

Personality Traits Prediction of Fear of Missing Out In College Students

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ABSTRACT

The internet users, especially social media users are increasing in the last decade. This intensive using of social media induces behavioral changes of its users. One of the phenomena emerging is the fear of missing out. Personality has different effect on the rising fear. This research is aimed to recognize the relation between personality traits on fear of missing out on students. This study involved 643 students. The research data were collected by Big Five Inventory scale. The fear of missing out scale is modified from the previous research (Hato, 2013 and Przybylski, 2013). The data were analyzed by multiple regression using statistic software. The analysis resulted in $r=0,248$ with significance or $p=0,000$, therefore hypothesis stating that there is a relation between the big five personality traits and fear of missing out about social media is accepted. The research results show that extraversion and agreeableness have positive correlation to fear of missing out. While neuroticism has negative correlation and conscientiousness doesn't correlate to fear of missing out.

Keywords: *Personality Traits, Fear, College*

Nowadays internet has been one of the basic human needs. Internet facilitates searching and providing information, with various facilitations supporting daily life fast, accurately and economically, thus internet and its protocols become inseparable part of modern human's life.

The usage of internet is developing not only by computer's ware but also it can be used by a more practical gadget like a mobile phone. People use mobile phone not only to communicate

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interpersonally, but also to do activities related to smartphone usage, such as searching online news, entertainment, multimedia usage and other applications (Leung, 2007: 115).

The usage of internet and its wares gradually increasing day by day, and not only in developed countries but also in developing countries (Aoki & Downes, 2003; The Mobile Consumer, 2013). According to IPSOS survey in Indonesia in February 2012 period, Indonesia had the most active internet users especially in social media. In the survey conducted by Global Web Index in 2014, from the total of 27.4 million of internet user's population, their age ranged between 16 to 64 years and the group with university educational background was the most frequent users which made 69% and this group also is vulnerable to experience dependency on technology (Leung & Wei, 2000). The age group of 13 – 33 years is the highest risk group to experience FoMO (Hato, 2013).

Based on the observation and survey practiced on students in campus, Elon showed that mobile phone addiction phenomenon has affected many young adults. Some people state that addictive behavior and habit emerged because they do not want to be disconnected from their friends and family. They should have mobile phone so that they are able to respond or reach people directly and immediately. This study finds that 77.4% of students thought that they were not connected/ disconnected, 25.8% felt incomplete or missed out, 25.8% experienced stress when they did not carry their mobile phone (Jones, 2014: 77).

For many people, mobile phone has been an inseparable part of daily life. They use private mobile phone regularly and tend to feel missed out when they do not carry it (Bianchi & Phillips, 2005). The easiness in accessing quickly and effortlessly in social media makes the users want to fulfil their curiosity and in turn this causes dependency.

Holmes (1997) explained that using internet could cause dependency with symptoms similar to drug addiction. The Fear experienced by human to miss up to date news from friends or family becomes the new focus in psychological field. If one is disconnected with others in social media and the outside world, this causes nervousity and fear (Przybylski, et.al, 2013).

A report of FoMO from JWT Intelligence (2011) and the use of social media stated that one who has bigger fear of missing out tend to use social media, e-mailing ad other applications more often. They are likely to feel restless if they are far or abstain from social media in a long period of time.

The fear of missing out occurs due to lack of communication in the real world and the strength of relationship with peer group therefore this causes users to make themselves connected to others in various matters or contents, such as profile information, updated news or their status (Steinfeld et.al, 2013).

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Fear of Missing Out (FoMO phenomenon)

Fear of Missing out phenomenon is based on the research about the awareness of the up-to-date news' importance, social events and activities, thus being disconnected from others and outside world is believed to cause nervousity and fear (Rosen 2012; Przybylski, 2013, Murayama, DeHaan&Gladwell, 2013, Hato, 2013).

According to Przybylski (2013) *fear of missing out* is the fear of losing when a person doesn't get informed about other persons' interesting experiences or activities. FoMO is defined as a deep fear when one doesn't know others' interesting experiences or activities, therefore this makes the person wants or keeps connected with what others are doing (Przybylski 2013: 1841). This causes a person with fear of missing out eagerly keeping connected with social media, so that the person knows what others are doing. This can be done by keeping the connection through contents, like profile information, news update or others' status update (Steinfeld, et.al, 2013).

The Uses and Gratification theory developed from the sociopsychologic theories, and positivistic approach has been studying why and how people actively search for certain media to fulfil certain need(West & Turner, 2007). The Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) inquires 'what do people do with media?'. UGT explores how and why users intentionally choose the media which will fulfil specific need and enable them to increase "knowledge, relaxation, social interaction/ friendship, diversion, or escape (Severin& Tankard, 2000; McQuail, 2010).

Pursuant to UGT, one will use social media to fulfil specific needs such as socialization and gaining information. For an individual experiencing FoMO, using social media can be interesting because it is functioned as an inexpensive and easy way to connect to others (Ellison, Steinfeld& Lampe, 2007). However, this individual will end up with increasing solitude, isolation and fear of missing out because in fact social media does not really substitute face to face contact (Dossey, 2014).

While in the perspective of Self Determination Theory (SDT) fear of missing out is a situation when the psychological need is not fulfilled regarding self and relatedness. Relatedness according to Fromm is human's basic need to unite with other human beings. (Feist & Feist, 2010). While Self according to Rogers is individual awareness of one's being and functions, gained through one's experience in which the individual involved either as subject or object (Alwisol, 2009).

The fear felt when one is not using social media perhaps is due to personality traits in which includes low self esteem, shy, impulsive, nervous, self control, the existence of life skill enabling one feels comfortable or not to communicate face to face, and need factor among which are the needs to get entertainment, affiliation, negotiation and communication (Rosdaniar, 2008).

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Fear of missing out will differ from one individual to another because of uniqueness. This uniqueness related to the personality each individual has. Personality is unique and consistent thus it can be used to differ one individual to another. Marshal (2015:36) stated that the relation between personality domain and the emerging fear response involves a complex and still unclear process and result, mainly about the relation between extraversion and fear response (Pineles, et.al, 2009)

Big Five Personality

One of the approaches in personality is the dispositional approach, assuming that personality consists of relatively stable internal characteristics becoming behavior reference. This characteristic is often depicted as personality type, however it is often called as personality trait. The personality trait regarded as some building blocks shaping personality. Some traits are considered to have different strength levels in each person. Factor analysis of personality test results is one of the methods underlining personality dimension. Recently, there are five personality dimensions often called the big five. So, those five dimensions focus on trait and not on personality type. On the approach with personality type, an individual will be in the certain type category, and he/she will be in that certain type. On the other hand, trait is a continual quality, an individual has trait in different extents. An individual could have higher or lower extent in some traits. Thus in this approach, each personality could be described as how strong the variation of certain traits.

The big five factor model is a dispositional approach which is an approach assuming that personality as a stable internal characteristic combination and giving meaning to a person and motivates him/her to behave in a certain way. This approach focuses on characteristics and not on personality types. In personality type approach, a person will be in a certain type category and further will stay in that type. While in characteristic, an individual has different extent of characteristics, one can have high or low in some characteristic. Therefore, in this approach each personality could be described as how strong is the variation of certain characteristics (Widyorini, 2003).

The big five personality traits have five factors with specific features. Although it is called big five, it doesn't mean that there are only five personalities, otherwise there are thousands of features classified into these five groups called personality dimensions (Ramdhani, 2012: 190). Those dimensions are *extraversion*, *agreeableness*, *conscientiousness*, *neuroticism*, and *openness*.

McCrae dan Costa (Feist & Fesit, 2010: 136) asserted that an individual with high extraversion will tend to be loving, get along easily, be talkative, be a pleasure seeker and be full of spirit, on the contrary an individual with low extraversion will tend to be indifferent, aloof, quiet, serious and unfeeling/ insensitive. The second personality trait, neuroticism, will cause an individual

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who has high extent of this to be nervous, temperamental, sentimental emotional and vulnerable, on the other hand, one who has lower extent will be calm, proud of oneself, unemotional and strong. An individual with high extent of trait openness tends to have imaginative, creative, innovative, curious and free features; on the other hand, those who have low extent will be strong, realistic, uncreative, conventional, incurious and conservative. An individual with relatively high agreeableness will be soft hearted, trustful, generous, friendly, tolerant and amiable. On the contrary, one with low agreeableness will be harsh, suspicious, critical, and temperamental. The fifth trait, conscientiousness, has the features of detail, hard-working, organized, punctual, ambitious and persistent for those who have high extent and on the contrary, those with low extent will be careless, lazy, unorganized, tardy, no purpose, and easily to give up (Feist & Feist, 2009: 136).

The difference in individuals regarded from their personality traits makes those individuals also have different fear. Lepp (2015) stated that the big five personality traits are relevant to comprehend the students' activities in social media. Pe Rhodes & Smith (2006) found that *extraversion* correlated positively and *emotional stability* correlated negatively to physical activities. Both traits were found correlated to social media and mobile phone usage (Amichai & Vinitzky, 2010). Moreover, *extraversion* is also related to the troublesome mobile phone usage (Bianchi & Phillips, 2005). Hato (2013: 36) suggested observing fear of missing out from the personality traits of the individual.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participants

This research involved 643 students of Semarang State University (UNNES), taken from 2% from the total number of students from 8 faculties in UNNES. Participants in this study have social media accounts and included in the frequent user category – more or less 3 hours or more per day. Sampling was done by multistage cluster sampling by taking individual in the cluster or doing randomization on group and not on subject individually (Gall, Gall, dan Borg, 2007:174).

Instruments

Fear of Missing Out

The *fear of missing out* scale consists of 19 items by using Likert scale model with scores range from 1 (very unsuitable) to 5 (very suitable). This scale is the modification of the research scale of Hato (2013) consisted of 34 items and Przybylski (2013) consisted of 10 items.

Big Five personality traits

The *Big Five Inventory* (BFI) scale was created by John, Donahue, and Kentle. BFI which has been developed has 44 items consisted of 8 items of *extraversion*, 9 items of *agreeableness*, 9 items of *conscientiousness*, 8 items of *neuroticism* and 10 items for *openness* personality trait.

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Analysis

The statistics software of Multiple Regression Analysis technique is used to analyse data in this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistic of big five personality traits. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistic of fear of missing out about social media, which asking about psychological needs and relatedness and the fulfillment of the self.

Table 1.1, Results of The Big Five Personality Traits

No	The Big Five Personality Trait	Σ Subjects	(%)
1	<i>Openness</i>	60	9,33
2	<i>Conscientiousness</i>	97	15,08
3	<i>Extraversion</i>	23	3,57
4	<i>Agreeableness</i>	442	68,74
5	<i>Neuroticism</i>	14	3,26
Total		643	100

Table shows between the five traits agreeableness is amongst the most common trait found in samples with 68.74% followed by conscientiousness with 15.08%.

Table 1.2, Fear of Missing Out About Social Media

No	Aspects	Mean	(%)
1	<i>Unfulfilled psychological needs and relatedness</i>	19,08	50,22
2	<i>Unfulfilled psychological need and self</i>	18,91	49,78

Result describe that fear of missing out related to psychological needs are higher than psychological needs fulfillment with 50.22%. Based on the results of the calculation of the value of $F = 10.390$ with a significance of $p = 0.000 (<0.05)$. So it can be concluded that the variable conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism, simultaneously affect the fear of missing out about social media. R-Square is 0.061 which shows that the dependent variable fear of missing out about social media can be explained by the independent variables namely, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

Conscientiousness variable regression coefficient is 2.156 with 0.083 significance value (> 0.05). Extraversion variable regression coefficient of 0.445 with a significance value 0.000 (<0.05). Agreeableness variable regression coefficient is 5.477 with a significance value 0.023 (<0.05). Neuroticism variable regression coefficient is -16.201 with significance value (<0.05). Therefore personality trait positively correlated with extraversion and agreeableness, conscientiousness is not correlated and neuroticism negatively correlated.

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Result shows as many as 442 students have agreeableness personality trait. Furthermore agreeableness personality trait is stated to have a positive correlation with FOMO with significance level of 0.023 (<0.05), so the higher the agreeableness, the higher the fear of missing out about social media is perceived by individuals. According to Seidman (2013) although this trait negatively correlated with facebook post in terms of looking for attention, this trait is significantly related to facebook update in terms of communicate and relate to others. Relationships built by people with this personality trait are related to social activities in order to inspire others (Marshall & Lefringhausen, 2015: 35). That is what makes individuals with high agreeableness will experience fear if left by news updates on social activities in social media which provide speed of news and social events in the community or social things that happened in their peer group.

Students included in conscientiousness personality trait is as many as 97 students with a percentage of 15.08% of 643 students. The results in this study indicate that this trait does not correlate with the fear of missing out about social media because it has significance regression coefficient of 0.083 (> 0.05).

According to Landers & Lounsbury (2006: 291) conscientiousness has a positive correlation with the use of the internet. People who have this personality trait would tend to regularly access the Internet and by always accessing the Internet they will always connected and know the news updates. Meanwhile, according to Ryan and Xenos (2011) conscientiousness had a negative correlation with time spent to access facebook. The situation is possible because people with this trait is characterized to have high need for achievement therefore they do not spend much time accessing social media.

Personality trait of 23 students in this study is extraversion with a percentage of 3.57%. This personality trait has a significant positive effect. In line with research & Lefringhausen Marshall (2015: 38) states that the personality trait extraversion was significantly correlated with constantly updated about social activities and life. In addition, according to Besser & Shackelford (2007) individuals with extraversion personality trait has a tendency to be sociable. Therefore activities to keep updated, relate to others, to know the activities of others and show her daily activities on others is a focus of this personality traits.

While as many as 14 students in this study belong to the neuroticism personality trait i.e. with a percentage of 3.26%. Personality trait neuroticism had a significant influence 0,000 (<0.05) with the regression correlation of -5.077 so it has a negative correlation, means that the personality trait neuroticism in the big five negatively affect the fear of missing out about social media. Therefore, the higher the neuroticism, the lower the fear of missing out about social media. According Swickert (2002) distrust within individuals with this trait tends to limit the amount of time used to exchange information online and play online game. Other studies have explained

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that there is no relationship between fear and times to use the internet and the neuroticism personality trait (Phillips & Stevenson, 2002). The shameness of the individual within this personality trait is confining the behavior of using the internet (Scealy, 2002). However, Armstrong (2000) explains that people with low self esteem is associated with neuroticism to spend more time to browse.

CONCLUSION

There is a linear relationship between the big five personality with the fear of missing out about social media with $r = 0.248$ and R-Square is 6.1%, which means that the big five personality traits simultaneously affect the fear of missing out about social media, while 93.9% is influenced by other variables outside this study.

There are significant positive relationships between traits of extraversion, and agreeableness with the fear of missing out about social media. The higher extraversion, and agreeableness, the higher the fear of missing out about social media and vice versa. There is a negative correlation between the neuroticism personality traits with the fear of missing out about social media and there is no relationship between conscientiousness personality trait with the fear of missing out about social media.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declared no conflict of interests.

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