NARCISSIM AND PROSOCIAL MOTIVATION IN SOCIAL NETWORKS USERS

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ABSTRACT

Social media use is becoming more common between the different generations all over the world. There are many researches that relate this growing use of social networks to different psychological constructs. The present investigation, with a study made on one of the most popular social networks, Instagram, wanted to see the relationship between the prosocial motivation in the use of social networks with the levels of narcissism of the participants.

INTRODUCTION:

According to the 2018 report made by the We Are Social and Hootsuite agency the number of social networking users worldwide is 3,196 billion with a 13% increase each year, 64% of these users are of ages between 16 and 64 years old. In the specific case of Spain, 58% of the population is a social networks user (We Are Social, 2018). Due to this important growth in the use of social networks worldwide, there has also been a great increase in research that seeks to relate that growth to concepts and psychological aspects. For example, according to few investigations, the increasing use of social media has been linked to the appearance of anxiety and depression in their users. Another concept that has been linked to social networks is self-esteem (Burrow, 2017). This is because social networks are platforms of constant interaction where our actions get an immediate feedback from those who are said to be our *"friends"* or *"followers"*. On the other hand, a meta-analysis carried out in 2008 in the United States and which covers a sample of 16,475 participants responding to the NPI-40, states that levels of narcissism have increased over the years (Twenge, 2008). Following with this data, the present investigation aims to see the relationship that have high levels of narcissism with prosocial behavior in social networks, which according to another investigation of 2008 is not always seen as a truly altruistic behavior (Batson, 2008) . Thus, by conducting our Instagram research, we start from the following two hypotheses: Participants with high narcissim levels will be paying more attention to the feedback they receive in their accounts and will have a greater prosocial motivation, while users with lower scores on narcissism will be less sensitive to the feedback and will have less prosocial motivation.

METHOD:

Sample:

A total of 50 people (38% men, 62% women) have participated in this instagram research.

Design:

Phase 1:

This phase has been carried out via Instagram, the third most used social network worldwide and one of the most popular among the young population for recreational purposes.
The 50 participants had to follow 2 Instagram accounts during a month (@Joansight89 and @Paradiseonearth212), which were created for this research. @Paradiseonearth212, behaved like an active follower who gave a 'like' to all the publications that the participants uploaded during the research, while @ joansigh89 was a follower of the participants, but didn't give any 'like'. In addition, both accounts raised a total of 7 photos during that period of interaction with the participants.

Phase 2:

After the month of interaction, the participants answered an on-line survey, through the Google Forms platform, with questions about the use they give to social networks, particularly at instagram. Within this survey they also answered the NPI-16, adaptation of the narcissism questionnaire NPI-40 and commonly used to measure this construct.

RESULTS:

When analysing the data, the difference in the likes of each one of the accounts proposed for the investigation was calculated (r = 0.103). Following a regression model, the ANOVA indicates that the difference between the likes received is explained in the first place by the extent to which the participants consider the user that has uploaded the publication when they give a like (r= 0.124) but the significance of such difference increases when is also considered the scores in the NPI-16 (r= 0.211).
Therefore, although we could say that the level of narcissism helps explain prosocial motivation in social networks, these results are not enough to confirm the initial hypotheses.

DISCUSION:

In this research has been indicated that levels of narcissism can be part of the explanation for a prosociall motivation in social networks. Furthermore, some of the most significant data obtained reveals that most of the participants have claimed to take into account which user has uploaded the publication when they give a like. Such data has also been shown as indicative of prosocial behaviour. This means that our prosocial behaviour on social media is not only determined by what really awakens our interest, but also we may be looking for an ultimate goal that implies our own benefit.

It is clear that the use of social media is increasingly present in our lives and, that its possible interference in our lives' development will be the subject of a large number of studies in the future. In a society that is more and more connected to the rest of the world while at the same time is getting more individualistic, it is crucial to analyse which aspects drive us to create and maintain these virtual relationships as well as the rewarding value that they have within our social development. This research aimed to provide with a small contribution within this vast network of social relationships and their characteristics, hoping to establish a starting point for a line of research which has a broader sample.

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