different reasons than the other personality type. Again, the only conclusive finding was that heavier users of Facebook tend to be more extroverted individuals. The current study contributes to an on-going dialogue about the importance of SNS in the relationship between the personality style of users and their usage and behavior. Much still remains to be explored. Methodologically, SNS researchers' ability to make causal claims is limited by a lack of experimental and longitudinal studies. Although the situation is rapidly changing, researchers still have a limited under-standing of who is using these SNS, why, and for what main purposes. Such questions will require large-scale quantitative and qualitative research. Thus, a focus group could be beneficial to gain more qualitative research. The researcher hopes that the current study will help construct a foundation for future investigations of these and other important issues surrounding social network sites.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Facebook Use

1. How much time do you spend on Facebook daily?

      i. Less than 30 minutes
      ii. 30-60 minutes
      iii. 60-90 minutes/ 1-1.5 hours
      iv. 90-120 minutes/ 1.5-2 hours
      v. More than 120 minutes/ 2 hours

2. What is your main purpose of using Facebook this often?

      i. Time-passing entertainment
          (e.g. to overcome boredom; it is habit; it amuses/ entertains me)
      ii. Information
          (e.g. to find/ share information; keep up with interests/ hobbies)
      iii. Relationship development/ companionship
          (e.g. to make new friends; to find people like me)
      iv. Relationship maintenance
          (e.g. to stay in touch with people I see a lot and/or rarely; to make
          plans with friends; to maintain relationships that I value)
      v. Trend-following
          (e.g. because everyone else is doing it; to impress people)

3. How often do you change the content and/ or features of your Facebook profile (e.g. update your status)?

      i. Often/ Almost daily
      ii. Sometimes/ Almost weekly
      iii. Rarely/ Almost monthly
      iv. Never/ Almost yearly
      v. Don't know

Personality Type

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?:
4. Sometimes, I enjoy Facebook (and online) interactions more so than face-to-face interactions (offline).
      i. Strongly disagree
      ii. Disagree
      iii. Undecided/ Neutral
      iv. Agree
      v. Strongly agree

5. I feel I communicate and represent myself better on Facebook (online) than offline (face-to-face) with others.
      i. Strongly disagree
      ii. Disagree
      iii. Undecided/ Neutral
      iv. Agree
      v. Strongly agree

6. I use the Internet and the online world to become the person I'm not offline or in the 'real world'.
    i. Strongly disagree – e.g. I am the same person both online and offline.
    ii. Disagree
    iii. Undecided/ Neutral
    iv. Agree
    v. Strongly agree – e.g. I can be more of myself and/or who I want to be online.

7. Which of the following statements do you most identify with?:

    i. I'm shy but enjoy using Facebook because I am in control of the interactions
    with others.
    ii. I'm somewhat shy and sometimes enjoy using Facebook as an alternative for face-to-face interac-
    tions.
    iii. I'm neither shy nor outgoing and enjoy using Facebook both as an alternative and a supplement for
    face-to-face interactions.
    iv. I'm mostly outgoing and enjoy using Facebook as an outlet to fulfill desire for continuous interper-
    sonal engagement.
    v. I am very outgoing and enjoy using Facebook to add to my offline (face-to-face) interactions.

8. Others would describe me as:

    i. Someone who is reserved and enjoys being alone most of the time.
    ii. Someone who sometimes seems distant and inhibited in face-to-face interactions.
    iii. Someone who is neither shy nor outgoing but enjoyable to be around in face-to-face interactions.
    iv. Someone who is talkative and seeks external face-to-face interactions oftentimes.
    v. Someone who is very outgoing and enjoys being always surrounded by others.

Demographics

9. What is your gender?
    i. Male
    ii. Female

10. What is your class year?
    i. Freshman
    ii. Sophomore
    iii. Junior
    iv. Senior

Appendix B: Data Tables from Survey Monkey

Table 1. Less than 30 Minutes Daily on Facebook- Personality Type Question 4

Which of the following statements do you most identify with?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I'm shy but enjoy using Facebook because I am in control of the interactions with others.	2.0%	2
I'm somewhat shy and sometimes enjoy using Facebook as an alternative for face-to-face interactions.	6.9%	7
I'm neither shy nor outgoing and enjoy using Facebook both as an alternative and a supplement for face-to-face interactions.	30.7%	31
I'm mostly outgoing and enjoy using Facebook as an outlet to fulfill desire for continuous interpersonal engagement.	28.7%	29
I am very outgoing and enjoy using Facebook to add to my offline (face-to-face) interactions.	31.7%	32
Why?		15
answered question		101

Table 2. More Than 120 Minutes Daily on Facebook- Personality Type Question 4

Which of the following statements do you most identify with?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I'm shy but enjoy using Facebook because I am in control of the interactions with others.	4.8%	2
I'm somewhat shy and sometimes enjoy using Facebook as an alternative for face-to-face interactions.	11.9%	5
I'm neither shy nor outgoing and enjoy using Facebook both as an alternative and a supplement for face-to-face interactions.	21.4%	9
I'm mostly outgoing and enjoy using Facebook as an outlet to fulfill desire for continuous interpersonal engagement.	28.6%	12
I am very outgoing and enjoy using Facebook to add to my offline (face-to-face) interactions.	33.3%	14
Why?		8
answered question		42

Table 3: Less Than 30 Minutes Daily on Facebook- Personality Type Question 5

Others would describe me as . . .		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Someone who is reserved and enjoys being alone most of the time.	4.0%	4
Someone who sometimes seems distant and inhibited in face-to-face interactions.	3.0%	3
Someone who is neither shy nor outgoing but enjoyable to be around in face-to-face interactions.	38.6%	39
Someone who is talkative and seeks external face-to-face interactions oftentimes.	34.7%	35
Someone who is very outgoing and enjoys being always surrounded by others.	19.8%	20
Why?		12
answered question		101

Table 4. More Than 120 Minutes Daily on Facebook- Personality Type Question 5

Others would describe me as . . .		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Someone who is reserved and enjoys being alone most of the time.	0.0%	0
Someone who sometimes seems distant and inhibited in face-to-face interactions.	7.1%	3
Someone who is neither shy nor outgoing but enjoyable to be around in face-to-face interactions.	31.0%	13
Someone who is talkative and seeks external face-to-face interactions oftentimes.	35.7%	15
Someone who is very outgoing and enjoys being always surrounded by others.	26.2%	11
Why?		8
answered question		42