



REVIEW ARTICLE

SELFIE MARKETING-EXPLORATION OF THE USER PROFILE

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ABSTRACT

The Selfie is taking a photo of yourself, sharing it on social networks, waiting for feedback, rinse and repeat. The proliferation of mobile phone technology combined with the popularity of social media applications has made 'selfie' as Word Of the Year, 2013. People who take Selfies can be grouped into two categories: the Chronic Abuser or the Occasional Poster. Chronic Abusers take Selfies multiple times a day. The Occasional Poster, meanwhile, tends to only snap a Selfie when the occasion presents itself to be favorable. The PEW Research Centre reported that 91% of teenagers have taken 'Selfie', which might suggest a divided perspective between generations. A new disorder has been identified by APA (American Psychiatric Association) due to selfie among the selfie addicts known as "Selfitis". Few reports have mentioned that the morale of people has changed because of selfie. Selfie, a new medium of self-expression and self-representation is usually posted in social media like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. These environment of social media influences a person's mood and attitude. This study analyses such influences made by selfie and the positive and negative impacts created by it. It examines the business opportunities introduced by selfie in various sectors. This selfie culture has brought incredible creativity in taking photographs by bringing out new poses and unimaginable location choices from people. It has also brought innovations in mobile applications and technological advancement in front camera. Selfie also accounts for the emergence of safe-selfie campaigns, rehab and counseling centers due to its negative impacts. This study answers the major two questions, why are selfies taken and how do brand capitalize this trend.

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INTRODUCTION

Selfies can be a powerful tool in attracting attention of socially responsible millennials to the brands. Selfies has been used by many companies nowadays to engage and attract and trigger the customers or at least to generate a traffic. The most successful marketing selfie campaigns are those that have a concise yet catchy hashtag unique to the brand or issue, a clear connection to the brand is supporting and multiple ways for users to engage. Selfie is defined as "a photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically with a smartphone or webcam and uploaded to a social media website. The selfie has opened up opportunities for brands to market themselves online. They are used in advertising campaigns, social media, and promotions to build brands when the business releases a new product or a new solution, including celebrity brands, corporate brands, and personal brands. Selfies are highly effective at driving likes, shares, and comments on a user's post, and brands can make use of this trend to increase awareness of and engagement with their products and services among fans and followers.

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Some businesses hold contests that encourage fans and followers to take photos of themselves with particular products. Users then post the photos on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram with a particular hashtag, giving the business increased reach across multiple social media platforms and they also offer discounts or rewards for users who post selfies of themselves engaging with the business's products. Selfies can combine humor and reality for social media campaigns, in particular when other marketing tools can't. Selfies are a big trend right now; they are indeed a product of the times. Done the right way it can be a method for engaging and connecting people to the brands, while also building a more refined experience into your social media channels. This study is quantitative in nature. Primary study was conducted using a structure questionnaire. A total of 100 respondents who were part of the selfie campaign completed the survey.

Review of Literature

Online interactions have increasing number of images than text. The images shared in social media (Instagram) have increased by 900 times from 2012- 2015. The styles adopted, majority gender seen in selfies differ from one country to

another (Diego de Las Casas *et al.*, 2015). One study found that posting pictures on Facebook is positively correlated with an appearance contingency of self-worth. This indicated that people who frequently post pictures to Facebook are more likely to stake their self-esteem in their appearance (Stefanone *et al.*, 2011). In particular, it is found that female users who base their self-worth on their appearances tend to share more photos online and maintain the largest online networks for social media than men (Stefanoe, Lackaff, & Rosen, 2011). Vacation spots, famous landmarks, and recreational destinations are all featured as primary elements of place for selfies. The Twitter hashtag #drivingselfie exemplifies the curious character of place within selfies. News outlets have carried stories of teens driving while taking photographs, offering the tags #drivingselfies, #drivingtoward, and #ihopeidontcrash (Popkin, 2013). The final relationship inherent to selfies is their networked quality. While self-portraits have long been a tradition in photography, selfies are taken to be shared on digital networks and through location-based services (Hjorth & Gu, 2012). In this sense, they are understood as public acts and public artifacts. In the last quarter of 2014, worldwide smart-phone subscriptions were up 20%, with fastest growth in underpenetrated markets such as China, India, Indonesia, Brazil, and Russia (Gartner, 2014). As to what people are doing with those phones, Google reports that, in 2014, people took approximately 93 million selfies per day on just Android models alone (Brandt, 2014). Since 2014, 49 deaths have been reported and this is just an underestimate as most of the deaths have not been reported. More than a quarter of the deaths has concentrated among 21-years old and 75% of them are male. (Priconomics). Following lot of accidents in the Mumbai city, police identified 16 dangerous “selfie spots” within the city and have erected warning signs and life guards in those places.

DISCUSSION

Images tagged as #selfie began appearing on the photo-sharing website Flickr as early as 2004. But it was the introduction of smartphones – most crucially the iPhone 4, which came along in 2010 with a front-facing camera – that made the selfie go viral. According to the latest annual Ofcom communications report, 60% of UK mobile phone users now own a smartphone and a recent survey of more than 800 teenagers by the Pew Research Centre in America found that 91% posted photos of themselves online – up from 79% in 2006.

Occasions

Selfies are taken on certain occasions. Though nowadays the range has increased such that there is no criteria. It is now taken anytime, anywhere. Below are some of the most common occasions for taking a selfie.

- With Celebrity
- Me Time
- With your pet
- Bathroom selfies
- Outing
- Birthday/Party
- Fun times
- With friends
- Sunrise/sunset

Holding positions

- **Two hand selfie:** Use both of your hands to hold the phone and the one of the fingers for clicking the picture (or) hold mobile with one hand and use another to click the picture. Its advantage is to avoid blurred image.
- **Wide Angle Selfie:** To cover a large group of people, call it Groupie or Wefie, hold the camera high and tilt a little.
- **Horizontal Selfie:** To cover two or more people, hold the mobile horizontal. Pose in such a way that gives a cheerful look. Picture should not look dull.
- **Vertical Selfie:** If only one person is taking a selfie, vertical angle is the best. So that if a particular style is to be shown, it will be vivid. Strike a Pose that shows the 'Good Side' of you.

Different Selfie poses

- Open mouthed
- Slightly toothed
- Duck face
- Sparrow face
- Fish gape
- Squinch
- Pout
- Kissy face
- Tongue out
- Brow too strong face
- Smize
- Thumb face
- Drunken selfie
- Cringey snap
- Monster snap

Selfie- Negative Effects

Selfitis (Mental disorder): The American Psychiatric Association (APA) has termed SELFITIS, a newly developed mental disorder, where a person develops an obsessive compulsive disorder of clicking selfies. Selfie is of two types – individual and group (groupie). It is found that individual selfies are of great concern, where individuals get addicted to taking more selfies in a day. A study conducted by Sion hospital, among school students showed that majority of the “selfie-addicts” were girls and it also showed that 55% of the selfie-takers were insecure or self-obsessed. Doctors have broadly classified selfie-takers into 3 categories:

- Borderline (taking at least three pictures of self but not posting them on social media),
- Acute (taking at least three photos of oneself every day and posting them on social media) and
- Chronic severe (taking at least six photos of self every day and posting them on social media).

Selfie Accidents: Following lot of accidents in the Mumbai city, police identified 16 dangerous “selfie spots” within the city and have erected warning signs and life guards in those places. Selfie-related accidents have killed more people worldwide this year than shark attacks. At least 49 people have died since 2014 in selfie-related accidents.

- An American woman fell to her death while taking a selfie with her boyfriend on a cliff in South Africa.
- Two Russian men were killed while taking a selfie with a hand grenade.
- Three Indian students were killed by an oncoming train while taking selfies on train tracks.
- A Romanian teenager was electrocuted when she was taking a selfie on top of a train and touched a high-voltage wire.
- A Russian teen was also electrocuted after touching live wires while taking a selfie near railway tracks.

Objectives of the Study

- To explore the usage pattern of selfie and the user's profile
- To understand the positive and negative impacts on people

Research Design

The study investigates "Selfie" is a working paper and exploratory in nature used both primary and secondary data. A survey & interview schedule method using simple random sampling method on selfie users was administered. A survey instrument (Questionnaire) was developed measuring usage pattern and impacts. The Questionnaire was administered to a sample of 100 selfie freaks representing social groups such as students and working professionals. Results were presented using Descriptive statistics, Correlation, infographics using SPSS and Excel.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Among the respondents of the survey 53 percent are female 47 percent are male. Around 71 percent are from urban area, 22 percent are from semi-urban region and remaining 7 percent are from rural region.
- iPhone is considered to be a "Selfie Expert" followed by Samsung
- Feeling of looking good urge our respondents to click a selfie followed by wearing a new attire and changing whereas 10 percent of the people have no reasons to click a selfie.
- Just smiling tops the list as the most favorite pose for taking selfie followed by tongue out and slightly tooth exposed poses.
- Users prefer mirror selfie more compared to make-up free selfie and selfie of selfie and they wanna click vertical selfie.
- Selfies are shared across Whatsapp followed by Facebook, surprisingly Instagram trails.
- Respondents directly correlate their amount of happiness with the number of likes they get for their selfies they share.
- And it's serious, people don't edit selfie's before posting, if they wish to edit Retrica does the job followed by candycam.
- Participation in the promotion campaign or contest involving selfie is very less which shows that selfie is not yet fully tapped by the marketers for their promotional activities and to build their brand.

- Most of our respondents members are emotionally stable but a few have taken risks like standing on the edge of a cliff, standing at the top of the hill, peaks, selfie in middle of the road.
- Depression and suicides are the most common mental disorders of selfie

Research Limitations

The main limitations of this research include people who doesn't use internet, who had not been through selfie campaign before in their lifetime, people who are below the age of 18 and brand consultants.

Practical Implications

The social media phenomenon, better known as the Selfie is now commonly viewed as a tool people use to share their individuality with others on channels like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, as well as a form of self-branding. Selfies showcasing people with negative emotions can be identified and companies can use it to target them to feel valuable with their brands in selfies. This acts as a marketing strategy with minimum budget.

Conclusion

Selfie (Mobile) phones have become an extended arm of the digital generation. This tool is a twin edged psychological sword; meaning it makes a selfie-maniac extremely happy and also extremely lost in the social world. Further, studies are being made on the percentage of domestic accidents and life losses because of selfie habits. Days are gone where people felt that phones are for formal photos, and the big-data analytics say that new human psychological order theories may arise due to smart phones and social networks. Selfie and social grouping are an upcoming area in the studies of consumer psychology. Never the less we can say that "tell me your selfie... and we will tell about you".

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