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Article Critique #1

SECTION 1:

1. **Problem/Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to determine if the OSN profiles created are accurate representations of the profile owners, and not an idealized self the person is presenting. This study is very relevant to our modern-day social networking society, where the vast majority of the population has some sort of social media account and virtually interact with others daily. The research question is if OSN profiles are truthful to the owner of the profile. The study aims to test the two hypotheses presented.

1. **Key Hypotheses:** The study focused on determine which of the two hypotheses regarding OSN profiles is more accurate. One hypothesis states that the personality and image a person presents on their social media platform is an idealized version of themselves (*idealized virtual-identity hypothesis*), based on research by Manago, et. al (2008). The other hypothesis states that what is portrayed is an extension of the person’s real-life personality (*extended real-life hypothesis*), based on the work of Ambady et. al (2008), Funder (1999), Hall et. al (2001), Kenny (1994), and Vazire et. al (2004). These hypotheses are not grounded in any established theory.
2. **Sample:** The study sample included a total of 236 people with age ranging from 17-22, from the United States and Germany. There were 133 participants from the US, 52 males and 81 females, and 103 participants from Germany, 17 males and 86 females. The volunteers from the US were recruited from the University of Texas campus, whereas the volunteers from Germany were recruited through advertisements. The sample has a bigger sample size of females than males, although it is generalizable due to the inclusion of volunteers from more than one country.
3. **Measures & Procedure:** The study included three different assessments in order to evaluate the personality of the participant, what they think their ideal self is, and an outsider rating of the participant’s profile. The first, which was accuracy criteria, was developed to determine what the profile owners really were like. This was done by grouping together different personality reports which measure five different personality traits. In the US a Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI) was utilized as well. In Germany the short form of the Big Five Inventory (BFI-10) and the NEO Five-Factor Inventory was used. The perception of ideal-self was determined using a rephrased version of the TIPI and the BFI-10. Finally, their profiles were rated by nine research assistants in the US and ten in Germany, each rating volunteers from their own countries. They used an observer report form of the TIPI in the US and BFI-10 in Germany. Then, observer agreement was determined for each sample. This was done using intraclass correlations, which was then average using Fisher’s r-to-z transformation.
4. **Results/Conclusions:** The results of the study found that there was no self-idealization presented in the OSN profile, instead that it was an accurate depiction of the profile holders’ personality. It was determined that OSN is efficient for expressing a person’s true personality. These results are consistent with the second hypothesis, which states an OSN profile is an extension of a person’s real-life personality.
5. **Practical Application:** These results are important for better understanding social interactions in an age where most interactions happen online. Much of a person’s life is presented through social media platforms, usually on public profiles. The results discovered in this study shed a light on the motivation and intentions behind social media presence.

SECTION 2:

This study presented interesting findings that represent an important insight and explanation on much of human behavior, especially involving such a commonly used medium of communication and presentation. Understanding how what can be observed on OSN profiles is a true and accurate reflection of a personality, will provide a better basis for future experimentation into this topic. This study was well constructed, using several different tests and surveys in order to determine both personality and how correlated that is with OSN profiles. This allowed for an accurate and substantial conclusion. Although the study did well in evaluation the specific sample size that was curated, I believe a more complete understanding of social media presence could be achieved by expanding this same experiment to more age groups and nationalities. This could allow for an expansion in the current results, in order to determine how factors like generational differences and differences in culture play into social media presence.

Although the results of this study can be still applicable to social media culture in more modern times, there are most likely differences that should be accounted for with further experimentation. As this was published in 2009, there has been a multitude of new social media platforms that operate on different models than Facebook and Myspace. Due to this, the results of this study may not still be the most accurate. My personal belief is that there has been a rise in a culture on social media that may present opposing evidence to what was determined in this study.

SECTION 3:

1. How has the rise of social media influencers and personalities, as well as the popularity of more picture based OSN such as Instagram, in recent years, contribute to a shift in the perception of what is “worthy” (i.e., Insta-worthy) of being posted on social media?
2. How has the prevalent use of editing apps, such as Photoshop and Facetune, as well as the constant use of filters, create an attitude of insecurity in posting realistic appearances on OSN?