

**Exploring the Effects of Gratifications, Narcissism,
Sense of Humor and Sensation-seeking on the
Sharing Humorous Selfies Online**

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Abstract

The goal of this study was to investigate how individual personality traits (including narcissism, sense of humor, and sensation seeking) as well as the gratifications sought relate to the sharing of humorous selfies online. Data were collected from 507 respondents in China. An exploratory factor analysis yielded three dimensions of gratification uniquely sought from the sharing of humorous selfies (i.e., entertainment and relaxation, escapism, and attention-seeking). Regression results showed that only attention-seeking needs, exhibitionism, attitude toward humor, and sensation seeking were significant predictors of the level of online sharing of humorous selfies. This study reflected a special narcissism and some unrecognized psychological factors as well as gratifications in the sharing of humorous selfies online.

Keywords: selfie, narcissism, sense of humor, sensation seeking, uses and gratifications

Introduction

Comparing with the time when we primarily exchange words on the screens of our computers and mobile phones for routine mediated interpersonal communication a few years ago, it is quite common for us to share and spread photos as well as videos online nowadays. Thanks to the advancement and popularization of smartphones, people do not content themselves with generating textual contents such as in blogs and forums online. Instead, producing pictures and videos of *themselves* and sharing them in social media has been a viral trend. In fact, “selfie” has become so popular that it has won the honored title for “Oxford Dictionaries Word of the Year 2013.” However, among many typical selfies which were often taken in meticulously selected angles, some are transformed into “humorous selfies” via various photo editing apps and subsequently feted in social networking sites (SNS). “Humorous selfies” in this paper refer to those photos/video selfies where some special effects and/or modules (such as moustache, doodle, photo-twisting, and quirky adornment) were added or the original audio were dubbed with amusing sounds (taken from movies, music, TV programs, Internet, etc.). These photos or videos are often altered through the use of certain apps, such as Snapchat (Doodle), Dubsmash, Musical.ly, and Ugly Camera. Some alternatives in China include Xiaokaxiu, Doupai, Tiantian P’tu, Faceu, and so on. A succession of such apps have emerged in recent years and made people — the youths in particular — obsessed with it, which has become a new emerging phenomenon.

Research into “selfie” has sprung up for the last few years. Such image was called “self-portrait” in early times, which was believed to be imported from a Japanese term (Yeh,

2007), and was called “Internet self-portraiture” when the photos were posted online (Wang, 2009). Iqani and Schroeder (2015) identified a variety of selfies, including funeral selfies, bathroom selfies, extreme selfies, “belfies”, and animated selfies (with the app Dubsplash). Many researchers regarded selfie as a new medium for self-presentation or self-expression (Mehdizadeh, 2010; Papacharissi, 2010; Qiu, Lu, Yang, Qu, & Zhu, 2015). Stefanoe and Lackaff (2009) also explored the photo and video sharing as a kind of self-disclosure and supposed that such behaviors closely mimicked the reality television (RTV). However, past studies found that SNS users prefer to choose their profile pictures which are perceived more physically attractive (Siibak, 2009; Strano, 2008), and this situation may be similar to selfie sharing according to our own experiences. To a certain extent, this is supported by the finding that body image satisfaction is associated with more Instagram selfie posting (Ridgway & Clayton, 2016). And this is why some people even criticize this phenomenon as “a symptom of social media-driven narcissism” (Pearlman, 2013).

Most past studies on selfies focused on the *beauty* of the selfies. However, the notion of studying humorous selfies is still scarce. Humorous selfie distinguishes itself by trying to make a display of one’s amusing look rather than an attractive one. Since people always try to present their positive attributes to others, what are their motivations to share their self-mocking selfies online at their own expenses? “To exhibit one’s attractiveness” and “to gratify one’s vanity” can easily be figured out when talking about the motivation of posting selfies. However, these may no longer be applicable in terms of humorous selfies, since there are no attractiveness and it seems unreasonable to gratify vanity by self-mocking. So this

study aims to explore and identify some specific motives of humorous selfie sharing. On the other hand, the related personality traits of humorous selfies use may also differ. Even if “narcissism” would still be an important factor, it seems that there would be something different from what we conventionally recognized in it. Concerning the contrasts between humorous selfies and “common selfies”, it is valuable to examine if the concept of “narcissism” could be generalized into such areas. Grounded in uses and gratifications theory, together with personality traits (including narcissism, sense of humor, and sensation seeking), the goal of this study is to explore the explanatory power of these factors influencing the intensity of sharing humorous selfies online.

Literature Review

Humor types, internet humor, and Kuso

Based on a 2×2 model of humor functions (benevolent/detrimental, to-the-self/to-others), four types of humor were identified. Among which the one with the “benevolent and to-the-self” was named *self-enhancing humor* (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, & Weir, 2003). As making humorous selfies are always well-intentioned, therefore it can be classified under “self-enhancing humor” as well. This kind of humor is commonly regarded as a positive humor style, which “involves a generally humorous outlook on life” and an ability to laugh at oneself, and in which individuals “maintain a humorous perspective even in the face of stress or adversity” (Kuiper, Martin, & Olinger, 1993; Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, & Weir, 2003). Self-enhancing humor is also closely related to the concept of coping humor (Martin, 1996) and emotion regulation (Lefcourt et al., 1995).

Most scholars focused on political humor in the internet. Baumgartner (2007) investigated internet political humor and found that a video clip, which parodied President George W. Bush unexpectedly, had a positive effect on evaluations of the President. This may imply that such to-the-self humor could actually have positive effects on oneself. Chen (2014) explored the Internet humor in China with the case of “Baouzou manhua,” which was an internet community where rage comics were introduced and could be generated by users. He also pointed out that it actually “signifies a new form of expression for ordinary netizens where they move from simply being consumers of comics to producers.” This relates to humorous selfies since they both result from a subculture called “Kuso.” Kuso was initially associated with a culture of computer games, referring to the parody or spoof. When imported to Taiwan and Mainland China, this term has also been called “E’gao,” which means “making mischief” (Silvio, 2009). Since “E’gao” concerns something humorous, revelry, but subversion with defiance of authority (Huang, 2006), it actually achieves an effect of emotional catharsis (Gong & Yang, 2010).

Gratifications from online humorous selfies sharing

Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory emphasized how and why people purposively choose certain media (Klapper, 1963). It suggested how factors such as one’s social environment and psychological circumstances, needs, motives, and expectations about mediated communication can influence media use and its effects (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974; Rosengren, 1974). Previous studies have highlighted some gratifications sought by users from SNS- or online community-based sharing, such as information seeking,

socializing, status seeking, information sharing, and entertainment (Baek, Holton, Harp, & Yaschur, 2011; Lampe, Wash, Velasquez, & Ozkaya, 2010; Lee & Ma, 2012). Specifically, studies that focused on online/mobile photo sharing have found several gratifications, including maintenance of social relationships, reminding of individual and collective experiences, self-presentation (including humor), self-expression, task performance, self-development, enjoyment, etc. (Chua, Lee, Goh, & Ang, 2009; Nov, Naaman, & Ye, 2009). Summarizing previous studies, Malik, Dhir, and Nieminen (2016) listed six major motives of digital photo sharing on SNSes: affection, attention seeking, disclosure, habitual pastime, information sharing, and social influence.

A few studies focusing on Snapchat also enlightened us the gratifications of humorous selfies sharing. Conducted by Roesner, Gill and Kohno (2014), the study suggested that Snapchat represented the leisure, the sharing, but most of all, the immediacy and amusement which was far from that of Facebook and Instagram. Piwek and Joinson (2016) also confirmed that the second most mentioned factors for using Snapchat was its funniness and found that 59.8% of respondents reported their primary use for Snapchat was for sharing funny contents including their “stupid faces.” David (2015) investigated the selfies shared in Snapchat by teenagers and concluded that youths did not regard their selfies as an object for personal data archiving, but as “fleeting ephemerality.” He also asserted that such “self-mockery” was a healthy release. By making yourself appear silly or hilarious, you are actually showing others that you have a humorous attitude towards yourself. When trying to make fun of yourself, you are no longer getting stuck in deliberately showing your image of

beauty, elegance, and stylishness. Since “E’gao” has a principal effect of emotional catharsis (Gong & Yang, 2010), it is also somehow an effective way for relaxation and stress reduction to make your selfies in a funny way.

Those good-looking selfies are usually considered manifestations of existing normative institutional values (Wang, 2009). In selfies, men and women are supposed to enact a role deemed socially acceptable by his or her audiences online. However, to engage in humorous selfies, you concern less about those values and regulations. Considering the culture of “E’gao”, it actually relates to subversion of authority and defiance of mainstream of social values.

One of the most significant features of “play” is “free,” without any task-driven forces and in the sense of being different from ordinary life (Huizinga, 1955). In a more recent study, Caillois and Barash (2001) divided “play” into four types and two play attitudes. Creating humorous selfie photos and videos that imitates celebrities or virtual characters by adding decorations or visual effects is something called “mimicry” according to the definition given by Caillois, for the reason that they are temporarily believing they are in an imaginary universe where others believe that they are someone else. Regarding the two play attitudes proposed by Caillois, mimicry involved attempts to escape oneself, and tended towards “paidia”, which referred to “diversion, turbulence, free improvisation, carefree gaiety and laughter, spontaneous, impulsive, joyous, uncontrolled fantasy” (Caillois & Barash, 2001). By mimicking others and employing various effects, they are actually making their selfies not

resemble themselves any more. Thus, they may successfully escape from the real world and leave their tasks and stress behind.

Based on aforementioned studies, one research question and one hypothesis were proposed:

RQ1: What are the gratifications sought by users that are uniquely associated with sharing their humorous selfies online?

H1: Individuals who find sharing humorous selfies online gratifying will participate more in sharing humorous selfies online.

Narcissism

Narcissism indicates to a personality trait reflecting a grandiose and inflated self-concept marked by self-promotion, vanity, and grandiosity (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; DeWall, Buffardi, Bonser, & Campbell, 2011). Specifically, narcissism is associated with superiority, a positive and inflated self-view in terms of intelligence, power, and physical attractiveness (Brown & Zeigler-Hill, 2004; Gabriel, Critelli, & Ee, 1994; Bleske-Rechek, Remiker, & Baker, 2008). More narcissistic individuals are more acutely concerned about their physical appearances than less narcissistic individuals are (Vazire, Naumann, Rentfrow, & Gosling, 2008). But as narcissists also tend to overestimate their attractiveness (Gabriel, Critelli, & Ee, 1994), it is also likely for them to post some unattractive selfies, which are nevertheless been considered attractive by themselves. Another important point is that a crucial component of narcissism is the need to be the center of attention (DeWall, Buffardi, Bonser, & Campbell, 2011). When attention to the self is not forthcoming, narcissists may engage in compensatory

actions to direct attention toward themselves (Buss & Chiodo, 1991). This may even cause some dispositions like exhibitionism, which relates to vanity and a willingness to attract attention, entailing behaviors such as to flaunt money to impress someone, or to disagree merely for the sake of attention (Buss & Chiodo, 1991; Murray, 1938). Also, social exhibitionism was found to be correlated positively with online selfie-sharing behavior (Sorokowska et al., 2016). Sharing humorous selfies with some eye-catching effects or amusing scripts is definitely an effective way of drawing attention from others, thus narcissists will have less concerns and expect to grab attention by doing so.

H2: Individuals who are more narcissistic will participate more in sharing humorous selfies online.

Sense of humor

“Sense of humor” refers to humor as a stable personality trait or a temperament (Ruch, 1998; Ruch & Carrell, 1998). Individuals with a good sense of humor are perceived as friendly, interesting, pleasant, intelligent, emotionally stable, and creative (Cann & Calhoun, 2001; Kaufman, Kozbelt, Bromley, Geher, & Miller, 2007; O’Quin & Derks, 1997). Individuals with a greater sense of humor possess some other desirable traits, such as greater optimism, self-acceptance, self-confidence, and autonomy (Kuiper & Martin, 1998). This may help them well accept their own imperfections and be confident in themselves. There is also a positive correlation with sense of humor and exhibition (Thorson & Powell, 1993), which also motivates them to present themselves to public. Svebak (2010) conceptualized sense of humor as a 2-dimensional concept including meta-message sensitivity (which means one’s

sensitivity to humorous contents and ability to capture tiny humorous-intentioned meta-messages or hints like blinking) and attitude towards humor (also called liking of attitude towards humorous people and situations). For humorous characters, some might welcome them but others may think about making jokes all day are irresponsible and unreliable. Both of these are essential factors when considering them in the context of generating humorous selfies as well as the willingness to share them.

H3: Individuals with (a) greater sense of humorous meta-message sensitivity and (b) more positive attitude towards humor will participate more in sharing humorous selfies online.

Sensation seeking

According to the definition made by Zuckerman (1979, p. 10; 1994), sensation seeking is a biologically based personality trait that describes individuals' characteristic preferences for and willingness to search for novel, varied, and intense stimuli. A number of studies revealed that high sensation seekers tend to select media content that is stimulating and arousing and avoid content that is placid and boring (Edwards, 1991; Hirschman, 1987; Nater, Krebs, & Ehlert, 2005; Perse, 1996). In an experimental condition, Schierman and Rowland (1985) found that high sensation seekers spent more time watching comedy movies. There are four dimensions of the sensation seeking trait: thrill and adventure seeking, experience seeking, disinhibition seeking, and boredom susceptibility. Experience seeking represents stimulation achieved through some unconventional life styles like art, travel, and music, while boredom susceptibility refers to aversion to boredom and agitation caused by the lack of stimulation from activities or other people (Deckers & Ruch, 1992). Both of these two dimensions were

considered to be predictors of appreciation of humor structure since the former relates to the novelty and complexity dimension of stimuli (Zuckerman, 1984) and the latter represents avoidance of repetitious experience (Deckers & Ruch, 1992). For high sensation seekers, they are inclined to experiment with some newfangled mobile apps to get rid of dull life, especially that are entertaining and somewhat irregular. Although no evidence suggests the clear relationships of humorous selfie use and “thrill and adventure seeking” as well as “disinhibition seeking”, the positive relations could be legitimately inferred. To take humorous selfies makes us see a different image of ourselves, which may make us thrilled; to post them may cause some uncertain responses (the comments can be positive or negative), which may be regarded as something adventurous. If the stereotyped beautiful selfies are recognized as an inhibition, humorous selfies which can freely display one’s appearance can sure be recognized as a disinhibition.

H4: Individuals with higher sensation seeking will participate more in sharing humorous selfies online.

Based on the review of literature above, this exploratory study seeks to examine the comprehensive picture by addressing one broad research question:

RQ2: To what extent can the control variables, gratifications-sought, narcissism, sense of humor, and sensation seeking predict sharing of humorous selfies online?

Method

Sample

Data for this exploratory research were gathered using a snowball sampling approach. The acquaintances who are humorous selfie users were invited to complete the questionnaire via a hyperlink of the online questionnaire posted on sojump.com in April 2016. Respondents were asked to invite other humorous selfie users from their social networks to complete the questionnaire. “Humorous selfie users” refer to those who have both made and shared their selfies which are considered to be humorous, amusing, or comic by themselves, in the forms of photo or video, either with or without employing specific editing applications before sharing. The requirement above was conveyed and explained to each respondent in advance. The final sample of participants (N = 507) in the survey consisted of 55.6% male and the median age was 18-23. A project called “Selfiecity,” conducted by City University of New York in 2014, collected over 120,000 selfies from five cities across the world (Selfiecity, 2014). The sample demographics of this study (see Table 1) bear a relatively good demographic resemblance to that of these five cities, in particular Bangkok (the other four cities were New York, Sao Paolo, Berlin, and Moscow).

(*Insert Table 1 about here*)

Measures

Gratifications-sought. Some relevant gratification items used in previous research into online sharing or online humor-related contents such as sharing news (Lee & Ma, 2012), sharing links (Baek, Holton, Harp, & Yaschur, 2011), sharing digital photos (Malik, Dhir, & Nieminen, 2016), co-viewing with YouTube (Haridakis & Hanson, 2009) were included in the survey questionnaire. The wordings for some items were rephrased in order to suit the

situation of humorous selfie use. The final questionnaire consisted of 15 gratification statements and a five-point Likert scale was used (1 = “strongly disagree” and 5 = “strongly agree”).

Narcissism. The NPI-16 (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006), drawing its items from NPI-40 (Raskin & Terry, 1988), was used to measure narcissism in this study. The revised Chinese version of Narcissism Personality Questionnaire was developed by Zhou, Zhang, Chen, and Ye (2009) based on Chinese culture, and shows a good reliability within Chinese students. A total of 12 items were chosen from the original inventory in order to make the questionnaire more manageable. A five-point Likert scale was used (1 = “strongly disagree” and 5 = “strongly agree”). Table 2 shows the factor analysis of 12 items of narcissism. The three dimensions, authority ($M = 2.72$, $SD = .89$, $\alpha = .85$), superiority ($M = 3.07$, $SD = .83$, $\alpha = .85$), and exhibitionism ($M = 3.09$, $SD = .89$, $\alpha = .82$) show a good reliability.

(*Insert Table 2 about here*)

Sense of humor. The Sense of Humor Questionnaire (SHQ; Svebeck, 1974) has been a commonly used way of assessing sense of humor as a personality trait. Later, a revised version, SHQ-6, including 6 items of SHQ, was developed by Svebeck (2010). SHQ-6 contains 3 items for “meta-message sensitivity” ($M = 3.35$, $SD = .83$, $\alpha = .72$) and 3 items of for “attitude towards humor” ($M = 3.62$, $SD = .93$, $\alpha = .86$) in SHQ. “Meta-message sensitivity” contained statement such as “I can easily capture tiny humorous-intentioned hints like blinking” and “attitude towards humor” contained statement such as “those who think

about making jokes all day are irresponsible and unreliable” (converse statement). The items were measured in a five-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree” and 5 = “strongly agree”).

Sensation seeking. Form V of the Sensation Seeking Scale (SSS-V; Zuckerman, Eysenck, & Eysenck, 1978) is a typical way of measuring the sensation seeking construct. However, to shorten this 40-item scale, an 8-item scale called Brief Sensation Seeking Scale (BSSS; Hoyle, Stephenson, Palmgreen, Lorch, & Donohew, 2002) was adopted in this study. A five-point Likert scale was also used (1 = “strongly disagree” and 5 = “strongly agree”; $M = 2.96$, $SD = .78$, $\alpha = .81$). Sample items included “I would like to explore strange places” and “I get restless when I spend too much time at home.”

Intensity of Use. Five statements regarding the intensity of humorous selfie use were developed, including “I frequently make humorous selfie photos or videos”, “I frequently share my humorous selfie photos or videos to my SNS”, “I spend much time making my humorous selfies”, “I always try every effect/material/decoration in the humorous selfie-making applications”, and “I ask for my parents’ or friends’ assistance to make my humorous selfies more interesting”. Also, a five-point Likert scale was used (1 = “Never” and 5 = “Very often;” $M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.03$, $\alpha = .91$).

Control variables. The demographics and control variables including gender, age, and daily time spent on social media (1 = “less than 1h”, 2 = “1~2h”, 3 = “2~3h”, 4 = “3~4h”, 5 = “4~5h”, 6 = “more than 5h”) were also recorded.

Findings

Gratifications-Sought in sharing of humorous selfies online

A factor analysis of gratification items in sharing of humorous selfies online yielded three factors: entertainment and relaxation, escapism, and attention-seeking (see Table 3). The first factor, entertainment and relaxation needs, accounted for 44.5% of the variance after rotation, and consisted of six statements which illustrated respondents share humorous selfies because it is entertaining and relaxing ($M = 3.47$, $SD = .90$, $\alpha = .91$). The second factor, escapism needs, accounted for 14.8% of variance after rotation, consisting of four statements that described sharing humorous selfies as a tool for escaping from the real world and responsibility ($M = 2.78$, $SD = .93$, $\alpha = .81$). The third factor called attention-seeking needs explained 9.0% of variance after rotation. It consisted of four statements that portrayed sharing humorous selfies as an instrument for grabbing attention ($M = 3.02$, $SD = .96$, $\alpha = .86$). Among all three factors, “entertainment and relaxation needs” was the most salient factor due to the highest mean score, followed by “attention-seeking needs”, while the “escapism needs” was a less salient gratifications users sought from sharing humorous selfies online.

(*Insert Table 3 about here*)

Hypotheses testing

The first hypothesis investigated the relationship between gratifications and intensity of humorous selfies use. Table 4 shows the correlations of all variables and intensity of sharing humorous selfies online. Entertainment and relaxation ($r = .31$, $p \leq .001$), escapism ($r = .31$, $p \leq .001$), and attention-seeking ($r = .45$, $p \leq .001$) positively correlated to intensity of sharing humorous selfies. However, after controlling for demographics, regression results in

Table 5 show that only escapism ($\beta = .13, p \leq .01$) and attention-seeking ($\beta = .34, p \leq .001$) were significantly linked to intensity of selfies sharing online. So individuals who find it more gratifying only in attention-seeking and escapism tend to participate more in sharing humorous selfies online. Thus, H1 was largely supported.

(*Insert Tables 4 and 5 about here*)

H2 proposed that individuals who are more narcissistic will participate more in sharing humorous selfies online. The correlation results in Table 4 narcissism (composite) was found positively correlated with sharing humorous selfies online ($r = .32, p \leq .001$). Furthermore, all three dimensions of narcissism (authority, superiority, and exhibitionism) showed strong and positive correlations with sharing humorous selfies ($r = .26, p \leq .001$; $r = .25, p \leq .001$; and $r = .32, p \leq .001$ respectively). However, after controlling for demographics and gratifications-sought, regression results in Table 5 show that only exhibitionism was significantly related to selfie sharing intensity ($\beta = .11, p \leq .05$). Thus, H2 was only partially supported.

H3 hypothesized that individuals with (a) greater sense of humorous meta-message sensitivity and (b) more positive attitude towards humor will participate more in sharing humorous selfies online. Results in Table 4 show that both meta-message sensitivity and attitude towards humor significantly and positively correlated with sharing humorous selfies online ($r = .24, p \leq .001$ and $r = .30, p \leq .001$ respectively). However, only attitude towards humor ($\beta = .19; p \leq .001$) was a significant predictor in the final regression model. Thus, H3a was rejected and H3b was supported.

As for sensation seeking, H4 predicted that individuals with higher sensation seeking will participate more in sharing humorous selfies online. Table 4 also shows a strong and positive correlation between sensation seeking and sharing humorous selfies online ($r = .33, p \leq .001$). However, regression results in Table 5 reveal that sensation seeking ($\beta = .07; p \leq .05$) also significantly linked to intensity of selfie sharing online. Thus, H4 was fully supported.

Predictors of sharing humorous selfies online

The second research question aimed to develop a more comprehensive model predicting the use intensity of sharing humorous selfies online. Table 5 shows the results from the hierarchical regression analysis. The first model only included demographics and control variables, with a relatively low R^2 (Final adjusted $R^2 = .01$). It seems that males are more likely to share their humorous selfies ($\beta = .11, p \leq .05$). One possible explanation may be that males are more technologically competent in editing software to make humorous selfies. In Model 2, gratifications-sought were also taken into consideration other than control variables, and R^2 showed a significant change (Final adjusted $R^2 = .21, \Delta R^2 = .20, p \leq .001$). Gender was no longer a significant predictor ($\beta = .05, p > .05$), whereas escapism and attention-seeking became two significant impact factors ($\beta = .13, p \leq .01; \beta = .34, p \leq .001$). A more comprehensive model was developed in Model 3 consisting of control variables, gratifications-sought, and personalities altogether, and it was examined to be the best one to predict sharing humorous selfies online (Final adjusted $R^2 = .27, \Delta R^2 = .07, p \leq .001$). Escapism failed to predict sharing humorous selfies ($\beta = .07, p > .05$), while

attention-seeking could still positively predict it ($\beta = .26, p \leq .001$). Among all the personalities, attitude towards humor was the strongest predictor ($\beta = .19, p \leq .001$), followed by exhibitionism ($\beta = .11, p \leq .05$) and sensation seeking ($\beta = .11, p \leq .05$). All other variables showed no relationship with use intensity of sharing humorous selfies online.

Discussion

People share their humorous selfies in order to get entertainment, escape, and attention.

Humorous selfie can not only act as *amusement* and *getaway*, but also make you an *eye-catcher*. It is palpable that people use humorous selfies because it is entertaining and makes them joyful and stress-free. The escapism needs reflect their motives of mentally escaping from reality by playing with humorous selfies. This also reinforces the theory of “play” proposed by Caillois and Barash (2001), supposing that play contributes to develop a sense of being different and separate from everyday life and “mimicry” involves attempts to escape oneself. To produce a humorous selfie, you may decorate yourself with mustache, enlarge your face, or dub yourself into some interesting voices, which is actually making your selfies look different from yourself. That is how you escape from yourself and briefly imagine a fantasy world for you. This also suggests that such diversion is beneficial for us to get a relief and not to focus on the distress all day.

Besides, people use humorous selfies to draw attention from others. Since attention-seeking can most significantly predict the use intensity of humorous selfies, this may suggest that those who share humorous selfies regard such selfies as something different and offbeat compared with those beautiful selfies of the same pattern. It is the alternativeness

or nonconformity that they value the most, instead of other qualities. So, probably they will not use it once humorous selfies become too common.

As mentioned in the research objectives, unlike those who love to share good-looking selfies to present their positive attributes such as beauty and shapeliness, can sharing humorous selfies, which are sometimes unattractive, still be related to narcissism? Based on the results of the present study, the answer is yes: those humorous selfie users are still narcissistic persons. According to the findings, when all variables were taken into consideration in the regression analysis, only exhibitionism was significant among all three narcissism dimensions. However, it is also interesting to note that superiority was approaching significance with a negative beta value ($\beta = -.10$; $p \leq .1$). This suggests that heavy humorous selfie users are people who have strong desires to show off, but feel inferior to others. So making humorous selfies becomes a good choice for them to exhibit themselves while not revealing their weakness. Therefore, we may conclude that humorous selfie users are generally narcissists with a score high in exhibitionism but may also be low in superiority. In fact, when looking at a humorous selfie, people won't take much notice if the person in the selfie is good-looking. So they show off, get attention, and hide their self-perceived weakness. Furthermore, it seems that such narcissism with low in authority and superiority is uniquely associated with sharing humorous selfies, whereas all the dimensions of narcissism were found to be positively correlated with selfie-posting frequency in previous studies (Sorokowski et al, 2015; Weiser, 2015). Since exhibitionism was related to being the center

of others' attention (Carpenter, 2012), this also sustains the attention-seeking needs mentioned above.

As for sense of humor, attitude towards humor can positively predict humorous selfies sharing online, while meta-message sensitivity cannot. It seems that to make humorous selfies doesn't require a great sense of sensitivity to humor, because most people use some applications to produce humorous selfies, while the materials as well as the effects are preset. So all they need to do is to simply try every material and see if it is funny, which actually lowers the barriers to use. However, it is nevertheless necessary for those who share humorous selfies to hold a positive attitude towards humor. So in this case, the attitude counts, rather than the ability.

High sensation seekers participate more in sharing their humorous selfies. This is also reasonable because playing humorous selfies can effectively help them get rid of boredom and their dull life. High sensation seekers would love to make humorous selfies in order to seek for some novel experiences, but they may also get tired of this after the novelty effect diminishes. To keep these users requires frequent surprises to make them always feel fresh and different, which is quite challenging and demanding. Thus, one practical implication of this study may be that photo editing apps have to be constantly updated with sophisticated effects if humorous selfies are to maintain interesting for demanding users.

Conclusion

This exploratory study is the first research focusing on humorous selfies that presents a different aspect of "selfie". Based on the results above, it seems that the results of previous

studies on general selfies cannot be generalized. The contrasts between humorous selfies and general selfies are not only visual and external, but also demonstrated to reflect some psychological differences. This may also inspire us that users intentionally choose the certain medium, and more importantly, intentionally choose how to use the medium to gratify themselves in diverse ways. Another theoretical contribution of this study is that the personality trait can be divided into several sub-concepts which can be analyzed respectively. All the concepts of personality traits are composite to some extent. So it is also worth exploring within a certain personality trait to get some valuable insight. Concerning this study, as mentioned in discussion section, although narcissism has always been the main concern regarding selfies, there are some differences and unrecognized psychological factors when talking about a specific kind of selfie.

For practitioners, it is important to understand users' real minds and needs. As the most relevant personality traits of sharing humorous selfies are healthy attitude towards humor, exhibitionism, and sensation seeking, humorous-selfie-making apps can target their products at those optimists, jokers, buffoons, exhibitionists, high sensation seekers, adventurers, and so on. And since sensation seeking is the most important predictor, those humorous-selfie-making products need to provide more absurd and uncommon effects to make users' selfies more eye-catching. Some exclusive functions or stickers could only be available to those active users or VIPs; this may arouse their enthusiasm due to their strong desire of being exclusive. Besides, a user community could be developed where they can post their works of humorous selfies, make comments, and click to like others' works. The

interactions in the community would make them feel that they have caused a sensation, and they thus feel gratifying.

Some limitations of this study as well as recommendations for future study should also be pointed out. The first is a methodological limitation: Due to the non-probability sampling method used, the sample of this study can be biased. And in order to get a deeper understanding, more dimensions of narcissism should be considered and included in the questionnaire. For future research, more gratifications can be developed by conducting a focus group and more control variables can be taken into consideration to lead a more comprehensive study.

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Table 1: Sample demographics (N = 507)

Measure	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	225	55.6
	Female	282	44.4
Age (years)	17 and below	11	2.2
	18~23	321	63.3
	24~29	147	29.0
	30~35	19	3.7
	36 and above	9	1.8

Table 2: Factor analysis of narcissism (N = 507)

	Factors			Mean	SD
	1	2	3		
Authority:					
1. I find it easy to manipulate others.	.80			2.57	1.05
2. My authority is recognized by others.	.75			2.66	.98
3. The world would get better under my rule.	.73			2.63	1.17
4. I like to be a leader.	.72			3.02	1.08
Superiority:					
5. I have a greater taste than others.		.82		3.08	1.00
6. I am more capable than others.		.75		3.14	1.00
7. People can learn a lot from me.		.72		3.11	.98
8. I can always let others believe me.		.64		2.93	1.00
Exhibitionism:					
9. I like to look in the mirror.			.76	3.14	1.09
10. I will not get satisfied until get what I desire for.			.75	3.23	1.14
11. I like to be the focus.			.75	2.94	1.13
12. I like to present myself once having chances.			.73	3.06	1.08
Eigenvalue	6.05	1.40	.84		
Variance explained	50.45	11.63	6.96		
Cronbach's alpha	.85	.85	.82		

Only factor loadings greater than .50 were reported.

Table 3: Gratifications-sought of sharing humorous selfies online (N = 507)

I generate and share my humorous selfies online:	Factors			Mean	SD
	1	2	3		
Entertainment and relaxation needs				3.47	.90
1. To make me feel happy	.85			3.57	1.05
2. To relieve my pressure	.84			3.54	1.08
3. To relax myself	.82			3.59	1.03
4. To make me laugh	.77			3.35	1.13
5. Because it is funny	.77			3.54	1.11
6. Because it is enjoying	.67			3.24	1.14
Escapism needs				2.78	.93
7. To forget things related to my study or work		.82		2.73	1.19
8. When I have nothing else to do		.79		2.67	1.18
9. To kill the time		.74		3.01	1.06
10. To escape from what I am doing now		.70		2.74	1.16
Attention-seeking needs				3.02	.96
11. To draw others' attention in social networks			.80	2.98	1.18
12. To make me distinctive			.78	2.90	1.14
13. To leave a deeper impression to others			.74	3.07	1.13
14. To present a different aspect of myself			.62	3.11	1.14
Eigenvalue	6.22	2.07	1.26		
Variance explained	44.45	14.76	8.96		
Cronbach's alpha	.91	.81	.86		

Only factor loadings greater than .50 were reported.

Table 4: Correlations between demographics, gratifications-sought, and personalities and intensity of sharing humorous selfies online (N = 507)

Independent Variables	Intensity of sharing humorous selfies online r
Demographics & control variables	
Gender (Male=1)	.11*
Age group	.03
Daily exposure to social media	.07
Gratifications-sought	
Entertainment and relaxation	.31***
Escapism	.31***
Attention-seeking	.45***
Personality traits	
Narcissism (composite)	.32***
Authority	.26***
Superiority	.25***
Exhibitionism	.32***
Sense of humor	
Meta-message sensitivity	.24***
Attitude towards humor	.30***
Sensation seeking	.33***

Figures reported are Pearson's r.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 5: Hierarchical regression of control variables, gratifications-sought, and personalities traits predicting intensity of sharing humorous selfies online (N=507)

Predictors	Intensity of sharing humorous selfies online		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Block 1: Control variables			
Gender (Male=1)	.11*	.05	.05
Age group	.02	-.01	-.04
Daily exposure to social media	.08	.01	-.02
Block 2: Gratifications-sought			
Entertainment and relaxation		.06	.06
Escapism		.13**	.07
Attention-seeking		.34***	.26***
Block 3: Personalities			
Authority			.04
Superiority			-.10
Exhibitionism			.11*
Meta-message sensitivity			.04
Attitude towards humor			.19***
Sensation seeking			.11*
ΔR^2	.02	.20***	.07***
R^2	.02	.22	.29
Final adjusted R^2	.01	.21	.27

Figures reported are standardized beta-coefficients of Linear Regression.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$