SELF ESTEEM AND THE SELFIE PHENOMENON AT THE FACEBOOK PROSUMER TEENAGER

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ABSTRACT. Teenagers spend about half of their free time during a day using various kinds of mass communication, especially the new media: Facebook. The teenager's portrait on Facebook is as varied and complex as it is in real life. In the real life, the teenager knows reality through experience, through education, by means of the family, the school and the society. In the new virtual area towards which we are moving quickly, the Internet (Facebook) is a great source of information and training of adolescent equally with family, school, society. But like any human product, Facebook's virtual world has its advantages and disadvantages, pluses and minuses. The mind's product can have, under the specific conditions, positive effects and negative effects. Sometimes enthusiastically using Facebook the teenager ignores the negative effects.

Keywords: teenager, prosumer, Facebook, irrational beliefs, behavior

As a concept, the "self" (self-esteem) can be approached from various scientific paradigms or theories. According to the humanist theory of personality – one of its representatives being Rogers – the individual perceives the exterior objects and his or her own experiences by attaching significance to them. Perceptions, next to the significances they receive, form a system which represents the individual's phenomenal field. The parts of it which the individual perceives as "mine," "I," "me," represents the self[2]. Although the self goes through transformations throughout a lifetime, it preserves at all times this characteristic of a structured, integrated, and organized system.

The self, nevertheless, is not the "small person" inside us. The self doesn't "do" anything through itself; it only coordinates the behavior of the

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individual. This system of experiences and perceptions known as "self" answers, in general, to the calling coming from our consciousness, thus being able to become conscious. Although each individual has a set of experiences which he or she is not aware of, one is conscious of the image of one's self. Rogers considers that such a definition of self is accurate and useful to research at the same time since a definition of self which would take into account the subconscious material could not be used as an instrument in objective research. A structural concept related to the one mentioned is that of the ideal self. The ideal self is that image of one's self one wishes to acquire the most. It includes the perceptions and significations potentially relevant for the self but which have a great importance for the individual.

As a result, the image one forms about one's self is also an organized and unitary structure of perceptions which led to the drawing of self and of which the consciousness took note. The evaluation of one's image of one's self leads to establishing the level of one's self esteem by understanding the way in which people perceive themselves and the world. People react in such a way as to preserve the self's consistency and keep the perceptions related to self and those related to experience congruent. This is why the experiences which affect the unity of self's image can be – due to some defensive mechanisms (distortion and negation) – blocked from reaching the conscious area.

According to a series of studies, people tend to act so that they preserve and self-confirm the image of their selves. People continuously need to be appreciated and seen highly. In those circumstances in which the appreciation manifests unconditionally, the individual has the possibility to develop in an atmosphere of congruency and self-fulfillment. On the other hand, when the appreciation is conditioned, people tend to eliminate from their consciousness certain experiences and to limit their potential of self-fulfillment.

There are forces of development existing in each individual. The organism's natural growth and development implies a growing complexity, an expansion, a stronger selfienomy and socialization – thus, the self-fulfillment. From this perspective, the self-esteem sums up certain essential elements, such as knowledge of one's self, a feeling of safety, a feeling of competency and a feeling of belonging.

A healthy development of personality is based on a family and social climate in which the individual is offered filly the possibility to experiment, thus learning to accept himself or herself and being, at the

same time, accepted by others even if they disapprove sometimes certain particular aspects of his or her behavior. For example, the parents of children with a high self-esteem are caring and tolerant but firm and constant in applying the pre-established rules.

According to the social-cognitive theory[3], the self-esteem is born from the social origins of the behavior and from the cognitive processes' implications in all aspects of human functioning. The individual is seen as agent of action, while the origins of the behavior are considered to be generally social. The person is considered to be active, reacting differently to various circumstances. The cognitive processes are used in order to represent events, to anticipate the future, to choose among many alternatives and to communicate with others. According to this theory, the behavior can be explained in the light of an interaction between the person and the environment, process which is considered reciprocal determinism. According to the above-mentioned theory, a particular aspect of the perception of the self is given by the feeling of self efficiency, defined as the self perceived capacity of handling certain situations. The processes through which the individual adapts to the immediate realities are: observational learning – which refers to the capacity of learning behavioral answers – emotional reactions, and general rules resulting from observing others and from one's own direct experience.Through these two adjusting processes, self regulation becomes a natural consequence, though which the individual manifests his or her capacity of influencing his or her own behavior, more than reacting mechanically to external influences. This is done through self empowering and setting up a set of standards and values. An important factor in one's self regulation is the perceived self efficiency which influences one both at the cognitive and emotional level and all the most at the level of effective performance.

These two theoretical approaches are at the basis of the study of the self-esteem at the adolescent from the perspective of posting selfies on Facebook. The study aligns with the other studies on the effect the new media communication has on the homo cyber of 2.0 web area. The amazing rhythm in which the applications of any software are enriched and diversify from one hour to another determine the necessity of a longer period of time for observing the long-term effects on the individual who is wholeheartedly involved in the communicational act and who is many times completely immersed in this type of communication.

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[3] Apud Opre, A., (2006), Teoria social-cognitivă a personalității, În A. Opre, Introducere în teoriile personalității, Ed. ASCR, Cluj Napoca.

The present study aims to observe a certain type of communicational behavior and self-representation on Facebook, which imitates the models promoted by mass media (TV, radio, printed and online press) for the producer-consumer adolescent (both a producer and a consumer of media). The study also aims to identify the effects the new media generates on the producer-consumer adolescent's self-esteem.

One of the mimetic behaviors observed within the testing group Teens Cluj, created for this research, was the Selfie phenomenon. A selfie is considered to be a photographic self-representation which is snapped with a mobile phone and shared on the online social networks. This is a way of expressing one's individual and social experiences, personality, and level of self-esteem. Selfie was deemed "word of the year 2013" by the Oxford Dictionaries.

The Association of American Psychiatrists (AAP) published a conclusion according to which generating Selfies in excess can lead to psychological problems. The new malady is defined as "the obsessive-compulsive desire of taking pictures and using them on the social networks as a way of regaining one's self esteem and of making up for everything missing in one's private life".

The number of studies done on the Facebook phenomenon and its implications at the level of the human personality is ever-growing. Some results confirm the need for Facebook's existence in the life of the postmodern individual while others warn about its negative effects. For example, the Internet addiction is widely seen as having negative effects, especially on the formation of children and adolescents.

Our study was conducted on a pilot group and tries to establish a correlation between posting selfies on Facebook and the level of self-esteem in 16 year old adolescents from two liberal arts high-schools in Cluj.

Research design

The purpose of this study:
Determining the impact that selfie has on exhibiting self esteem and on the mimetic behavior of 16 year old teenagers.

Theoretical-methodological objectives:
- Evidencing the relationship between *selfie adepts* and certain types of attitudes and beliefs

- Determining the level of self esteem at *selfie prosumers*;
- Identifying the correlation between the dependence degree of teenage Facebook users and the mimetic behavior in the case of certain types of *selfies*.
- Observing the connection between social desirability and selfie posts

Practical objectives:
- Identifying the types of attitudes and beliefs of Facebook teenage adepts
- Measuring the level of self esteem in relation to the received feed-back: number of Likes, number of shares, number of positive/ negative Comments;
- Measuring the degree of dependence considering the number of selfie posts by teenagers on Facebook in accordance with models from mass media (radio, TV, newspapers or on-line): selfie type A ([4] duck face); selfie type B ([5] VIP), type C[6] selfie (couple type selfie), selfie type D[7] (group-selfie) and selfie type E (the person and the animal) in relation to the time spent on Facebook
- Establishing the types of mimetic selfies inspired by mass media (radio, TV, newspapers or online) in accordance with the principle of social conformity

The assumptions of the research

Hypothesis no. 1
It shall be presumed that selfie adepts who post with a high frequency (daily) have low self esteem as compared to teenagers who do not post frequently (1 time/ week or 2-3 times/month)

*Assumptions derived***:**
1.1. It shall be presumed that the feeling of self esteem is lower for those who post frequently (daily) selfie than for those who do not post very often (1 time/ week or 2-3 times/month).

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[4] Duck, smiling face, bust, provocative hand
[5] Couple type selfie
[6] Whole body or a large part of the body, front and side, the hand type VIP, Lady Fabian Attila, Justin Bieber, Rihanna, Bianca Dragusanu
[7] Group of several, type Ellen DeGeneres, president Barack Obama, Bill Clinton, Ellen DeGeneres, advertising in Tel Samsung

1.2. It shall be presumed that self-confidence is lower for those who post frequently (daily) selfie than for those who do not post very often (1 time/ week or 2-3 times/month).

1.3. It shall be presumed that the self esteem has negative aspects for those who post as compared to those who do not post

1.4. It shall be presumed that the level of expectations is lower for those who post frequently (daily) selfie than for those who do not post very often (1/ week or 2-3 times/month).

Hypothesis no. 2

It shall be presumed that there is a higher degree of dependence on Facebook for teenage users who post *selfie* repeatedly frequently (daily) selfie than for those who do not post very often (1/ week or 2-3 times/month).

Assumptions derived:

2.1. It shall be presumed that the time spent on Facebook influences the number and type of *selfies*

2.2. It shall be presumed that Facebook adversely affects school activity of those who post *selfie* repeatedly (daily)

3.3. It shall be presumed that Facebook becomes the solution to the personal problems of the teenagers who post *selfies* repeatedly (daily)

Hypothesis no. 3

It shall be presumed that the following attitudes and beliefs: reason, the need for confirmation of their value, the need to achieve, the need for approval, the need for comfort,

is associated to a greater extent with teenagers who post selfies than to those who do not post.

Assumptions derived:

3.1. It shall be presumed that ***reason*** is associated to a greater extent with those who post *selfies* than with teenagers who do not post

3.2. It shall be presumed that the need for ***confirmation*** is more specific to those who post *selfies* than to teenagers who do not post

3.3. It shall be presumed that the need for ***approval*** is associated to a greater extent to teenagers that post *selfies* than to those who do not post

3.4. It shall be presumed that the need for ***comfort*** is associated to a greater extent to teenagers that post *selfies* than to those who do not post

Hypothesis no. 4

It shall be presumed that there is a correlation between high level of social desirability and posting selfies.

Assumptions derived:

4.1. It shall be presumed that teenagers who post frequently *selfies* adopt a desirable behavior with the purpose of showing social conformity.

4.2. It shall be presumed that the frequent posting of *selfies* increases the degree of social approval, from the group that the adolescent is part of.

Research methodology

The systematic observation method
Analysed group in pilot study:

26 pupils from the tenth grade; members of the National Training - Cluj Napoca

14 pupils from the tenth grade; members of the Orthodox Theology High School - Cluj-Napoca .

Research Tools:

The scale of rational and irrational cognistions (GABS-SF, Dr. Raymond DiGiuseppe, adapted by Bianca Macavei).

The self esteem scale (Rosenberg).

The scale of dependence on Facebook Bergen.

Social scale desirability (Douglas P . Crowne & David Marlowe).

A page of Facebook *Teens Cluj* to which the students involved in the project have had access, has been monitored for several months. Analysis has been carried out for only a month - April - from the school year 2013-2014. The scales were posted on the Facebook page *Teens Cluj* in Google docs. Answers have been processed with SPSS.

The interpretation of the results

Hypothesis no. 1

In the case of the first hypothesis, which stated that the ones who use Selfies have a low self esteem compared to the teenagers who do not post them, we can report the following results:

There is a positive correlation of average intensity between type A Selfie and type D Selfie, respectively between type a Selfie and the number

of Likes D. The numbers of Likes A significantly correlates with the number of Comments A, with the numbers of Likes B and the type C Selfie. The number of Comments A significantly correlates with the number of Likes A, with the number of Likes B and with type C Selfie, with a number of Likes E and with the number of type E Comments. There is a under average positive correlation between the type B Selfie and the number of Likes E and between the type of Selfie B and the number of Comments type E. The numbers of Likes B is significantly correlated with the number of Likes A, with the number of Comments A- a positive average intensity correlation, with type C Selfie- a positive average intensity correlation, type C Likes- a positive average intensity correlation, with the number of type C Comments- a positive below average intensity correlation. The number of Comments B with Selfie C, with the number Likes, with the number of Comments E. Selfie C with the number of Likes A- in a positive correlation of below average intensity; with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation o average intensity, with the number of Likes B- in a positive correlation of average intensity, the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of Likes C with the number of Likes B- in a positive correlation of average intensity. Selfie D with Selfie A- in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of Likes D with Selfie A- in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of Likes E with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of average intensity; with the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of Comments E with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of average intensity; with Selfie B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity; with the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity.

Partial Conclusion:

The teenagers who post Selfies have tried several types of Selfies: individual type A, of a couple type B, individual, VIP, type c, with a group type D, with animals type E.

The monitoring and analysis undergone throughout a month have shown that the favourite type of Selfie, which is posted most frequently, is not directly correlated with the level of *self esteem*. Individually speaking, out of the 40 students, just one has posted frequently and atypically. This person has been excluded from the study in order to establish a correlative value which is relevant for most of the sample. In the case of this student, trough this case study, analyzing the results separately, it was noticed that

his self esteem is lower and posting a Selfie was seen as a need for confirmation. It has been proven that the teenager who posts Selfies frequently (daily) has a lower self esteem than the ones who don't post, or post more rarely. His self image is put in a negative light compared to the other 39 teenagers in the study who don't post as frequently(daily). In their case there is no correlation between the level of self esteem and posting several types of Selfie. And the level of expectancy of the one who posts a Selfie is greater than the ones who don't post so often.

In conclusion, the hypothesis we initially stated has proven to be correct. The ones who post Selfies very frequently (daily) have a lower self esteem compared to the teenagers who don't post as frequently. Of the 40 students, the correlation between Selfies and the level of self esteem was noticed only in the case of the one who posted daily.

Hypothesis no.2

The addiction to Facebook was measured using the test of Facebook addiction and it has taken into consideration the time each student spent on Facebook every day, according to the monitoring of the Teens Cluj Facebook page which permitted to measure how often the study group accessed Facebook and how much time each student spent exclusively on Facebook.

In the matter of Facebook addiction of teen users who post Selfies, we have noticed the following: Selfie A with the number of Likes D- in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of Likes A with Selfie C- in a positive correlation of below average intensity.

The number of Comments A with the number of Likes A- in a positive correlation of below average intensity; with the number of Likes B- in a positive correlation of average intensity; with type C Selfie- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with the number of Likes E- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with the number of Comments E- in a positive Correlation of average intensity. Selfie B with the number of Likes E- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Comments E- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of Likes B with the number of Likes A- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number Of Comments A- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with Selfie C – in a positive correlation of average intensity, with the number of Likes- in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of Comments B with Selfie C – in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Likes E- in a positive correlation of

below average intensity. Selfie C with the number of Likes A – in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Likes B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity,. The number of Likes C with the number of Likes B – in a positive correlation of below average intensity, Selfie D with Selfie A- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. Selfie E with UF_SCOR – in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of Likes E with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with Selfie B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number UF_SCOR – in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of Comments E with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with Selfie B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of UF_SCOR – in a positive correlation of below average intensity. UF_SCOR with the number of Likes E- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Comments E- in a positive correlation of below average intensity.

Conclusion:

39 teenager users, prosumers of Facebook, post rarely (once a week or 2-3 times a month) and are not addicted to Facebook, according to the answers from the tests and monitoring.

The daily usage of Facebook is not positively correlated with the posting of all types of Selfie. For Selfie Type E, the individual joined by an animal, there is a positive correlation in relation to the usage of Facebook. The phenomenon is accountable. Even though Facebook is accessed daily, Selfies are not posted daily. After analyzing the results from school there hasn't been achieved a positive correlation between the time spent on Facebook and the scholastic condition of the 39 moderate prosumer students. Poor learning results are achieved only in the case of the student who uses excessively Facebook and who posts daily Selfies and the starting hypothesis is confirmed.

Hypothesis no. 3
The attitudes and beliefs: reason, the need for confirmation of their value, the need to achieve, the need for approval, the need for comfort associates in a higher degree with the teenagers who post Selfies daily than with those who post rarely.

The number of likes A with the number of likes B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with Selfie C- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of comments A with the number of likes B- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with Selfie C- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of likes E- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with the number of Comments E in a positive correlation of average intensity. Selfie B with the number of likes E- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Comments E – in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of likes B with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with Selfie C- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with the number of likes C- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with the number of Comments C- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of Comments B with Selfie C- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of likes E-in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Comments E- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. Selfie C with the number of likes A- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of likes B- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of likes C with the number of likes B- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with GABS-SF- in a positive significant correlation of below average intensity. The number of likes C with the number of likes B in a negative significant correlation of below average intensity, with GABS-SF(in a negative significant correlation of below average intensity). Selfie D with Selfie A- in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of likes D Selfie A- in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of likes E with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with Selfie B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of Comments E with the number of Comments A – in a positive correlation of average intensity, with Selfie B – in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. GABS-SF with the number of C type likes - in a negative significant correlation of below average intensity with the number of D type Comments- in a negative significant correlation of below average intensity.

Partial conclusion:

The achieved correlations between the types of Selfie (A, B, C, D and E) and the attitudes and opinions of the 10th Grade high school students from social-humanistic specialization prove the fact that *reason* doesn't affiliate better with Selfie sympathizers than with the teenagers who don't post. The need for confirmation of their value, the need to achieve, the need for approval, the need for comfort are very common characteristics of teenagers.

In the case of our study, only the C type Selfie(whole body, provoking attitude) had a significant correlation with the attitudes and opinions measuring scale. It seems that the whole image, individuality as a whole- which bears within significances of emotional, cognitive and mostly sexual nature- needs confirmation for the 16 year-old teenagers which were involved in our study. In the case of the active prosumer student with high addiction to Facebook at the level of reason, of the need for comfort and of the irrationality degree has scored high results.

Hypothesis no. 4

It shall be presumed that there is a correlation between high level of social desirability and posting selfies.

The results achieved in SPSS are:

Selfie A with Selfie D- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of likes D- in a positive correlation of average intensity.

The number of likes A with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of likes B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with Selfie C- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of Comments A with the number of likes A- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, the number of likes B- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with Selfie C- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of likes E- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with the number of Comments E- in a positive correlation of average intensity. Selfie B with the number of likes E- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of Comments E- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with social desirability- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of Comments B with Selfie C- of below average intensity, the number of likes E- of below average intensity, the number of Comments E- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. Selfie C with the number of likes A- in a positive

correlation of below average intensity with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, with the number of likes B- in a positive correlation of average intensity, with the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of likes C with the number of likes B- in a positive correlation of average intensity. Selfie D with Selfie A- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of likes D Selfie A- in a positive correlation of average intensity. The number of likes E with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of average intensity, Selfie B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. The number of Comments E with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of average intensity, the number of Comments E with the number of Comments A- in a positive correlation of average intensity, Selfie B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity, the number of Comments B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity. Social desirability score with Selfie B- in a positive correlation of below average intensity.

Partial conclusion

Regarding the correlations between a high degree of social desirability and the Selfie posts, the teenagers who post frequently and the ones who don't post frequently *selfie* take up a desirable behavior towards the social compliance (fashion). The types of selfie that they post on their Facebook pages are after the models of selfie posted by the pop, rock, dance music stars,…..TV stars, stars that the Media promote (TV, radio, on-line press).

The social desirability correlates positively and significantly with the type of selfie B, that is with the type of selfie in which the individual/ person appears with a friend/girlfriend. Involving the individual in a social context, after the models of selfie established by the Media increases proportionally with the value of the social desirability(established through the SPSS programme) and contributes at the social approval growth from the small, familiar group that the teenager is part of. This conclusion stands for all the 40 students from this study.

Final Conclusion:

The impact of using Facebook and posting selfies have upon expressing self esteem and imitating behavior of 16 year-old teenagers shows a variation connected to the time spent on Facebook, the degree of addiction to Facebook, specific individual elements of the subjects from the study sample.

Out of the 40 students that have been observed, 39 of them are students that use Facebook every day for up to 2 hours a day and post once a week or 2-3 time a month. In the case of these students, self esteem is not significantly influenced, the addiction to Facebook is low, their attitudes and beliefs (reason, the need for confirmation of their value, the need to achieve, the need for approval, and the need for comfort) do not associate in a significant measure. On the other hand, the social desirability is significantly correlated with the teenagers' activity on Facebook (especially posting the types of selfies).

In the case of the student who was addicted to Facebook, all the hypotheses of the research are confirmed. So, the moderate, reasonable use of Facebook cannot have negative influences. If one exaggerates, as in the case of all exaggerations, the consequences are negative.

The group of students that have been selected for the research is small. But it can represent a pilot sample which can generate a macro research sometime in the future.

Facebook is perseveringly trying, through various attractive services that are brought daily on the market of communication, to get the attention of the users, to achieve their constancy. The effects of these technical benefits upon the human physique, upon our lives are a result which is corroborated with the way these mass communication means are administrated, alongside social context, the individual identity, the level of culture and education, and the individual specificities.

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