www.irbas.academyirmbr.com July 2021
International Review of Basic and Applied Sciences Vol. 9 Issue.3

New Media and Self-Presentation During Covid-19 Pandemic: A Uses and Gratification Approach

NAZMINE
Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Communication Studies,
Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan.

HANNAN KHAN TAREEN
PhD Scholar, Associate Lecturer, Department of Media Studies,
Islamia UniversityBahawalpur, Pakistan.
Email: Hannankhan.tareen@iub.edu.pk

TAYYABA LATIF
PhD Scholar, Associate Lecturer, Department of Media Studies,
Islamia UniversityBahawalpur, Pakistan.
Email: tayyabalatifch@iub.edu.pk

Dr. MANAN KHAN TAREEN
Research Scholar, Department of Communication Studies,
Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan.

Abstract

Covid -19 pandemic attracts the attentions of the researchers worldwide to explore the impact of Covid-19 on different sphere of human's lives. Similarly, the trend of self presentation on new media was also affected by covid-19.It leads people to think in a particular way and it is intended to maintain, manipulate and adjust an image of oneself. Purpose of this study was to examine the relation between new media and self-presentation during covid-19 pandemic. Quantitative research methodology was used and with the help of survey 100 respondents were selected, from social sciences departments of Bahaddudin Zakariya University as a sample of the study through conveniencesampling technique. Pearson's correlation and regression analysis was applied to analyze the correlations between variables. The results indicated that there was a significant relation found between self-presentation and new media during covid -19 pandemic. Majority of the students shifts towards online self presentation during covid-19 for attaining desired image of oneself.

Keywords: *New Media, Self-presentation, Covid-19, Desired Image.*

Introduction

With the passage of timetechnological opportunities to selectively represent yourself online are increasing day by day. Communication and way of communication plays vital role in conveying ideas and helps in building the societies. Communication transfers the ideas and information through a medium. It builds the human relations and community development by interactive patterns.Moreover, communication also changes the way by which individuals/people are building relationships andgetting access in to the social world. Now a days, standards of communication has been turned from old media (letters, radio, television, newspaper and telephones) to new media (social networking sites, mobile phones) (Flew, 2002). Now a day's people usually desire to use new media and social networking sites to ease their lives and satisfy the different needs. New media relates to a networking mechanism where media channels are

accessed through the Internet and utilized to generate content, change content and exchange knowledge via the usage of a digital computer.

New media refers to a networking mechanism where media channels are retrieved through the use of Internet to generate content, change content and exchange information via the use of a digital computer. Today's younger generation are growing up as important part of the Internet Generation and their access to emerging technology become a catalyst for social change. However, the revolution as described by Holmes and Gardner (2011) would only be feasible if the digital media was used for the correct reason. It is a communication mechanism used to develop, change and exchange information. Email, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Text Messages, Facebook, Blogs, Snapchat and so on are all new media. The new media is simply a fusion in technologies.

Gauntlet (2008) clarified that "media and communication are the cultural components of modern life". The success behind any kind of communication is the medium which isused to make the method more efficient.Mikle and Young (2012) noted that "the media are no longer what we watch, listen to or read—the media are now what we do' 'The access to social networking sites and process of communication has become more faster and easier just because of Information and Communication Technologies(ICTs) as they improve the process of communication (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).

New media is the mixture of information and ideas related to social, political and cultural sphere by the advancement of technology while Mass Media is described as the process of communication that include dissemination of information at a larger scale.In the early phases of researches attention have been diverted to identityformation in the online world, designated as online "self-presentation". The phenomenon of Self-presentation defined as "the performance of actions that symbolically communicate information about the self to others**"** (Schlenker,2003). Self-presentation is the meaning making process about the self, by collecting specific gestures which may carry symbolic meanings. Such symbolic meanings and gestures influence the responses of audience and help self-presentation goals. (Belk 1988). Leary defines it as "the process by which people convey to others that they are a certain kind of person or possess certain characteristics" (Leary,1996). Self-presentation in this era of social media triggers various features of how to present oneself and how to be perceived online. Social media participants have the freedom to display according to their choice. This selective form of presentation includes "impression management" and "selective disclosure of personal details designed to present an idealized self" (Hogan, 2010).

Self Presentation during COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has completely altered the process of communication with each other . In several countries , people have been advised to be socially distant. (Williams, 2020). This modification was rapid, with some governments instructions and then instantaneously insisting that people to stay at home (Kent, 2020). Quarantine has been expanded to several months, and the guidelines on social distance continue to be changing with passage of time (Kamin, 2020). People around the world have improved the transition to social distance by investing more time online. Social networking sites have seen a 61 percent rise in use as users use platforms to remain linked to families, friends, and colleagues (Holmes, 2020).

Social media channels are allowing the users to easily and selectively interact with each other and gets benefit from user generated content (Carr& Hayes, 2015). During the lock down people were limited to their homes and they mostly spent time on new media sites for different reasons this research study aims to find out the needs of users that the gratify through self presentation during COVID-19.

Problem Statement

Emerging trends of new media grabs the attention of users towards itself and it is giving them a platform where they can present their self according to their own choice and comfort. Self-presentations turn out to be more essential when people are staying at home during lock down and connecting with each other through the use of new media. without any kind of restriction. Through self presentation people want to attain something, such as developing or enhancing relationships, escaping from stress , presenting a positive New media give the opportunity to the uses to present their self online according to their own choice image online or getting sympathy. It is consider important for the process of online communication that we take care of how we look for fulling our specific needs. Excessive self presentation on new media may lead towards some negative effects as well which the new media users are not understanding. When we think about the use of new media for self-presentation there comes a point in our mind that why the users are using new media for self-presentation what are the motives or needs they are gratifying by the use of new media..

This reach study helps to find out the different factors that boost the phenomenon of self presentation through the use of multiple new media platforms. There is limited research studies conducted for investigating the phenomenon of self presentation that how people present themselves online in order to attain their needs on new media during Covid 19 pandemic. Furthermore, the empirical research studies on self-presentation was mainly found in Western countries. Therefore, this study aims to examine the situation about New media and Self presentation within the context of Pakistani society specifically focused on university students because of COVID-19 they were confined to their homes and using new media for every type of communication including online education and online self presentation as well.

Significance of the Study

This study was proposed because much of the previous research has focused on addiction and general self-presentation. However, there has been a slight shift in self-presentation phenomenon which led to presentation of self specifically through photographs. This study would investigate how students present their selves through self-presentation to attain specific needs . This study may leads towards the understanding of different behaviors regarding and behind self-presentation phenomena. This study would allow individuals to understand the self-presentation on new media during COVID-19. Determining motive for self-presentation will help the researcher to understand whether the user is satisfied with their real self or not . By using the uses and gratifications perspective the researcher determines what needs are required to be fulfilled and what motives need to be satisfied with online self presentation. This research will provide new horizon to analyze the self-presentation phenomenon . This study paves out the way for researcher to conduct more studies related to this topic.

Objectives

Every research has some goals and objectives on which all research work depends. Following are the main objectives of this research study.

- To highlight the difference between pre and post effects of covid 19 on self presentation.
- To explore the purpose behind using the new media for self-presentation during Covid-19.

Literature Review

Literature review offers the preview of the relevant studies which could include the various scopes of the topic of current study. It enables a researcher to extend and elaborate the former studies gaps through intellectual insights into theoretical frame work, research methods and results of the previous work. New

media have provided a new outlook to people about their social life. As Wellman (2001), argues that Internet has shifted the society to a network-based society. As quoted by DiMaggio 2001, with time Internet keeps introducing new methods of interaction.

Chen and Kim (2013), did a survey of 1044 students. They established that privacy concerns do not limit people from using social media which the use in an enthralling manner. Their article concluded that "Purposive value, self-discovery, entertainment value, social enhancement, and maintaining interpersonal connectivity are the key values (or needs) that are widely adopted to determine the use of virtual communities". According to researcher "a person imagines how she or he appears to another person, this process contributes to the growth of his or her self". The findings concerning this role of users expectation is known as looking-glass self-concept. Moreover, self-esteem of people seem get affected while using social media.

According to Leary 1996, "emotions are not only something internal they need to be communicated to others, through emotional expressions we can influence other's impressions of us". Behaviors like raising voice. Such spontaneous expressions have impact on others. Which means these are the cues of self-presentation. "When people are angry they often show it clearly.

Contemporary studies has anticipated the gestures and visibility of narcissism on Social networking websites. In justifications for Facebook usage and narcissism Bibby (2008),examined both narcissism and extraversion on Facebook and found that narcissists use Facebook to enjoy the attractive exhibitionistic platform of social media to avail leisure interests.

Buffardi and Campbell (2008) stated in their work that social media websites provides full control over self-presentation and gives space to maintain meaningless relationships just to satisfy narcissistic desires. They identified "narcissists" had more wall-posts and Facebook friends. Relating to this researchers states that to affirm the exaggerated beliefs narcissists may have carefully chosen more attractive photos of themselves.

Walther 2001, stated that "One of the reasons why self-presentation on social networking sites may be different from face-to-face is that online one may inspect, edit and revise". It is a well-known fact that Self-presentation is a substantial factor of Facebook. Comprehending phenomena of online self-presentation may help individuals to understand other Social and psychological phenomena for example "well-being, self-esteem, identity formation and social anxiety".

Kosanovic 2006, states that "it is quite possible that online self-presentation affects offline identity formation" consequently, it can be assumed that users self-concept is shaped on the internet and users create an ideal self instead of a realistic self. "Most Facebook users believe that those who see their profile pages the most are members of their offline social networks". (Ellison, Steinfield& Lampe, 2007). Social networking participants present ideal sides of their selves on social networking websites through posting photographs. Researchers have stressed upon the significance of framework in the identity-formation process. Identity formation process change the way people interact with their social environment.

Erikson (1968), described the identity development as "a series of actions over time which Individuals draw on the values, beliefs, and signals embedded in their social contexts to shape their identities". Valkenburg and Peter (2011), recorded three surveys to find out the relationship between use of internet use and individuals self-concept clarity. He summed up his study with statement that "Information and communication technologies have given rise to many new platforms, space and time for adolescents to express and manipulate their identities".

Smith & Hung, 2010 defined Self-concept as "beliefs and thoughts about the self, is learned and amended over time as new information about the self is absorbed and new self-schemata are formed".All the previous work and evidences depicts a confused picture of the relationship between internet use and individual sense of identity.Valkenburg and Peter (2011), described the sense of identity as "online activities provide opportunities to manipulate their identities to receive overwhelming feedback and support from others". Internet technologies have helped out the users to receive spontaneous social feedback. Such feedback which affects how individuals view themselves and make them cautious.

Siegle 2011, stated that "Adolescents have always regarded peers to disprove or validate socializing behaviors when developing their self-concepts" and Chances for individualism and self-authentication may increase the self-concept. Wilcox and Stephen (2012), determined that social media platforms has authority to influence the users because the users show a desired identity-perception to others on social media and its improve their profile between the Facebook friends.

Theoretical Framework

Uses and Gratification Approach

According toUses and gratification theory the media users are active in selecting the media which they prefer to gratify their needs, as compared to the audience which is passively effected by media (Katz et al., 1973). Although in the late 1950s and early 1960s, uses and gratification theory cannot overlook the concept of individuality presented by new media technologies in computer-mediated communication. Users of internet are empowered by choice, with entire control over creation and sharing of information. They can manage and control their online self, as well as determine how much time to spend online and which internet site they prefer(Ruggiero, 2000). In other words, we can say that audiences are more active than ever on internet in respect of selection of media and sharing of information.Previous research studies using the framework of Uses and gratification theory have offered in-depth understanding of different motives behind the use of media . According to Malik, Dhir, and Nieminen (2016), attention seeking, habit, information sharing, and social influencewere the basic gratifications of the users for posting photos on Facebook. Facebook is mainly used for the purpose of entertainment, identity seeking ,socializing, and information sharing (Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009).Uses and gratifications theory presents comprehensive understanding of the social, physical, and emotional gratifications that users obtain by their own choice.

In the age of digital communication, New mediarelativelyoffers new ways of communication technology as compared to others while uses and gratifications theory permits the researchers to analyze the technological gratifications that users obtain by the use of digital technologies. Different research studies highlights that in contrast to other types of media level of social gratifications by the use of internet is higher. The popularity of self presentation through the use of new media still requires much more exploration for finding out the motivation behind the phenomenon. Sung, Lee, Kim, and Choi (2016) identified different gratifications in the context of selfie posting that include attention seeking, communication, archiving, and entertainment by using uses and gratification framework. Further research is required to determine the motives of self presentation that encourage the users to present their self online . This research study aims to highlight the different motives for self-presentation during covid 19 pandemic by using uses and gratifications approach.

Hypotheses

1. There is correlation among new media and self-presentation during covid-19.
2. Self presentation on new media during covid 19 increase the trend of attaining desired image of oneself.

Research Questions

1. What is the difference between pre and post covid 19 self presentation
2. What is the purpose of using new media for self-presentation during COVID-19 pandemic ?

Methodology

Research Design

Quantitative research approach is used to investigate the phenomena of new media and self-presentation during COVID-19 pandemic .Survey method was used to the get the data for the analysis of new media and self-presentation .Questionnaire was formulated for collecting the data. Literature review from the previous researches and objectives of the study helped to develop the question statements. Five point Likert scale has been used for measuring the response of respondents.

Population of the Study

Population of the research study comprises the students from social science department of BahauddinZakariya University Multan. During the Covid-19 majority shifts towards the use of new media for different purpose and students comprises the largest part of society who use new media for online education and other online activities .Generally it is the vision of majority that University students use new media regularly like mobile phone, laptops, internet social media etc. for different needs So, all the students that were currently enrolled in BahauddinZakariya University Multan were the population of the study.

Sample Size

100 students from the university on equal representation of male and female were selected as a sample for the research .

Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling technique was used for selecting the sample.

Data Collection and Data Analysis:

For the collection of data pre-constructed close ended questionnaire based on the previous literature and objectives of the current research study will be used for gathering the responses from the respondents. Data obtained from the survey will be analyzed through the use of SPSS software and results of the study will be presented in the form of tables.

Data Analysis and interpretations

Hypothesis testing

In order to test the Hypothesis 1, the Pearson correlation test was applied to examine the relationship among new media and self-presentation during covid-19 The results generated, indicate that there was a significant and positive correlation between self-presentation and new media during covid-19 ($r = .546$, $p < .001$).

H1: There is a correlation among new media and self-presentation during covid 19.

Table No 1

		NEWMEDIA	SELFPRESENTATION
NEWMEDIA	Pearson Correlation	1	.546**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
SELFPRESENTATION	Pearson Correlation	.546**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

H2: Self presentation on new media during covid 19 increase the trend of attaining desired image of oneself

Table No 2

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.271	.169		1.602	.112
	SELFPRESENTATION	.921	.085	.740	10.875	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Desiredimage

Multiple regression was conducted to investigate the relationship between self presentation and and attaining desired image. Test demonstrated that self presentation (β = .740, p >05) increase the trend attaining desired image of during covid-19.

Findings of the Study

Drawing on uses and gratification approach , this study sought to analyze the trend of self presentation on new media during covid-19 pandemic. As self-presentation through photographs on new media is very populargesture. It is apparently easier and less risky to present a glorified unreal image on a social networking site as compared to real life; and accordingly it affects the personality of users. This digital age has brought various ways of communication online and to present oneself in different ways. This study specifically explores about the pre and post trend of self presentation during covid -19 with the help of various factors like judgment anxiety, attention seeking and desired image associated with online self-presentation.

Self-presentation is a fundamental element of everyone's life these days. The main goal of this research study is to investigate for what purposes students are engaged in self-presentation on new media during covid-19 pandemic with the help of uses and gratification approach. Findings of the study revealed that majority of the students used new media for representation during covid-19 and trend of self presentation during covid situation has been increased among the students. Furthermore, results of the study indicates that majority of the students said Excessive use of new media enhance their self presentation and self-promotion during covid-19. They were more involved in self prestation on new media during covid 19-as compared to the pre covid situation. Findings of the study exposed that self presentation on new media helps the students to attain the desired image of their self on new media and they feel confident about their image on new media during covid-19 pandemic.

Discussion

Findings from the current research study highlights that the one cannot neglect the impact and consequences of covid-19 pandemic on online self presentation. Self presentation through the use of new media provide a platform to the users to present their self according to their own desire during covid-19 and this thing lead towards the concept of desired self or desired image that one actually want to portray in front of others for getting positive admiration and social support.. Furthermore, for attaining the desired image of oneself and for getting compliments from other during covid-19 pandemic the users use different kind of filters that enhance their features and beauty but on the same side this thing also lead the user to build and admire their fake image or identity of their self rather than accepting their real self. During covid-19 pandemic new media plays a very vital role in increasing the trend of self presentation. When everybody was bound to stay at home and they have no other way to socially interact with others and to kill their time new media provide them with a platform to interact with others and this thing boost the trend of self presentation among the users.

References

Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, andscholarship. *Journal of computer-mediated Communication*, *13*(1), 210-230.

Buffardi, L. E., & Campbell, W. K. (2008). Narcissism and social networking web sites. *Personality and social psychology bulletin*, *34*(10), 1303-1314

Carr, C. T., & Hayes, R. A. (2015). Social media: Defining, developing, and divining. *Atlantic journal of communication*, *23*(1), 46-65.

Chen, H. T., & Kim, Y. (2013). Problematic use of social network sites: The interactive relationship between gratifications sought and privacy concerns. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, *16*(11), 806-812.

Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2007). The benefits of Facebook "friends:" Social capital and college students' use of online social network sites. *Journal of computer-mediated communication*, *12*(4), 1143-1168.

Flew, T. (2002). New media: An introduction (1st ed.). Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Guardian June 2. https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/jun/02/dontstand-

Guardian June 2. https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/jun/02/dontstand-so-close-to-me-the-new-rules-of-social-distancing,

Holmes, R. (2020). Is COVID-19 social media's levelling up moment? Forbes April 24. https://www.forbes.com/sites/ryanholmes/2020/04/24/is-covid-19-social-mediaslevelling-up-moment/#32e022256c60

Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., &Gurevitch, M. (1973-1974, Winter). Uses and gratifications

Kent, J. (2020). COVID-19 data shows how social distancing impacts virus spread. Health IT Analytics June 2

Kowalski, R. M., & Leary, M. R. (1990). Strategic self-presentation and the avoidance of aversive events: Antecedents and consequences of self-enhancement and self-depreciation. *Journal of experimental social psychology*, *26*(4), 322-336.

Leary, M. R., Landel, J. L., & Patton, K. M. (1996). The motivated expression of embarrassment following a self-presentational predicament. *Journal of Personality*, *64*(3), 619-636.

Leary, M. R., Tchividijian, L. R., &Kraxberger, B. E. (1994). Self-presentation can be hazardous to your health: Impression management and health risk. *Health Psychology*, *13*(6), 461.

Malik, A., Dhir, A., & Nieminen, M. (2016). Uses and gratifications of digital photo sharing on Facebook. *Telematics and Informatics*, *33*(1), 129-138

Siegle, D. (2011). Facing Facebook: A guide for nonteens. *Gifted Child Today*, *34*(2), 14-19.

Snell, W. E., Miller, R. S., & Belk, S. S. (1988). Development of the emotional self-disclosure scale. *Sex Roles*, *18*(1-2), 59-73.

Sung, Y., Lee, J., Kim, E., & Choi, S. M. (2016). Why we post selfies: understanding motivations for posting pictures of oneself. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 97, 260-265.

Tareen, Manan Khan, et al. (2021). "Measuring the Impact of Audio/Visual Aids on Learning Process: A Case Study of South Punjab" Journal of Peace, Development and Communication, vol. Volume 5, no. Issue 1, 2021, pp. 163-175, https://doi.org/10.36968/JPDC-V05-I01-15

Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2011). Online communication among adolescents: An integrated model of its attraction, opportunities, and risks. *Journal of adolescent health*, *48*(2), 121-127.

Walther, J. B., Slovacek, C. L., & Tidwell, L. C. (2001). Is a picture worth a thousand words? Photographic images in long-term and short-term computer-mediated communication. *Communication research*, *28*(1), 105-134.

Wellman, B., Haase, A. Q., Witte, J., & Hampton, K. (2001). Does the Internet increase, decrease, or supplement social capital? Social networks, participation, and community commitment. *American behavioral scientist*, *45*(3), 436-455.

Williams, Z. (2020). Don't stand so close to me! England's new rules of social distancing.