4-1-2022

Investigating Factors Related to Faux Pas Posting by Students: Moving Beyond the Big Five

Robert Miller
Central Michigan University, mille5re@cmich.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://aisel.aisnet.org/sais2022

Recommended Citation
https://aisel.aisnet.org/sais2022/25

This material is brought to you by the Southern (SAIS) at AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). It has been accepted for inclusion in SAIS 2022 Proceedings by an authorized administrator of AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). For more information, please contact elibrary@aisnet.org.
INVESTIGATING FACTORS RELATED TO FAUX PAS POSTING BY STUDENTS: MOVING BEYOND THE BIG FIVE

Robert E. Miller
Central Michigan University
mille5re@cmich.edu

ABSTRACT

Posting inappropriate content on social media sites has long been a common practice for college students. While such behavior may be viewed as innocuous by students and their peers, it is often viewed negatively by potential employers. When uncovered through cybervetting, this inappropriate posting can be seen as a serious faux pas – even leading to negative employment decisions. Given the potential negative outcomes, researchers have investigated Faux Pas Posting in order to better understand the behavior and its antecedents. To date, much of this research has employed the Big Five to examine the relationship between personality and the decision to post inappropriate content. Unfortunately, the results from this research have been mixed, with no clear model to explain Faux Pas Posting. In order to move the research forward, this paper draws on extant literature to identify potential factors impacting Faux Pas Posting beyond the Big Five. Specifically, the paper examines Need for Popularity and Self-promotion as possible antecedents. The paper also examines the role that friend posting behavior has in inappropriate posting. Finally, the paper proposes a model of Faux Pas Posting and discusses how the model can be validated through a field study.

Keywords

Social media, Faux Pas posting, cybervetting, Big Five, Need for Popularity, Self-promotion

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Faux Pas Posting, posting social media content that would be negatively viewed by potential employers, is a common practice among college students (Karl et al., 2010). While students, and their peers, may not have an issue with such postings, they can lead to negative hiring decisions when uncovered during cybervetting. As such, students would benefit from more carefully considering what they post and the potential audiences who may view their content.

Researchers have studied Faux Pas Posting in order to better understand why students post inappropriate content. Much of this research has investigated the relationship between personality traits and posting behavior. This research has concentrated on the Big Five personality traits (agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism, and openness), producing results that are largely mixed. In addition to personality traits, research has also shown that the posting behavior of close friends has an impact on a student’s decision to post inappropriate content (Miller, 2020). While the effect of friend posting is clear, the mechanisms by which friends affect student posting behavior has not been fully explored.

In order to move beyond the Big Five and, hopefully, help explain the effects of close friend posting, this paper draws upon previous research to identify additional personality traits that may affect inappropriate posting behavior. Specifically, the paper proposes Need for Popularity and Self-promotion as antecedents of Faux Pas Posting. Need for Popularity can be defined as feeling urged to do things in order to be viewed as popular with friends (Santor et al., 2000). Self-promotion refers to the practice of presenting oneself in a positive way in order to be viewed as highly competent/successful by other people. The goal of this research is to investigate the relationships between these personality traits and Faux Pas Posting. The moderating effects of close friend posting behavior on these relationships will also be examined.

REFERENCES