SELFIE: A NEW WAY OF SELF-EXPLORATION

*B. Ghosal[1] and N.Manna[2]

[1]Department of Sociology, Midnapore College (Autonomous), Midnapore, WB, India
[2]Department of Education, Midnapore College (Autonomous), Midnapore, WB, India
banashreeghosal5@gmail.com, niranjanmanna.edu@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

A selfie is a type of self-portrait photography, typically taken with a handheld digital camera or camera phone. Selfies are often associated with social networking, like Instagram, Facebook. Smartphones have become a necessary evil in our lives and selfies have become the innovative technological obsession in the youth. Selfie refers to self-portraiture which predominantly takes the form of a photograph taken by oneself on a smartphone or webcam. The whole purpose behind taking a selfie is to show your mood and expression while you are doing or asked to do something. As an example, when you are visiting a famous landmark, you want to capture a memory and store it on your computers, hard disks, etc. Selfies are popular simply because camera-equipped cell phones have become so readily available to the masses at affordable prices. Some special apps have been also developed for smartphones for better selfies. Selfie accessories like, selfie stick allows people to take selfies more easily. The objective of this study is to analyze the attitudes towards selfie between adolescents.

Keywords: Adolescents, Selfie, Technology, Social network.

1. Introduction

The consumer society imposes on contemporary subjects the communication and creation of immediacy and ephemeral lifestyles, marked by the logic of individualism and the aesthetic value of everyday life. Within the past decade, social networking has become a hugely popular form of online communication, especially among people (Perloff, 2014). Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat are among the most widely used social media platforms available and can be accessed via computer, smartphone, computer tablet, and through other forms of technology (Perloff, 2014). In comparison to conventional mass media, social media are interactive, allowing individuals to create their profiles and share information and photos with users on their social network (Stefanone, 2011). Smartphones are no longer a communication device but serve as a substitute for the home computer and have internet-related access as well as a camera that with its high resolution(Chiu SI, 2014). 'Selfie'- the word introduced in 2013 has become a household name and is even featured in the Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford Dictionary, 2013). Oxford dictionary proclaimed selfie the word of the year in 2013, prompting lots of think pieces to read on smartphones and handwringing about narcissism, technology. There are a group of computer scientists, media theorists – have launched selfie city, a website answers about how people pose, smile in selfies around the world.

Many studies conducted with the thinking of individual psychological effects of selfies. In this study, the digital culture will be examined with sociological analysis. It will try to evaluate the sociological dimensions of selfies, shared publicly by most widely followed in Instagram. Everyone is a photographer now. No longer called upon only for special occasions, popular photography – epitomized by selfie has rapidly become a cultural practice of the everyday. Selfies are a compelling and proliferating phenomenon in our contemporary popular and visual culture, shifting boundaries of privacy and their wider impact on other social and cultural fields.

2. Literature Review

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) has confirmed taking 'Selfies' is a mental disorder, they have called it 'Selfitis'. A mental disorder is an inflammation of one's ego. APA has also defined it as an "obsessive-compulsive desire" to take pictures of oneself and post them on social media. According to,Toma and Hancock (2010), self-presentation involves "adjusting and editing the self during social interactions to create a desired impression on the audience". Now a day new selfie clicking

apps brought to light, using color, photoshopping to make body part thinner (Anderson, Fagan, 2012). It also has been found that individuals who desire to boost their self-esteem upload selfie more frequently mostly women aged 16 to 25 (Poudert et al. 2016). This is because women are more look and body concern than men. Women typically feel dissatisfaction with their looks, body, appearance (Tiggemann and Miller, 2010).

2.1 Reflection of Narcissism

Narcissism personality is an exaggerated feeling of self-importance an excessive need for admiration the behavior typically begins by early adulthood. According to, AshisNandy (2009), just because India is a third world country, somehow narcissism and desperations will surely come on the self of what Nandycalled, 'the globalized middle class'. As an example, in the 21st century, a big percentage of youth copied celebrities' lifestyle, through these selfies.

The early time when photos were 'clicked' by looking through the lenses there was a question of altruism in that action, there was self-sacrifice of the photographers. Now selfie has stopped that tradition. Selfie is like a mirror where one can see him or herself. In the postmodern context, communication exercises the power of organization and social mediation, promoting symbolic exchanges and establishing values among which can maintain freedom, happiness, individualism, pleasure, "Self-preservation" and "psychic survival" – which can be called as the *new visualculture of narcissism.*

3. Methodology

The paper has been attempted to explain the value and sense of self-worth and narcissism by uploading selfies to social media and Instagram. This study has focused on how females and their perceptions of themselves and their physical appearance can be affected by uploading selfies.

Sampling has been done between the students of age between 17 to 22 years of a reputed college of Midnapore; originally the sample size was 100 participants. Here convenient sampling was done. The objective of the paper is to explore the narcissism through the contemporary fashion self – portrait- selfie. The sample employed in this research encompasses undergraduate students. Invitations to complete the survey questionnaire were circulated on social media sites, including Facebook, Instagram, What's app. Data were collected using a direct questionnaire method. The questionnaire has been included a socio-demographic profile of each individual, using different types of the selfie, frequency of taking it. The participants were assured that the identity will not be revealed. There are also some statements given by the respondents like "I find myself alienated without posting a selfie in social networking sights".

3.1 Hypothesis

H_0: There is no significant relationship between gender and selfie taking.
H_1: There is significant relationship between gender and selfie taking.
(Females will be in the high rank of taking selfies)

3.2 Scale used for addiction

Addiction was evaluated using a simple version of the ten items Likert scale, based on questions (5 – strongly agree, 4 – agree, 3 – neutral, disagree – 2, strongly disagree – 1). And averaged scale of ten questions for each respondent were represented as addicted level, represented as (41 -50 –addicted, 31 – 40 – moderate, 21 – 30 – mild, less than that normal).

3.3 Results

From all ten questions, the most important five ones by which aspect of an individual's addiction revealed are discussed here. The majority of them take a selfie for fun. They think a selfie is different from any other image because it captures the real moment of a situation, without delay and wait.

Table; 1)   Socio-demographic profile.

	Variable	Percentage (%)
AGE	17 to 19	82
	20 to 22	18
GENDER	Female	55
	Male	45
FAMILY	Joint	22
	Nuclear	78
STATUS	I	18
	II	82

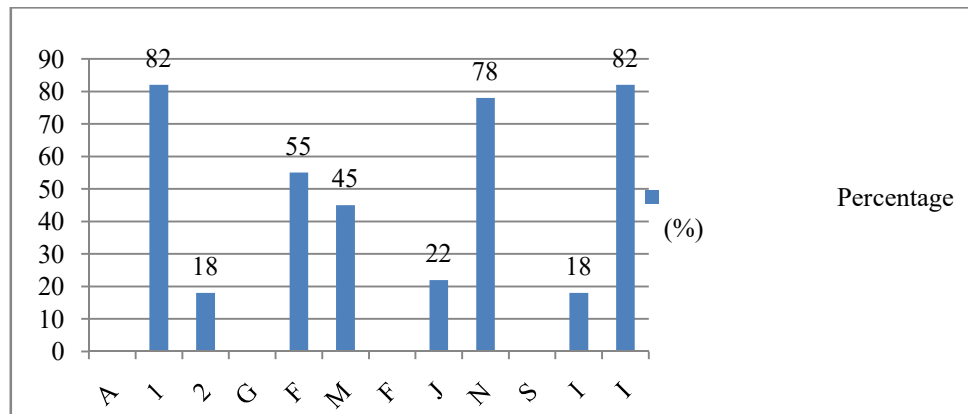### Fig; 1)   Socio-demographic profile

Table 1. Shows that, there are 82 students' aged 17 to 19 and 18 students aged 20 to 22. Gender wise numbers of female students are 55 and males are 45. Family background, most of them are from the middle class and nuclear family.

Table. 2) Selfie taking addiction

| Variable (Item Wise)		Percentage
How many selfies do you take in a week?	**1 to 5 times**	**43**
	6 to 10 times	**23**
	More than above	**15**
	None	**19**
Main reason	Fun	40
	Special moment	39
	Special outfit	07
	Get together	02
	To show good	04
	Others	08
Group Selfie	**Never**	**40**
	Rare	**29**
	Sometimes	**19**
	Often	**10**
	Very often	**02**
Looking after Selfie post	Change makeup	12
	Better appearance	34
	Share	32
	Ignore	22
Do you feel happy by it	**Get in touch**	**52**
	Confidence	**22**
	How I am for others	**15**
	To show everyone	**11**

Fig.2: - <u>Selfie taking addiction</u>
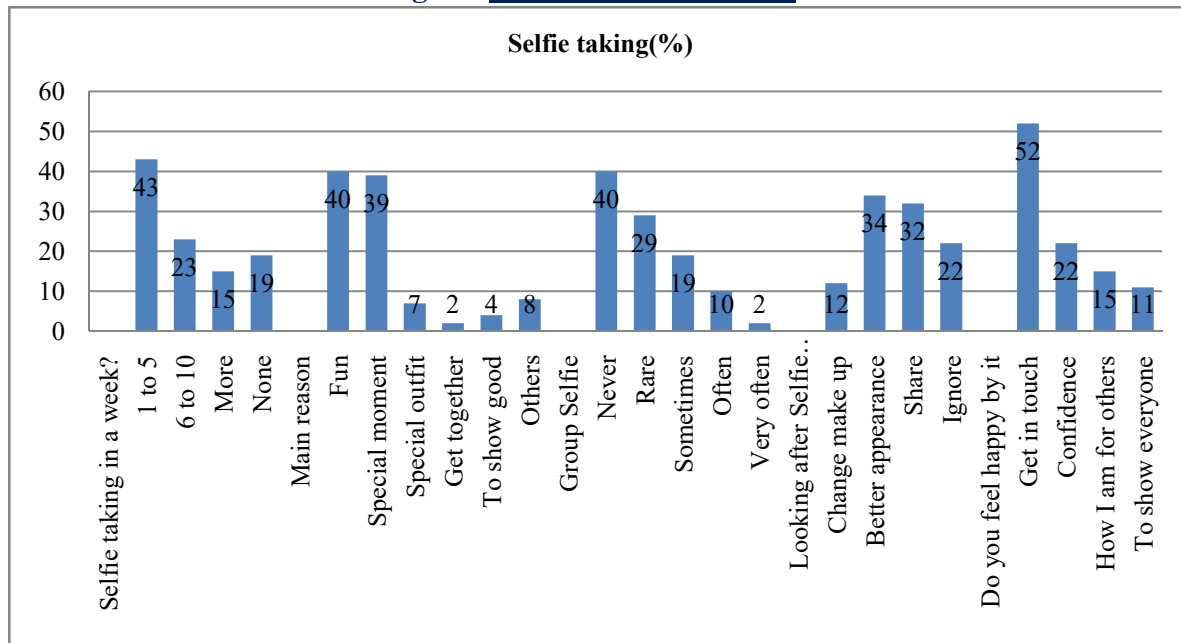
Table .2. shows that selfie-taking satisfaction comes when they can feel they are in touch with everyone from different places. They can share their joy with visualization from through these selfies. The percentage 'get in touch' is 52%. That means, selfies through social networking sights are one kind of way to show people that 'what are their plans', 'what are they doing now a day'. And public opinions also matters, because here percentage 'better appearance'(34%) is showing in table 2, that they also change their appearance after any negative comments. Selfies are one kind of application aiming at building online communities of people, who share an interest. Selfie is also one way of personal photography and staying connected with them who have lost.

Table 3. Distribution of students according to types of selfie shot taken –

Gender	Face shot	Full body	Surroundings selfie	Groupselfie	Total
Male	12	20	8	5	45
Female	31	9	5	10	55

Chi square(x^2) = 14(approx.), df = 3, P = 0.05(where Chi square tabulated value = 7.815)

Table 3: shows there is a significant relation between selfie shot was taken and gender. Chi-square test proved that females are more selfie prone than males. Null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted.

4. Findings

The study regarding selfie-taking in adolescents brought some interesting findings. The students in my study have a positive outlook toward the concept selfie, they are used to it. A big percentage of them copied famous Bollywood celebrities' selfie posts. Earlier photos were clicked by others (cameraman); there was a matter of sacrifice of that member because that person stands on distance with the camera to click the photo. Now selfie has stopped that tradition merely. The selfie has become a mirror one can see own face on the front camera of a smartphone. There are so many smartphones in the market with a high potential selfie camera. Selfie sticks are also there to click group photograph. High level flashed mobiles are also in the market, to save crystal clear selfie moment. The silent photograph becomes a place for comment by

posting it through a selfie. After becoming an object self becomes there dispersed. The private information, private matters of one's life become their public commentary place. It is also hoped by the person who posted it, that people will give their comments on their display picture, profile picture or posts.

5. Discussion

The "selfie", self-image is important and not always in a narcissistic way. It's how we define ourselves and present it for others to see. The opinion of others has been a part of identity development for more than a century. Bourdieu (2012) might understand our reaction as a form of cultural or professional "distinction", photography has long stopped being the symbol of elites, but it has been placed within social networking sights. Now selfie has become a psychological concept "looking glass self" that suggests, we develop our sense of self-based on the perception of others, especially with those we interact with. Symbolic interaction theory proposed by George Herbert Mead and Charles Horton Cooley(Ritzer, 2020) where the idea of looking glass self can be communicated through images that selfie evokes. In the time clicking selfie, the person becomes an object and treats himself/herself as own creativity.

The selfies are also a gendered form. In each of the social network platform, more selfies are from women (Waskul, 2015). According to the girls of college from which I collected my data,

this is a concept of presentation of self. As Erving Goffman explained in his work "dramaturgical analysis"[1], selfies are also like a presentation of different roles in social media platforms. In social media people also get comments from users of that, as in a theater performers get from the audience. Selfies are ubiquitous and abundant. People appear to love representing themselves in contemporary popular culture. Not even good moments, people also share selfies of their suffering events (like hospitalized situations, injuries, home quarantine). The selfie has become a new cultural practice; the new visual World has been discovered. Through which one can interact without verbal communication, with a visual appearance from distance.

6. Conclusion

The image these days is an endless youth stretching. These 'young' bodies become constructed in social media by their selfie posts. The emphasis on the body beautiful has a far greater effect on women than men. Young women have always been concerned with their physical appearance (one reflection of the gender socialization process of our Indian society). How Dorothy Smith's analyzedthat femininity is associated with clothes, images, beauty (Goffman, 1977). That's why, hopefully posting selfies have been assumed as gender process, typically engaging girls and women in it.

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