



The Sociology of Selfies

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Abstract

Background: “Selfie” is a modern phenomenon of the 21st century; the work of taking and sharing a selfie with friends/others pre-dates the Internet and was named the Oxford Dictionary Word for the year 2013 (Veena & Krishnamurthy 2015). This led to the emergence of new social phenomena that have a strong impact on society, say the selfie, a modern evolution of the self portrait usually taken with a digital camera or a camera phone (Mazza, et. al., 2016). Now Selfies are not individual phenomenon but rather involves actor’s perspective, the relevant others and societal perspectives.

Methods: The present study has a descriptive-cum-explanatory research design and Secondary source of data was used for the research. Selfies have been mainly discussed in the academic world from a communicative and gender perspective. Given the strong social implications, now time has come to look at it from the broader perspective and to analyse this phenomenon through the prism of sociological standpoint.

Results: This highlighted how the selfie phenomenon is perceived differently in various cultures and societies. In particular, the results show that factors such religion, sex, customs and geopolitical situations affect the space-time, distribution of selfies around the world. The tendency of taking own pictures has turn into an observable fact of the new culture of the society. Furthermore, there are notable differences between how women and men present themselves online. These differences reflect the traditional values of how men and women should present themselves in society. Though there are positive facets of selfies but the addiction of selfie leads to Skin damage, Loss self-confidence & self esteem, Suicide, Mental illness, damage real relationships, Plastic surgery even Deaths especially among youth.

Conclusion: In this century, the technology and social media is influence our life directly. In this manner, the selfie take more place on youth. They share their selfies on Facebook and posted selfie on WhatsApp, viber, twitter, instagram. According to review of secondary literature, the research finding revealed that there is a negative impact of selfie particularly on youth. Time has come to create public awareness about the negative consequences of selfies right from the school to the community and society level. The phenomenon of selfie is not peculiar to some societies or nations, rather it is happening all over the world.

Keywords: Selfies, Social Media, Self Representation, Gender-Presentation, Gender Stereotype

1. Introduction

The continued existence of advanced information communication technology and the internet has revolutionized the society and their standard of living today (Ogbomo, 2008). New media technologies are changing the social status and lifestyle of human being in a paradigm shift in technological society. The tendency of capturing own images has turn into a phenomenon of the recent culture of the society. The culture which has been gaining recognition as of these days has not merely increased the concentration of teenager, but also the adults (Tajuddin, Hassan & Ahmad, 2015). Smartphone self-portraits or “selfies” as named in social media tags, are enlarging drawing media consideration and sociological analysis. In the last few years, capturing selfies has become a global phenomenon. Individuals from dissimilar socio-economic, sexual category, race and age groups take selfies in different occasions (Bruno, & others 2014). This enormous amount of self-portrait images captured and pooled on social media is modernizing the way individuals introduce themselves and the surround of their friends to the globe. While capturing photos of oneself can be seen basically as documenting personal memories (Kalayeh et. al., 2015). This research study seeks to analyze this integration to inspect why individuals upload images to different social media platforms and how it affects themselves (Veena & Krishnamurthy, 2015).

A **selfie** (/selfi:/) is a self-portrait photograph, typically taken with a digital camera or camera phone held in the hand or supported by a selfie stick. Selfies are often shared on social networking services such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. They are usually flattering and made to appear casual. Most selfies are taken with a camera held at arm's length or pointed at a mirror, rather than by using a self-timer. A selfie stick can be used to position the camera farther away from the subject, allowing the camera to see more around them.(www.wikipidea.com) A photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically one taken with a Smartphone or webcam and shared via social media (oxford dictionary). As we know selfie has become a part of modern society. It's not culture dependent in fact selfie spread all over the world and accepted by all the cultures very easily. Selfie can be taken by anyone and anywhere. It's free from age boundation From child ones to old ones anyone can take the picture of itself. Selfie become the word of the year in 2013 by oxford dictionaries.

2. Mapping the selfie

Robert Cornelius, an early American photographer, has been credited with taking the first selfie: in 1839, Cornelius, using one of the earliest cameras, set up his camera and ran into the shot. The broader availability of point-and-shoot cameras in the 20th century led to more self-portraits, with many using the (still) popular method of snapping a photograph in front of a mirror. Selfie technology took a giant leap forward with the invention of the camera phone (Weigold, 2016).

2.1 History of the selfie

“Selfie” is a modern phenomenon of the 21st century; the work of taking and sharing a selfie with friends/others pre-dates the Internet and was named the Oxford Dictionary Word for the year 2013. According to the oxford dictionary, “a photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically one taken with a Smartphone or webcam and uploaded to a social media website” (Day, 2013). The work of sharing “cartes de visite,” or compact sized photos, dates back to the 1860s. In 1880, the photo cubicle was introduced, which catch the attention of people to capture self-photographs just as they immobile do today (Volpe, 2013). The discovery of the self-timer in the behind 1880s permitted for any human being capturing a photograph to fixed their camera and let themselves 5 to 10 seconds to catch into a shot (MichaeF, 1995). This is understood to be the beginning of what is at the present known as a selfie, or self-photograph. The first Polaroid camera was sold in the year 1948. This camera could be held at an arm's length, which supported persons to capture more intimate self-photos .The terminology phrase “selfie,” though, first emerged in 2002 in an online post from Australia. However Since November 19, 2013 Oxford Dictionaries publicized selfie as “the international Word of the Year”. The definition of the selfie that was created by the Oxford Dictionary in 2013 highlights two important elements i.e. the front—facing camera and the distribution of images through social media.

These two variables make selfies different from other, earlier, media of self--imaging. The front—facing camera of a Smartphone allows an individual to simultaneously see their reflection and record it. This is possible for the first time in history as mirrors allowed us to see our reflection but not record it, and analogue cameras the other way around (Rettberg, 2014). Originally, the front—facing camera on a mobile phone was intended for video calls. Several mobile phones released in late 2003 introduced the front—facing camera, amongst others the Sony Ericsson Z1010 (Nerdeky.com, 2003). The quality was significant lower than the rear camera, similar to the relative low resolutions of webcams used for video chatting. The resurgence of the selfie happened in 2010 when Apple released their iPhone 4 (Losse, 2013) and social media photo applications like Instagram and Hipstamatic were launched. These tools made it possible for users to have complete control over the selfie: the framing of the selfie, the afterwards editing with filters, brightness and contrast, and its distribution. Over the years more and more applications were launched that focused primarily on using the front—facing camera, like Dubsmash (Mobile Motion, 2014), a lip—synching app That allows users to recreate their favorite movie scene lines, or Snapchat (Snapchat. Inc. 2011), a video Messaging app that allows users To take photos, record videos, add text and drawings, and send them to their friends. These snaps can only be seen for a limited time after they are removed, or can be added to *My Story*, which is available for all ones followers for 24 hours (Laan, 2016)

2.2 The selfie era

The selfie we know today has developed through the rise of social media sites that in turn cultivated the need for a profile picture. In the era of MySpace from 2006 to 2009 self portraits were often taken in front of a bathroom mirror producing an inferior “flash-blinded” image that invoked a self-representation of “bad taste”. The launch of Facebook in 2004 with its superior profile photo “announced a clean, well-lit model of orderly selfhood”. Crucially, the launch of the iPhone 4 with its front facing 5 megapixel autofocus camera in 2010 was a key technological advance (apple.com, 2010, Losse 2013, Day 2013, Malik 2012). These cameras now embedded in the smartphone and tablet market, transformed self- portraiture enabling the selfie to go viral (Losse 2013, Day 2013). On the go software applications such as Instagram, with its mobile only photo orientated social platform of “shared experiences” and stylised filters challenged the dominance of Facebook’s social network, eventually prompting Facebook to acquire Instagram for nearly a billion dollars in stock and cash (Malik, 2012). More recently Snapchat, now valued at 15 billion dollars, has become an increasingly attractive way of sharing photos (Arthurs, 2015). Snapchat’s self-destructing quality provides its users with a level of control over who views their photos and the length of the time that they are available. Moreover, it appears that teenagers in particular are leaving Facebook for Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter, “at an estimated rate of up to a million a year” (Lang 2015 cited in Laughlin, 2015). In other words the emergence and spread of new technologies affects our daily lives, creating new ways to communicate, relate, think and act. Social networking websites (SNSs) have become an integral channel for communication and self-expression in the life of many; the term SNS refers to a web based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semipublic profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). We use SNSs to find satisfaction of certain needs, such as association and selfesteem through individuals who share similar interests and with whom there are often bonds even outside the social networks, like friends, family and peers. Thanks to social networks we can stay in touch with the world outside, keep us updated on what's happening, tell about us and compare us with others. (Mazza, et. al., 2016) The use of social networks has undergone an exponential growth in the last decade and it involves an increasing number of individuals: Facebook, the most popular social network, counts 1 and a half billion users around the world, with an average of nearly 1 billion daily active users (Facebook, Company Info); on Twitter there are 316 million monthly active users that produce 500 million tweets per day (Twitter, Press); Instagram, a mobile photo sharing application, exhibits 400 million monthly active users, which load about 85 million of pictures every day, which sum to the 40 billion pictures already hosted on the platform from October 2010 (Instagram, Press Page). Unlike most popular social networks, Instagram allows only to share pictures

and videos, to which the user can apply filters and associate hashtags (terms preceded by the # character) that allow the user to categorize the media shared by topics. At the same time it's a social network where you can follow the photographic work of other users, leave a comment and show preferences for specific pictures. Filters modify the images recorded. Sometimes they are used to make only subtle changes to images; other times the image would simply not be possible without them (Wikipedia, Optical Filter). Instagram filters, unlike traditional filters, are not accessories but a set of settings and software changes that are applied to the digital image after the shot. The user can choose which filter apply to the picture among the available, each of which brings different aesthetic alterations. All filters however have in common, the tendency to give your image a more analogic and antique look. An hashtag is a word or a short phrase preceded by the character # (hash), it works as a label for the media to which it refers, in the case of Instagram a picture or a video. Through hashtags is possible to classify and search for pictures or videos related to a certain subject, they can be used to follow or tracing an event, but also to make what a user shares accessible to a wider audience exploiting the popularity of certain words (Mazza, et. al., 2016). The selfie exposes the individual's image on the network satisfying his need to tell about him and confront himself with others; It's a self representation tool, but also a communication tool. Thus confirms the thesis of Marshall McLuhan, according to which the transmitted message consists in the same nature of the medium, namely that "the medium is the message (McLuhan, 1967)": the phenomenon of the selfie has become in short time the most appropriate way to convey the message that is "myself". This message is not only formed by the self-portrait, but is enriched by metadata: additional information that may be provided by the same user or automatically generated by the service used (Mazza, et. al., 2016).

2.3 Nature of selfies

Selfies are self-portrait photographs, usually taken with a Smartphone or webcam and shared via social media websites (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013) and are a modern form of self presentation (Hunt, Lin, & Atkin, 2014). Selfies have become an important part of the visual communication in social media and are a growing trend. So-called social media (Carr & Hayes, 2015), e.g. social networking sites (SNS) like Facebook and photo sharing websites like Instagram etc. give everybody the opportunity to present themselves with their selfies to a wider Internet audience. There are many different types of self-presentation in selfies depending on the photographic angle and perspective, photo filters, situations etc. In public discourse more and more subgenres of selfies are pronounced: selfies taken while working out are referred to as fitness-selfies (Fausing, 2013), welfies (work-out selfies) (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013) or healthies. Other word creations are the belfie (back side selfie), the prelfie (pregnant selfie) (Bennett & Burke, 2014) and the drelfie (drunken selfie) (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013). Selfies inevitably deal with gender expressions on two levels: the persons producing the selfies a) bring certain gender expressions with them (e.g. through their styling and attire) and they b) create gender expressions while taking the selfies (e.g. through choice of posture, facial expression or gaze in the photo). Focusing on gender expressions, the question arises how gender-stereotypical selfies are. For example, do females display themselves in selfies more often in postures suggesting weakness, subordination, and seduction (e.g. by lying down and/or making a kissing pout) and even self-objectification, while males more often demonstrate their physical strength (e.g. by standing solidly and/or showing off their muscles)? (Doring, Reif & Poeschl, 2016). And the other type of selfie which author has given the name of Showfies (or show-off selfies) are those selfies where people try to attract the attention of others by clicking selfies either with new branded items be it accessories, clothes, bike, cars, any picnic spot so on and or even sometimes showing new house by taking selfie in front of new home. Author has observed this type of selfie is more prevalent in Kashmir than other types of selfies.

Tourists taking their selfie during fresh snowfall at Famous Tourist Resort Gulmarg Kashmir.

Photo: #Faisal_Bashir



Source; facebook/Kashmir reflector, on 4-11-2018

2.4 Selfie statistics

The data relate to the number of selfies shared in each country (tab. 1). United States appears to be the nation where most selfies were shared during the four weeks, remarkable is the difference from the second country in the ranking, Italy, that is close to 100,000 selfies. A justification for this significant gap between United States and the other countries can be given by its high population of over than 310 million people, making it the third most populous country after China and India. In China however, access to Instagram is blocked by the government (Mazza, et. al., 2016)., while in India purchase a smartphone is a luxury reserved to a small part of the population, since nearly 75% of it live with less than 2\$ per day (The Times of India)

Table 1. Top Five Countries with Most Selfies.

Country	Number of selfies
United States	175,605
Italy	76,505
Turkey	67,090
Brazil	65,651
United Kingdom	53,414

Courtesy: (Mazza, et. al., 2016)

The evidences also emphasizes that countries with low “selfie density” are generally the most economically depressed areas on the planet, or the countries where there are strong personal freedom limits. China, for instance, despite it’s the country with the highest population value has a low “selfie density”, ranging from 0.000013 to 0.000029 per inhabitant. Same is the situation in North Korea, which is ruled by a government that restricts internet usage (Jacobs, 2013). We observe also that low “selfie density” values are present in countries with very low HDI 3 (Human Development Reports, Data) like the countries located in the central part of Africa, in particular Niger, Republic of Congo, Central Africa, Chad and Sierra Leone which occupy the last five positions in the world rankings based on the HDI value. Also Afghanistan, involved in a war, exhibits a small number of shared selfies compared to the number of inhabitants. Instead, countries with a stable economic situation and with free internet access, have the highest “selfie density”. Notably, Italy is the second country for SIM card, with an average of 1.59 SIM per person and is visited every month by thousands of tourists (Mazza, et. al., 2016).

4. Methodology

The present study is predominantly based on secondary sources, as well as observation and conversations with the significant others on the theme at hand. Data was obtained from Books, Journals, Research Papers, websites, doctors’ reviews, experts’ opinions and other relevant unpublished archival material available on this subject. Consequently, the present study has an descriptive-cum-explanatory research design. Selfie culture has generated a considerable amount of debate and discourse and the purpose of this study is to explore sociologically the selfie practices and adds to the growing interdisciplinary academic research and literature seeking to understand this new phenomenon.

4.1 Need of the study

The selfie craze has gathered a lot of concentration and behind the recently-minted distinction from Oxford Dictionaries. Selfies are exploding up everywhere all over the world of social media, and most recently even a number of the world's most famous personalities of society – from prime ministers and the pope, to athletes, and politicians—not just teens are skipping on the bandwagon. Whereas a few people love them, others hate them, while they are still as popular as ever. Taking ‘selfies’ and sharing them through social media websites, has develop into one of the trendy enjoyable activities, we can’t deny. But especially few of us, do identify the hidden facts after this addiction of “selfies” is also flattering the foundation of numerous psychological mental illness and disorders and selfie Can Turn Deadly. In addition, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) had officially classified taking “Selfies” as a mental disorder (Veena & Krishnamurthy, 2015). *Philadelphia* CBS news (Sep, 2015) reports states that, “more deaths have occurred as a result of taking a selfie than from being attacked by a shark this year”. The report declares that 12 people have died in 2015 while taking a selfie, while only 8 have died from shark attacks. “A cool selfie could cost you your life,” the interior ministry warned in a new leaflet packed with tips such as “a selfie with a weapon kills”. That warning comes after a string of recent selfie-related accidents. In May, a 21-year-old woman accidentally shot herself in the head in Moscow while taking a selfie holding a pistol. The mobile phone with the selfie survived as a record. In May, a teenager in the Ryazan region died while attempting to photograph himself as he climbed on a railway bridge and accidentally came into contact with live electrical wires (Veena & Krishnamurthy, 2015). Furthermore Pew Research Center (2013) points out that 73 percent of the Internet users use social networking sites, and fully 40% of cell phone owners use a social networking site on their phone. With the growing of online communities, it enables people to share their lives, including selfies, with each other and to maintain their close relationship. Consequently, online communities and selfie culture are inseparable (Analyze Teenagers’ Selfie Culture in Taiwan, 2014). Therefore to study selfie culture in present society and in light of the above facts is not only sociologically imperative but rather need of the hour is to study it from psychological, economic, political, historical aspects as well.

4.2 Theoretical View

This Study is an interaction between different theoretical perspectives. Unfortunately, there is dearth of new theories about this latest phenomenon of selfie. Though theories presented below are not the most recent ones. But they are still valid, since the thoughts about self—presentation, identity and social reproduction still holds today (Wrarmert, 2014). The presentation of the self presupposes an audience, observers or co-participants. In applying Goffman's theory of performance to the selfie we can see the selfie as the “front” performance managed through a setting of optional filters and aesthetic props. As Goffman argues, a personal front may include clothing, sex, age, racial characteristics, size and looks, facial expressions, bodily gestures (Goffman 1959). Goffman argues some are fixed yet some sign vehicles are mobile and transitory. However, Goffman suggests that performances are socialized and molded and modified to fit into the understanding and expectations of the society in which they are presented (Goffman 1959). The presentation of the self in the selfie can in this manner be seen as very much a front stage performance that complies with a script of body and beauty norms. Moreover It is essential for all individuals to create a personality, which doesn't interfere with the expectations from the group. The expectations of the group are equal to the norms of the surrounding social units, like friends and family. These expectations and norms of social units are often referred to as social structures (Wrarmert.2014). However, as Jenkins argues the problem with Goffman's framework “is its vision of the human world as rule-governed, scripted and ritualised”. Moreover, rules are not sufficiently flexible to deal with the variability and unpredictability of modern life (Jenkins, 2014).

On the other hand Sociologist Anthony Giddens writes that social forces determine our interaction with others. The way we behave is not only based on random acts and individual intentions. Similar to Goffman, Giddens state that we are in fact very dependent on surrounding social rules and norms of society. However, individuals may challenge these social structures. This means that not only expectations and norms form our social life, but also individual acts of people. Giddens speaks of a micro and a macro structure that together construct the nature of society:

“Human agency (micro level activity) and social structure (macro level forces) continuously feed into each other. The social structure is reproduced through repetition of acts by individual people (and therefore can change)” (Gauntlett, 2008, 102).

This theory indicates that even though social norms do exists and affects us, we always have the power to change and challenge these norms with individual acts. According to Giddens, we are surrounded by a social structure in terms of traditions, established codes and values, but these structures can be changed or challenged if people start to ignore them or replace them with something different (Wrarmert, 2014).

Moreover, when communication through media enters a traditional society, people begin to discover places, both real and imagined, outside their own physical world. The traditional face—to face communication is challenged by the media in the sense that new values are presented and exposed to people. With new inputs from the outer world through media people start to distance themselves from the traditional values and patterns. Values and patterns that normally have been mediated by local authorities and through face-to-face communication. In this process, people start to shape their own identity based on new ways and means, mediated through the media. This is a development that Thompson agrees with and finds logic but he doesn't agree with the notion that tradition disappears with the entry of a modern, mediated society, which has been stated by several theories about modernity in the 1950 and 1960s. In these theories, researchers like for example Daniel Lerner, claim that there is a dichotomy between tradition and modernity. Opposite to these theories, Thompson argues that traditions survive through continuous face-to-face communication and that this verbal transmission of values and norms should not be understated. The medialization of society has instead of eliminating traditions, given them new life, according to Thompson. “All though traditions were dragged up with its root, it doesn't mean that they died due to lack of nutrition”. When it comes to tradition and identity, Thompson suggests that there are two forces shaping ones identity, namely self—identity and collective identity (Thompson, 1995). Self—identity is the image that people have about themselves as individuals, including certain characters and capacities. The collective identity is the idea that people have of themselves as a being part of a

social group – the feeling of belonging in a group with its own history and meaning. According to Thompson, both the self—identity and the collective identity are formed in the social context. A person's identity can simply not start from nothing – it is shaped out of values, opinions and behaviours from the past. These thoughts about identity, are similar to Giddens's ideas about social reproduction (Wrannert, 2014).

Furthermore significantly, the global information society characterized by the compression of space and time “marks a whole new epoch in the human condition”. Technological advances and the ubiquity of new mobile devices provide a space to allow the self, through the medium of the selfie, to perform upon the world stage. In Technofeminism, Judy Wajcman outlines the conflict within feminism with regard to the impact of technology on women. Wajcman contends that there is a split within feminist discourse between utopian and dystopian views of technology. The view of the selfie travels along the same divide, between explorative and challenging forms of reflexive agency and conform within societal structure. Wajcman contends that seen through the lens of cyberfeminism technology and virtual reality as a new space for “undermining old social relations, a place of freedom and liberation from old conventional roles”. Through an alternative lens, technology is a key source of male power. The analysis that technology is socially shaped by men to the exclusion of women has generated a pessimistic view. Furthermore, the utopian view of technology is equally deterministic imbuing technology with “romanticized ideas of virtual voyages”. Wajcman argues that the problem with both perspectives is that they assign too much agency to technology and not enough to feminist politics. Technofeminism presupposes a socio-technical framework of a mutually shaping relationship between gender and technology. Wajcman not only argues against technological determinist thought, but also highlights feminist discourse that essentializes women's identity in order to identify commonalities in experience “that could form the basis of a shared moral commitment” (Wajcman, 2004).

5. Gendered perspective

By the widespread use of Smartphone with integrated high resolution cameras, the extensive upload of selfies on social media websites is a recent phenomenon that is intensely used by adolescents (Subrahmanyam & Smahel, 2011). Online communities on the basis of social media websites (for example Instagram) play an important part in their identity development (Zarghooni, 2007). They provide young people with an opportunity for actively creating self-representations or a projection of their self socially and emotionally as real people (Garrison & Anderson, 2003). This allows for the creation of a social identity within the community. Such social identities provide “information about the social group, what is typical for that group and the expected norms it demands” (Caspi & Blau, 2008). This works even for selfies that offer minimal social cues for interaction: Spears and Lea (1992) state that social cues exist as cognitive representations, even if they are missing in an interaction. Therefore, a feeling of belongingness to a group, or identification with a group, can still occur even if minimal social cues are provided in the environment. Moreover Selfies as user-generated content provide the opportunity to experiment with various gender-related self-representations, be they stereotypical or non-stereotypical, and thereby are a chance to overcome traditional gender self-representation (Doring, Reif & Poeschl, 2016). Users post them so that others can be a part of their experiences, with the understanding that the Internet, particularly social media and social networking sites, have become spaces for identity manipulation or “selective self-representation”. The increasing popularity of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest allow for the conspicuous prosumption of experiences. Users generate content and make it immediately available for critique and negotiation by the public, or at least their friends and followers. Social media, in turn, intensifies the effect of the perceived public sphere. Users overtly consume, negotiate, and reproduce experiences as a meaning-making process. During this process, gender plays a prominent role in the way experiences are prosumed. Users post selfies on social media platforms, where gender performance is often policed by other users.³ the manner in which this policing occurred differed by gender: Men and women used different tactics and language to describe and discuss selfies and selfie taking; they prosumed meaning by a different set of norms and rituals. In addition to gender norms, selfie policing occurred through another mode of self-performance: racial identity. For instance, although all of our male and female subjects related to male selfies as a

mode of conspicuously presumed masculinity, our subjects' determinations of the appropriateness and desirability of that masculinity differed across racial lines (Williams & Marquez, 2015). According to Butler (1999), the rationality that contributes to the way individuals categorize sex, gender, and sexuality is culturally constructed. They repeat stylized bodily acts, and those acts are regulated by others. By repeatedly performing gender roles, selfie takers produce new social norms and rituals. The more likes actors have, the more likely they are to re-prosume similar gender presentations. Every selfie captures one of these stylized acts on camera. Repetition occurs when users engage in daily or weekly selfie posting. Social media platforms provide a forum for regulation that is not subject to human memory but is instead memorialized online. Comments and other feedback from audiences can influence users' online self-presentation strategies (Lee-Won, Shim, Joo, & Park, 2014). One of the British report highlights younger women are more active participants in selfie-taking, spending up to five hours a week on self-portraits. The biggest reason for doing so? Looking good. But other reasons included making others jealous and making cheating partners regret their infidelities (Weigold, 2016).

Table 3. Selfies by Gender Distribution

	Male	Female
Global	38.16%	61.84%
United States	34.06%	65.94%
Italy	38.65%	61.35%
Turkey	46.44%	53.56%
United Arab Emirates	52.44%	47.56%
Syria	80.75%	19.25%
Iraq	85.13%	14.87%

Source: (Mazza, et. al., 2016)

It's evident from the secondary data that the selfie is more practiced by women, confirming the research result of Giuseppe Riva, which demonstrated disparities between the number of selfies made by women and men by showing that women are more affected by inner motivation to share a selfie (Riva, 2014, cited in Mazza, et. al., 2016). Analyzing the selfies in each country, we observed that in Islamic countries there's a more balanced distribution between sexes. This is presumably due to the customs in those countries that forces women to wear a veil to cover their faces, that makes selfies meaningless for any social purposes; in some countries like Iraq and Syria, the male percentage exceeds the 80% (Mazza, et. al., 2016).

According to Tifferet and Vilnai-Yavetz (2014), males upload pictures to Facebook that accentuate their social status by using objects (e.g. cars) as well as formal clothing. In contrast, females' pictures accentuate emotional expression by eye contact and an extensive smile. In teen chatrooms, the gender stereotypes of female passivity and males' greater variety in actions and behaviors were found to be reflected. Other study examined the gender differences in the profile pictures in chatrooms and found "girls presenting themselves seductively in posture, gaze, and clothing. In contrast, boys varied little in their dress, but adopted a greater range of behaviors in their profile photos, including presenting themselves as remote and dominant" (Kapidzic & Herring, 2011). According to Tortajada et al. (2013), 40% of photos uploaded to the social media platform Fotolog for the self-presentation of boys and girls are highly sexualised: males show off in more active poses and accentuate physical strength, while the pictures uploaded by

girls more frequently show them lying down and in passive and subordinated positions. The focus of females' pictures is on their attractiveness, beauty, and seductiveness. These pictures are more intimate as the protagonists reveal more naked skin (e.g., lower necklines) and are more often close-ups of parts of the body or face. This shows that mostly young Internet users tend to present themselves gender stereotypically in their selfies instead of creating alternative, stereotype-debunking or more gender-equal imagery (Doring, Reif & Poeschl, 2016).

6. Causes and Consequences of Selfies

When internet was introduced in the beginning of the nineties there were huge expectations among experts, politicians, businessmen and journalists about what the world of the wide web would be able to achieve. Internet, in the opinion of the leaders, would open up the borders between countries and cultures, increase the economic wealth and make way for democracy and freedom of speech. With the new digital opportunities, there would be major positive economical, political and social changes. Cultures would mix and opinions exchange. The geographical borders that previously had divided people from different Countries would be eliminated thanks to digital communication in the cyber world. Furthermore, the power of local authorities and repressive norms of traditional societies would dissolve and eventually vanish (Curran et. al., 2012). In other words: The Internet would make the world a better place to live in. James Curran In his book *Misunderstanding the internet*, stated that the internet has not lived up to these expectations and calls for a "reality check". Curran demands empirical facts for evaluating if the world has really become a better place with digitalization and online communication. One way of looking into how reality matches the notion that internet has made the world better is to explore How life online has affected social, cultural or political changes on a society level (Wrarmert, 2014). According to Dr. Long (2014), a Chinese psychiatrist, he claims that people who take selfies frequently may have psychological problems such as low self-esteem and being doubt about self-value. As a result, by taking selfies and sharing their photos with others on online communities, they can earn compliments and attention from others, and hence make them more confident (Analyze Teenagers' Selfie Culture in Taiwan, 2014).

Globally, it is estimated that one million selfies are taken every day. Selfies have their consequences positive or negative; depending on how individual utilize it. Selfies used for a good cause as campaign or awareness will have a good impact on the society. It is true that selfie helps boost one's confidence to face the camera. Certainly, it is not abnormal to take selfies, but to take selfies compulsively is abnormal. Uploading 'unpresentable' images can never be equated with ratiocination. Teens and young adults who have low self-esteem and most importantly, a long history of alienation by their peers are more likely to engage in frequent negative attention -seeking behaviours. So they will do almost anything to get noticed or to fit in with others (Puri, 2016). Though there is no age bar for taking selfies, nowadays person of any age and gender is taking selfie but the selfie is most popular among the youth it is said to cause addiction and negative impact on them. The Thai Mental Health Department has warned those obsessed with this trend that it could have a negative impact on their life and work, as reported in Bangkok Post. Here under author will discuss the repercussions of selfies;

6.1 Skin damage:

Constantly exposing the face to the light and radiation from smart phones may damage the skin, speed up ageing and promote wrinkles. Camera light and electromagnetic radiation from mobile phones are damaged the skin. Doctors can tell which hand a person holds their phone in just by looking at which side of the face is most damaged, they said. "Those who take a lot of selfies and bloggers should worry. Even the blue light we get from our screens can damage our skin," said Simon Zoakei, Medical director of the Linia Skin Clinic in the UK. Experts feel that electromagnetic radiation from mobile phones ages skin by damaging the DNA. It can cause breaks in the DNA strand which can prevent skin repairing itself and place oxidative stress on cells, ultimately promoting wrinkles. "You start to see dull dirty looking texture that you cannot identify on one side of the face," said Zein Obagi, who founded the Obagi Skin health Institute in the US (Safna, 2017).

6.2 Loss self-confidence & self esteem:

Many post photographs of themselves online in a bid to seek approval and attention, Malaysia department deputy Director-General Dr. Panipol wipulakorn said in a statement. She claimed such behavior could lead to mental health problems in future, especially related to self-confidence, and this could unexpectedly cause a negative effect on a person's everyday life, future career and even country's development. "A selfie creates an impact, more or less, on one's everyday life, depending on each individual. Posting photos (on social network sites) to seek approval and likes from peers as a reward is normal human nature. Whatever people do and then get rewarded for it, they will do again. Dr. Panpimol said.—But the reward has varying degrees of emotional effects on each individual. Some people are happy after sharing a selfie and getting few likes, while others expect as many likes as possible and become addicted to being liked. —Conversely, if they feel they don't get enough likes for their selfie as expected, they decide to post another, but still do not receive a good response. This could affect their thoughts. They can lose self-confidence and have a negative attitude toward themselves, such as feeling dissatisfied with themselves or their body. Paying too much attention to one's shared selfies by continuing to check on who sees or comments on them in the hope of getting the most likes as possible is a sign that selfies are causing problems for them, including a possible lack of self-confidence, Dr Panpimol said.

An abundance of 'selfies' are being posted to social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram where people can comment on and 'like' the images. Chartered Clinical Psychologist, Dr Hibberd said: 'Images are a way for young people to seek approval and attention from their peers, however they can also lead to cyber bullying and issues with self-confidence. The majority of teens post the photos in search of assurance and compliments, but they are also making themselves vulnerable to negative comments and abuse.' It's all about comparison and young people are using social media to measure themselves against others. 'If a teenager posts a picture and it doesn't get any 'likes' or if it is their birthday and they don't receive a certain number of posts they see that as an embarrassment. It is seen as an indication that they are not popular. There is an expectation now amongst young people that they should get comments on all of their posts and images. 'Social media sites have come under scrutiny recently following the suicide of 14 year-old Hannah Smith, who was allegedly targeted by trolls on social networking site Ask.fm. Dr Hibberd added: 'Comparison happens in everyday life, but the problem has been exacerbated by sites like Facebook (Safna, 2017).

6.3 Suicide:

Some research found that the selfie bring to suicide on those who addicts in selfie. That's what seems to be suggested by expert opinion surrounding the phenomenon, and a man diagnosed with body dysmorphic disorder says he grew suicidal due to his addiction to taking selfies. An extreme example is the story of Danny Bowman who ended up trying to commit suicide Danny Bowman says he became so obsessed with trying to take the—right selfie that he ended up shooting about 200 pictures a day while trying desperately to capture the perfect image of himself. When Bowman failed to take what he perceived to be the perfect selfie, he attempted suicide by taking an overdose of drugs. Prior to his suicide attempt, he says, he would spend about ten hours every day taking selfies. Dr. David Veal, a physician involved in caring for Bowman, says selfies may cause mental illness, including body dysmorphic disorder, which has —an extremely high suicide rate. Bowman's parents are both mental health professionals, and they say that society has a —huge lack of understanding about just how very dangerous electronic gadgets and social media can be to teens and adults alike. Experts say that while gadgets and social media cause addiction and other dangers, people are in extreme denial about the level of threat these types of communications pose, especially to impressionable teens. Bowman's parents recount how Bowman would spend many hours in his room taking selfies until his addiction culminated in not only a drastic weight loss, but also a terrifying suicide attempt. While Bowman's case may sound unique and extreme, experts in psychology as well as medical doctors say this problem is far more widespread than is generally understood (Safna, 2017).

6.4 Mental illness:

Doctor Pamela Rutledge (director of the Media Psychology Research Center) says that taking selfies can be detrimental to a person's mental health and that indulging in them is indicative of narcissism, low self-esteem, attention seeking behavior and self-indulgence. Most likely, the news that selfies might possibly cause a variety of troubling mental health issues is not going to be met with much acceptance by a society obsessed with the self-reflective nature of electronic gadgets. Some experts and physicians feel that society is collectively engaged in deep denial about how dangerous it is to interact with screens without setting limits on how much time is spent doing so. Doctor Rutledge points out that while selfies raise the risk of narcissism, it may only be because there is not yet a widespread, well-established context for their use. She says that taking selfies may indeed be normal and natural, but because society has not yet collectively been able to contextualize the place selfies are supposed to hold, they have been labeled as being narcissistic and therefore can cause feelings of narcissism in those who take them.

However, it has been proven by multiple studies that interacting with other types of social media is definitively linked to narcissism, depression, low self-esteem, addiction and a host of other negative effect. For example, Facebook use has been linked to depression while Twitter use has been linked to low self-esteem and narcissism. If selfies, specifically, are proven in the future to cause these negative mental health issues, it would most likely come as no surprise to experts in the fields of psychology and medicine (Safna, 2017).

6.5 Selfies can damage real relationships:

The real friends can end up disliking the friend when friend post too many selfies. It can damage friendships and relationships. This was the startling conclusion reached by researchers at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh. They found that it negatively impacts levels of intimacy. Researchers conducted the study to find out if publishing selfies online had any consequences. About 420 people aged between 18 and 62 years of age who are active online were asked to fill out a questionnaire about how many selfies they took and their relationships. The results revealed that how satisfied a person was with their body graph was directly related to the number of selfies they posted online. This, in turn, was linked with negative outcomes in relationships. (**Times of India**, website)

6.6 Death by selfie:

Recent statistics shows the selfie –related incidents and deaths is increased each and every day. 49 people died by selfie-related incidents since 2014, 75% were men and the average age of the person was 21. The youngest age was 14 and the oldest was 32. It would seem that, when it comes to selfies, we do tend to grow older and wiser — or maybe those of us in our 30s and 40s just don't take as many selfies (the 18-to-24-year-old age set snaps them the most).following data show the death by selfie (Safna, 2017).

Table 3: Selfies and Other Accidental Deaths (Worldwide 2015)

Cause	Death/Year
Vending machines	2
Shark attacks	8
American football	12
Mount Everest	17
Selfies	50
Airplane crashes	513

Courtesy: (Safna, 2017).

Table 4: No. Of Selfies Deaths and Year

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
2	13	50	60	15

Courtesy: (Safna, 2017).

Table 2 shows the number of deaths occurred in every year. The amount of death has been increased each and every year. The total amount of death is 140 from year 2013 to year 2017, May. The average age of the person was between 14-24 years. Most of them between age 18-21.76% youth are death by selfie.

Some other research shows since 2014, 49 deaths have been precipitated by selfie, 40% them occurred in India. Selfie fatalities by gender females are 26.5% and males are 73.5%. Most of the types of selfie deaths that have occurred, falling is the most common actual cause of death (usually off of a cliff or a building). Drowning and train deaths are second and third most common, respectively. It should be noted that no one has actually died from the selfie itself — it's the distraction from their surroundings while trying to take the perfect selfie that does them in. And if you thought the U.S. would be the most popular place where to perish in selfie-seeking glory, you'd be wrong. 40% of selfie-related deaths happened in India (Price economics thinks this is related to the country's high fatality rate from drowning) (Safna, 2017).

The United States Department of Transportation estimated that during 2014, the so-called "year of the selfie", 33,000 people were injured while driving and using a cell-phone in some fashion, which can include talking, listening, and "manual button/control actuation" including taking, uploading, downloading, editing, or opening of selfies. A 2015 survey by Erie Insurance Group found that 4% of all drivers admitted to taking selfies while driving. The Washington Post reported in January 2016 that "about half" of at least 27 "selfie related [sic]" deaths in 2015 had occurred in India. No official data on the number of people who died taking selfies in India exists, but reports show from 2014 up to August 2016, there have been at least 54 deaths in India while taking selfies. The Indian Tourism Ministry asked states to identify and barricade 'selfie danger' areas, its first national attempt to deal with the selfie deaths. Mumbai police identified at least 16 danger zones after a man drowned attempting to save a selfie-taker. No-selfie zones were also established in certain areas of the Kumbh Mela because organizers feared bottlenecks caused by selfie-takers could spark stampedes (Ibid, 2017).

6.7 Plastic surgery:

When we see our selfie we feel that our appearance not good. This feel lead to us to do plastic surgery. Professor W.Keith campall said, when the rest of us take a selfie, though, it is amateur hour. If we study our image too closely it is clear that we are really not as attractive as we should be – definitely not as attractive as the people whose selfies we see most often. Our faces are probably a little lopsided, our skin is a bit blotchy, we have a few more wrinkles than we thought, and we think we look fat. So what happens next? When we feel bad, we try to change. We can try some of the filters available on various sites to even out our skin tone. Or we can go the Kim Kardashian route and take scores of selfies until we get it right. But she is a pro and selfies are her job – we should have better things to do. The more drastic option is plastic surgery or other cosmetic treatments. Selfies are apparently driving people to seek plastic surgery. (W. Keith Campbell is co-author of *The Narcissism Epidemic* and a professor of psychology at the University of Georgia.) (Safna, 2017). In conclusion, selfies enable takers to capture the most beautiful figure of them. In the process of searching the perfect appearance, it can not only increase the takers' sense of achievement of being good-looking, but also gradually raise their confidence (Analyze Teenagers' Selfie Culture in Taiwan, 2014).

6.8 Selfies as Social Movements:

A new kind of online movement has emerged on social media: identity hashtag movements, through which individuals share "selfies" and personal stories to elucidate the experiences of marginalized social groups. These movements have the potential to counteract bias and enable social justice, but are enacted in a forum rife with identity and boundary management concerns. "Selfies," or photos of oneself, and stories have the potential to give a face to

the social issues experienced by marginalized groups. In recent years, selfies with an accompanying hashtag have become a major form of participation in online social movements, where they are used to challenge stereotypes. These identity hashtag movements use personal identities to shape and reclaim the broader public image of a marginalized group. For example, #ProfessionalLocs sought to counteract cultural stereotypes of wearing dreadlocks as a professional. Using a selfie to show how they don the hairstyle at work, participants used their own identity to appeal to viewers who may have biases about dreadlocks. Many such movements have gained wide popularity and international attention, challenging stereotypes around topics such as race, gender, appearance, and professions (e.g., #YesAllWomen, #IfTheyGunnedMeDown, #ILookLikeAnEngineer) (Liu, Ford, Parnin & Dabbish, 2017).

Although identity hashtag movements are becoming increasingly prevalent, it is unclear what kind of effects they have on the experiences and perceptions of participants and viewers of the movement. Identity Hashtag Movements Though several researchers have investigated identity movements, less is known about identity movements that take place online. With the advent of the Internet, online platforms have become widely used for social movements due to their ease of access, broad reach, mobilization support, and spread of information. One popular form that these movements have taken is social media posts that are labeled with hashtags. Many hashtags spawn in order to discuss issues about politics or social justice, especially involving marginalized groups. Research has shown that such hashtags are important for building communities for these groups. For instance, the "hashtag feminism" and "Black Twitter" communities have utilized hashtags as a virtual safe-space for expressing feminist and racial identities, respectively, connecting users with shared identities and demonstrating the ongoing discussions of the issues they face. Hashtags about these groups can evolve into or function as part of online movements, such as in the case of #WhyIStayed and #BlackLivesMatter. In these hashtags, individuals have formed a collective for changing beliefs about domestic violence and racial discrimination, deploying their identities in shared personal stories. These identity hashtag movements can empower members by helping them take control of how their experiences and identities are framed (Liu, Ford, Parnin & Dabbish, 2017). Though identity hashtag movements have been shown to have positive benefits for participants, less is known about their success in achieving identity goals. Online social movements are often criticized as "slacktivism," a combination of "slacker" and "activism" describing actions that people take to support a cause that make them "feel good" about themselves but produce little to no impact. These actions are considered low-cost and low-risk, including posting or liking posts on social media. Research suggests that while online activism can have positive effects of raising awareness or motivating donations, these changes might only come about when one is already well-aligned with the values of the cause. Still, stories or pictures of counter-stereotypical exemplars can be effective in overcoming stereotypes. Hashtags like #ILookLikeAnEngineer, which deploy counter-stereotypical identities of users through selfies, may reduce biases at a wide scale about the collective identity of engineers. Our work addresses this possibility by investigating the perceived impact of #ILooklikeAnEngineer. Unique issues for participation in identity movements may also emerge when they take place online. Though participation can be motivated by a desire to achieve a positive identity for one's social group, it may also be inhibited by the highly public and self-defining nature of deploying one's identity online—especially when the topic is considered controversial. Marwick and boyd suggests that users tend to censor potential controversial topics on social media sites like Twitter in order to uphold their personal online brand to imagined audiences. Generally, online environments may lack of a certain "level of participation, commitment, and trust" required for mobilizing individuals to deploy their identities. Moreover, Conover and colleagues suggest that hashtag participation may be limited to those who are already connected and interested in the hashtag topic (Liu, Ford, Parnin & Dabbish, 2017).

7. Selfie culture in Kashmir

Talking selfies is a global phenomenon and Kashmir is no exception in this regard. Popularly Kashmir known for picturesque place in the world has seen increasing trend especially among young ones to take selfies at every nook and corner. Though our society is traditional in nature but now the selfie culture is ingrained in our minds in such a way that people are taking selfies from planes to high altitudes, press conferences to high level meets and from weddings to mourning. One cannot deny this fact that the selfie culture is quite popular among our younger generation. They would go to any extent to take a selfie, upload it on social media and garner the likes or comments. The ravenous urge for popularity and show off drives them to resort to any risky feats. They don't mind in getting to the top of the cliff, middle of a busy road, get themselves trapped in deep waters, climbing top of the building, hanging from a fast running train, even posing with a live ammunition or with any ferocious animal. Some selfie lovers in pursuit of getting selfies falling to death is not new in our fast changing social order. There are a number of incidents that take place on daily basis where selfie lovers meet dreadful end of their lives (Darakshan, 2018). A teenage boy died after he was hit by train at railway station when he was talking a 'Selfie' on railway track in Nowgam, Srinagar. In another incident a boy while taking selfie from the top of a fort fell and died in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir. And in other more recent tragedy a female teacher slipped to death in the river while taking selfie during a school picnic, her body is yet to be retrieved from the waters. These are few examples to quote and it's pertinent to mention here that all of them were young between 15-25 years of age. And People are obsessed over their selfies so much so that they begin to compare themselves with models and celebrities they see on copious media outlets. Such unhealthy and unrealistic comparison afflicts especially the precarious teenagers with depression, anxieties and other psychological troubles (Puri, 2016). A new unusual and wired trend which has emerged in our society is that people are taking selfies when some accident took place instead of helping people in distress are busy taking selfies and posting on various social sites. Taking selfie with dead bodies has become the new norm in our society. In the hour of grief and sorrow with affected families which needs our support and sympathy people are taking selfies especially with the militants and civilians killed during insurgency operations or encounters. Taking selfies on such occasions is certainly against our cultural ethos and needs to be dejected.

A foreign tourist taking a selfie with paramilitary soldier during restrictions against the killing of a civilian in Srinagar.

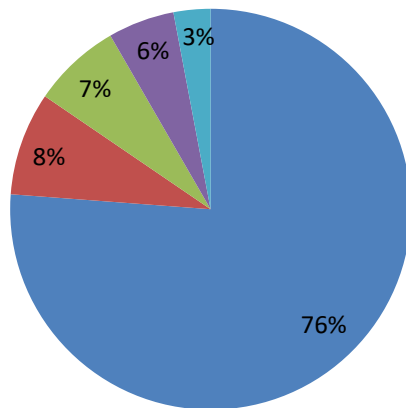
Photo by Basit Zargar



Source; facebook/Kashmir reflector, on 28-09-2018

Deaths by countries (2014-2017)

■ India (128) ■ Russia (14) ■ Pakistan (12) ■ USA (09) ■ Philippines (05)



Source: The Economic Times, Feb 18, 2018. (Selfies can be deadly - and India leads the way)

Apart from injuries, fatalities and tastelessness, one big issue with selfies appears to be their function as either a cause or consequence of narcissism (Weigold, 2016).

8. Concluding Comments and suggestions

The selfie “a photographic self-portrait; *esp.* one taken with a smartphone or webcam and shared via social media” was named Oxford Dictionary's word of the year 2013. Research conducted by Oxford Dictionary editors revealed that the frequency of the word selfie in the English language had increased by 17,000%, therefore meriting its inclusion and demonstrating the explosion of its use as both a word and a cultural phenomenon (blog. oxforddictionaries: 2013).

Selfie actually looks like a living mirror of the digital era that we are living, where everyone can capture his own image that goes to join to those of other, giving origin to a reflection of our society (Mazza, et. al., 2016). The explosion of Smartphones by cameras that can capture self-portraits or selfies as they are usually called has enlightened us. In recent tendency individuals are trying newer and dangerous behaviour to capture something out of the world and instantly share it with the world through them many of social networking websites. However, some consider that the continual quest to take the eventual selfie is causing individuals to take unnecessary dangers that in some cases are proving to be deadly! (Veena & Krishnamurthy, 2015). Three-quarters of young people aged between 18 and 24 admit taking selfies, the study by mobile phone company HTC found. According to the Pew Research Centre, teenagers in America are sharing more information than ever about themselves on social media. Of those studied, 91% post photos of themselves online – up from 79% in 2006. Not only is the above, according to the experts this latest selfie craze could also be fueling an increase in eating disorders such as anorexia. Another research which was published in the Journal of Adolescent Health, suggests that teens are more likely to engage in risky activities like smoking and drinking if they see their friends doing it in photos. According to Samsung's data, one third of all photos being taken daily by people age 18-24 are the selfie (Safna, 2017).

In this century, the technology and social media is influence our life directly. In this manner, the selfie take more place on youth. They share their selfies on Facebook and posted selfie on WhatsApp, viber, twitter, instagram. According to review of literature, the research finding revealed that there is a negative impact on selfie on youth. The selfie brings negative impact on youth such as skin damage, loss self-confidence and self-esteem, suicide, mental illness, damage real relationship, selfie deaths, plastic surgery on youth. So it is highly recommended the youth should understand its pros and cons. Parents should take effort in making their children understand their limitation and guidelines. They should know how it can be used for the better and how it can be lead to the worse. We can take selfie for our necessary but we are not being addict to the selfie. The number of deaths occurred around the world. So when we taking a selfie in the great outdoors think and keep the safe firstly. Take a good look at your surroundings, get into a safe position, and then break out the phone to snap your photo. If a cliff is right behind you, let a friend do the snapping. Time has come to create public awareness about the negative consequences of selfies right from the school to the community and society level. There should be notices advice people to take precautions or no to capture selfies while standing at the railway tracks, on the border of a boat, standing on the rock face or near the stairs. While these measures may help decrease the happenings, the only way to stop selfie-related injuries and deaths is if everybody takes responsibility - Not just for themselves, but also, their friends (Veena & Krishnamurthy, 2015), family and relatives. The phenomena of selfie is not peculiar to some societies or nations, rather it is happening all over the world. We should not allow selfie culture a modern trend lead us away from our own culture heritage of being social.

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