

CHAPTER

7

PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION

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7.1 INTRODUCTION

Social media is one of the leading platforms today for all individuals to spend their free time and stay connected. In January 2023, roughly 78.5% of Malaysians were using social media, marking a decrease of 13.2% compared to 2022, when approximately 91.7% of the Malaysian population were active on social media platforms (Statista Research Department, 2023). Wi-Fi and other internet connections make it possible for cell phones to connect to them, making it more straightforward to access social media. Priyadarshini et al. (2020) claim that from a psychological standpoint, using mobile social media presents a wide range of experiences, with most users having unhealthy behavioral tendencies. The use of social media as a medium for interpersonal communication and the development of social bonds has grown significantly. Our primary tool for fostering interpersonal interaction is social media. Especially among teenagers, social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube are widely used. Social networking sites (SNSs) are becoming more widely used, particularly among young people who view these platforms as the main means of communication. However, teenagers who used social media

for five or more hours each day reported the lowest levels of well-being, including happiness and general psychological health.

Statistics indicate that Facebook and other social networking sites are popular among university students. Contrarily, social networking site addiction results in many issues, including low self-esteem, self-efficacy, academic success, and introversion. The increase in social media usage could lead to addiction because people constantly want to connect on these platforms.

Numerous studies have looked at the idea that personality may change over a lifetime and that some personality traits can significantly affect essential life outcomes, such as the use of social media. The five major Big-five personality categories are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism. Individual variations in assertiveness, activity level, and socialization are called extraversion. A high level of extroversion is likely present in people who love interacting with others, can express their feelings and conduct in front of others, and exude positive energy.

Regarding compassion, awe, and recognition of others, agreeableness refers to individual variances. Aside from treating others with regard for their privacy and personal interests, agreeable people also exhibit emotional responsibility for their fellow human beings. They also tend to have unfavorable opinions of other people. Neuroticism is a difference in the intensity and persistence of sad or adverse emotions. When someone says they are open to new experiences, they refer to their unique personalities, including a love of art, a creative streak, a keen intellect, and a profusion of ideas. Individual differences that strive to act with self-discipline and set goals honorably are considered conscientious.

Prior research demonstrated that personality, commonly called individual variations, substantially impacts internet addiction. Those who spend much time on social media occasionally experience anxiety, irritability, depression, and sensitivity. Zhou et al. (2017) stated that only extraversion, neuroticism, and openness to experience positively correlate with internet addiction. Meanwhile, Kayış et al. (2016) found that openness to experience has a weak correlation with internet addiction. Social media

addiction positively correlates with extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Neurotics are less dependent on social media because they are agitated, irritable, and dislike routines, allowing them to be active and not stay for extended periods, such as on social media. In other words, people who are highly neurotic avoid using social media extensively. As a result of their pleasant and gregarious nature, extroverted individuals believe that social media provides a comfortable environment to establish themselves and satisfy their desires. They also look for an opportunity to connect with their peers to gain the most friends. Extroverted people like making new friends, and due to this competitiveness, they spend a lot of time on social networking sites to communicate with their many friends, making them more prone to addiction.

Social networking has so far shown to be a good fit for those with open personalities. High levels of openness lead to a preference for excessive usage of social networking sites and an increased risk of addiction. This result is consistent with prior studies that identified transparency as one of the factors influencing the use of social networking sites. According to research results from Bandung, college students have a high level of agreeableness and are favorably associated with social media addiction. The conclusions of this investigation agreed with those of earlier studies. Because they have not interacted with or seen people in person, people with this disposition do not choose to use social media excessively for agreeableness.

In addition, spending a lot of time on social media can become addictive, students with neurotic features were more likely to get addicted to social media because neuroticism was highly connected with the condition. According to Tekin and Turhan (2020), social media addiction positively correlates with neurotic features among undergraduate Turkish students. This showed that high neuroticism is believed to make it difficult for individuals to build strong relationships in daily life. In addition, Biggs et al. (2017) found that those with high levels of neuroticism tend to have problematic social media use. Students with high conscientiousness were shown to be less addicted to social media.