Narcissistic Personality Disorder in SNS

Kyungyoung Ohk

Depatment of Consumer Economics, Sookmyung Women's University
Cheongpa-ro 47-gil 100, Yongsan-gu, Seoul, 04310, Korea
okyoung@sookmyung.ac.kr

Abstract

Narcissistic personality disorder is a narcissistic symptom. Narcissistic personality disorder in SNS appears in the form of self-display or addiction to compliments, and it is becoming more severe due to the openness, sharing and participatory features of the new media, SNS, as well as the diversification of self-expression by users based on such features. This study focuses on narcissistic personality disorder in SNS to examine the factors affecting narcissistic personality disorder and behaviors caused by the disorder, thereby seeking positive ways of consuming the media. The specific objectives of this studyis to discern factors causing narcissistic personality disorder in SNS – extent of SNS usage and social capital – and analyze how these factors affect narcissistic personality disorder in SNS.

Keywords: SNS, Narcissistic personality disorder, Variety of use, Rate of use, Social capital

1. Introduction

This study focuses on narcissistic personality disorder of consumers among iDisorders that appear in social network services (SNS), a social space where users build relationships by communicating with friends. Here, narcissistic personality disorder is a narcissistic symptom, generally occurring in the socialization process of early adulthood, and is expressed in various ways depending on the degree of severity.

Narcissistic personality disorder in SNS appears in the form of self-display or addiction to compliments, and it is becoming more severe due to the openness, sharing and participatory features of the new media, SNS, as well as the diversification of self-expression by users based on such features. Users reveal the symptoms of striving to deliver their every move in daily life to their followers in SNS and to drag out respect and interest, and try to implant a positive image of themselves. Such narcissistic personality disorder in SNS seems to become more severe if the user frequently uses SNS and has formed ties with a greater number of people. Kuss and Griffiths (2011) also reported that people with more than 5,000 friends on Facebook is likely to have fallen under narcissism that may disrupt their social life [1].

Thus, this study focuses on narcissistic personality disorder in SNS to examine the factors affecting narcissistic personality disorder and behaviors caused by the disorder, thereby seeking positive ways of consuming the media. The specific objectives of this study are as follows. The first objective is to discern factors causing narcissistic personality disorder in SNS – extent of SNS usage and social capital – and analyze how these factors affect narcissistic personality disorder in SNS. The next objective is to examine how narcissistic

personality disorder in SNS affects social network formation and information sharing behavior in social network.

2. Related literatures and hypotheses development

Narcissistic personality disorder can be conceptualized as an exaggerated perception of oneself or narcissistic behavior, and it may positively affect an individual's daily life depending on the severity of symptoms, but may also cause abnormal behaviors in social relations when it is negatively reinforced. Narcissistic personality disorder can be categorized into overt narcissism and covert narcissism. The former is represented by exaggerated behavioral characteristics while the latter is represented by internal repression or excessive anger caused by such repression.

SNS is a typical platform in which users share information and express themselves to people with whom they have formed ties in social network. Users can express themselves in various ways via SNS and interact with others. The image of users expressed in SNS is mostly an aggressive expression of their positive image, which is somewhat expressed in the form of self-display. Such self-expressions of SNS users are associated with studies on narcissistic personality disorder in SNS [2].

Hart et al. (2008) stated that relational behaviors induced by people's use of SNS may reinforce iDisorder including narcissistic personality disorder [3]. Rosen (2013) also argued that narcissistic personality disorder is strongly revealed when consumers of all age groups are more engaged in online socio-relational activities, and that stronger narcissistic personality disorder leads to greater anxiety for people when they cannot check SNS such as text messages, cell phones and Facebook [4]. In particular, younger age groups that frequently use SNS tend to reveal stronger narcissistic personality disorder than other age groups.

H1: The greater the variety of use, the greater the internally-driven narcissistic personality disorder.
H2: The greater the rate of use, the greater the internally-driven narcissistic personality disorder.
H3: The greater the variety of use, the greater the externally-driven narcissistic personality disorder.
H4: The greater the rate of use, the greater the externally-driven narcissistic personality disorder.

Social capital exists in relationships built among individuals, and it is generated in a social structure, creating trust and norms among members in the structure (Coloman, 1988; Ellison et al, 2007). Social capital can be categorized into bonding social capital and bridging social capital. The former originates from close family or friends with similar backgrounds or characteristics, while the latter originates from acquaintances formed broadly based on diverse backgrounds and social relations. In previous studies, psychologists claimed that bonding social capital refers to strong ties based on special intimacy, and bridging social capital represents weak ties including those formed for the purpose of certain usefulness (Papacharissi and Mendelson, 2011; Steinfield et al., 2008).

H5: The greater the bonding, the greater the internally-driven narcissistic personality disorder.

H6: The greater the bridging, the greater the internally-driven narcissistic personality disorder.

H7: The greater the bonding, the greater the externally-driven narcissistic personality disorder.

H8: The greater the bridging, the greater the externally-driven narcissistic personality disorder.

3. Research methods

3.1 Data collection

This study is to examine the factors affecting narcissistic personality disorder in SNS and how this narcissistic personality disorder affects social network formation behavior and information sharing behavior in social network. Thus, consumers using SNS were used as a population for this study, equally sampling both men and women. Data was collected from online survey using a structured questionnaire, and total 225 copies were collected.

As a result of analyzing the demographic characteristics of participants in total 225 surveys that were collected, there were 113 men (50.2%) and 112 women (49.8%).

3.2. Formation of variables

Variables used in this study are narcissistic personality disorder, extent of SNS usage, social capital, social network formation behavior, information sharing behavior in social network, etc.

First, for narcissistic personality disorder, a factor analysis was conducted as shown in [Table 1] by Akhtar and Thomason (1982) to extract two factors named internally-driven narcissistic personality disorder and externally-driven narcissistic personality disorder, which were used as variables of narcissistic personality disorder [9].

Next, the extent of SNS usage and social capital were selected as variables affecting narcissistic personality disorder. The extent of SNS use was measured in terms of variety of use and rate of use, and social capital was measured in terms of bonding social capital representing strong ties and bridging social capital representing weak ties.

Table 1. Factor analysis on items of NPD

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Variance (cumulative variance)
I sometimes really like certain people but sometimes hate them extremely, and my emotions change radically.	0.608		0.35 (0.35)
I look down on the opinions of people around me, and I tend to ignore them and just do whatever I want.	0.846		
Sometimes my pride is hurt by receiving the same treatment as others.	0.785		
It is necessary to deceive or take advantage of others for my benefits.	0.639		

My issues are special and qualitatively different from those of others, and thus only really special people can understand them.	0.752		
When I am emotionally excited, I cannot think of other people's thoughts or positions.	0.706		
I cannot understand people who think of certain things differently from me.	0.805		
I am very offended when criticized or rejected by others.		0.523	
I always want to be approved and supported by others.		0.790	
I have imagined that one (or more) of the following things has happened: ultimate success, great power, supreme beauty, ideal love, being more famous than anyone else.		0.774	0.25 (0.60)
I want others to focus on me and regard highly of me.		0.769	
Others must acknowledge the important things I have done.		0.657	

4. Results

4.1. Reliability

The reliability of each variable was tested with Cronbach's α. The Cronbach's α values of narcissistic personality disorder, which is divided into internally-driven narcissistic personality disorder and externally-driven narcissistic personality disorder through a factor analysis, turned out to be 0.89 and 0.80. The Cronbach's α values of bonding social capital and bridging social capital turned out to be 0.94 and 0.92 respectively, securing the reliability of the variables.

4.2. Hypothesis test

This study is to examine the factors affecting narcissistic personality disorder in SNS and how this narcissistic personality disorder affects social network formation behavior and information sharing behavior in social network. <Table 2> shows the regression analysis results on how the extent of SNS usage and social capital affect narcissistic personality disorder in SNS.Rate of use from the extent of SNS usage and bonding social capital from social capital turned out to have significant effects on internally-driven narcissistic personality disorder in SNS. Furthermore, bridging social capital turned out to have significant effects on externally-driven narcissistic personality disorder.

Kyungyoung Ohk

Table 2. Results of regression analysis on the effects of the extent of SNS usage and social capital on narcissistic personality disorder in SNS

Dependent variable / Independent variable		internally-driven narcissistic personality disorder		externally-driven narcissistic personality disorder	
		B	β	B	β
extent of SNS usage	variety of use	.012	.049	.014	.062
	rate of use	.056**	.254	.014	.071
social capital	bonding	.231***	.265	-.033	-.043
	bridging	-.011	-.009	.380	.375***
F-value		14.675***		11.315***	
R^2		.211		.171	
adjusted R^2		.197		.156	
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001					

References

[1]   D.J. Kuss and M.D. Griffiths, "Excessive Online Social Networking: Can Adolescents Become Addicted to Facebook?" Education and Health, Vol. 29, pp. 63-66, **(2011)**.

[2]   Kim, U. J., "Narcissistic Self-Presentation on Facebook," Journal of Digital Contents Society, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 503-512, **(2015)**.

[3]   J. Hart, C. Ridley, F. Taher, C. Sas and A. Dix, "Exploring the Facebook Experience: a New Approach to Usability", In Proceedings of the 5th Nordic Conference on Human Computer Interaction: Building Bridges, **(2008)**.

[4]   L.D. Rosen, K. Whaling, S. Rab, L.M. Carrier and N.A. Cheever, "Is Facebook Creating ''iDisorders''? The Link between Clinical Symptoms of Psychiatric Disorders and Technology Use, Attitudes and Anxiety," Computers in Human Behavior, Vol. 29, pp. 1243-1254, **(2013)**.

[5]   J.S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 94, pp. 95-120, **(1988)**.

[6]   N.B. Ellison, C. Steinfield and C. Lampe, "The Benefits of Facebook Friends: Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites," Journal of Computer Mediated Communication, Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 1143-1168, **(2007)**.

[7]   Z. Papacharissi and A. Mendelson, "Toward a New(er) sociability: Uses, Gratifications, and Social Capital on Facebook", In Media Perspectives for the 21st Century, Stelios Papathanassopoulos (Eds.), New York: Routledge, **(2011)**.

[8]   C. Steinfield, N. Ellison and C. Lampe, "Net Worth: Facebook Use and Changes in Social Capital over Time," for presentation to the International Communication Association, Montreal, pp. 22-26, **(2008)**.

[9]   S. Akhtar and J.A. Thomson, "Overview: Narcissistic Personality Disorder," American Journal of Psychiatry, Vol. 139, No. 1, pp. 12-20, **(1982)**.

Authors

Kyungyoung Ohk, Professor
Department of Consumer Economics
Sookmyung Women's University