Effect of Facebook on Mood

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Prevalence of Facebook Use

• Founded in 2004
• Originally created for college students
• 1.15 billion people on Facebook
• On average, Facebook users spend 8.3 hours per month on Facebook
• Because so much time is spent on Facebook by so many college students, it is important to explore potential emotional risks associated with the site
Review of Facebook research

• Back et al. (2009) found that individuals’ Facebook profiles accurately reflected their personalities
• Gonzales and Hancock (2011) found that viewing one’s own Facebook profile raises self-esteem scores
  – Others’ profiles are seen as their authentic self and one’s own profile is seen as optimal self
Review of Facebook research (cont.)

• Kross, et al. (2013) studied the influence of Facebook on subjective well-being over a period of two weeks
  – Increase in Facebook use was correlated with a decrease in self-report of current feeling
  – Over a period of two weeks, increased Facebook use was correlated with a decrease in life-satisfaction
Purpose of present study

• To find the effect of Facebook on mood immediately after viewing different profiles
• Examine the correlation of change in mood and personality
Method

• Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS)
• International Personality Item Pool (IPIP)
  – Conscientiousness
  – Neuroticism
  – Openness
  – Extraversion
  – Agreeableness
  – Self-Esteem
Method (cont.)

• Three profiles
  – Self
  – Friend
  – Acquaintance

• Three minutes on each profile, assigned in random order

• Passively viewing
Results

Positive Affect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Friend</th>
<th>Acquaintance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results (cont.)

Negative Affect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Friend</th>
<th>Acquaintance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results (cont.)

• Overall, the PA and NA regressed to neutral
• The regression of PA was significant for the Acquaintance condition, moderately significant for the Friend condition, and not significant for the Self condition
• The regression of NA was significant among all conditions
Results (cont.)

Correlation between IPIP Scores and Change in Negative Affect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Self Condition</th>
<th>Friend Condition</th>
<th>Acquaintance Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>-.34*</td>
<td>-.43**</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to Experience</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * p < .05; ** p < .01; correlations that did not reach statistical significance are represented with by dash.
Results (cont.)

• Neuroticism was negatively correlated with change in NA scale for all three conditions
• Conscientiousness was positively correlated with change in NA scale for all three conditions
• Self-Esteem was positively correlated with change in NA scale for Friend and Acquaintance condition
Inferences

• Negative mood lessens after spending time on Facebook, and positive mood is either lessened or remains the same
  – Not worsening mood, but rather bringing a person nearer to an emotionless state

• This may give insight to the addictive qualities of Facebook
Inferences (cont.)

• The people who had the greatest reduction in negative moods were those:
  – With high emotional instability
  – Who are highly disorganized or undependable
  – Who have negative feelings about themselves
  – Or a combination of the three