

Research Article

Validation of the Narcissistic Tendency Scale of Instagram Users in Gen Z

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Abstract: Social media is currently undergoing various developments that can change patterns and habits of life. For example, the social media platform that is most popular among Gen Z is Instagram. Gen Z users who are active on Instagram tend to exhibit narcissistic tendencies because they see the lives of others as superior to their own. Objective: This study aims to develop the NPI-40 measurement tool based on seven aspects in Indonesian, adapting the construct to Gen Z Instagram users. Method: The method used in this study is quantitative, with sampling conducted using Gpower. The technique employed in this study is purposive sampling. The validity used was content validity and convergent validity, followed by reliability using Cronbach's alpha. The narcissistic tendency scale is divided into seven dimensions, including authority, exhibitionism, exploitativeness, entitlement, vanity, superiority, and self-sufficiency. Results: The results of this study yielded 29 valid items with a reliability score of 0.930. It can be said that the Authority dimension has a higher variation contribution compared to others in narcissistic tendencies. Conclusion: The development of the NPI-40 narcissistic scale is suitable for measuring narcissistic tendencies among Gen Z Instagram users.

Keywords: Gen Z; Narcissistic Tendencies; Psychological Assessment; Social Media; Validation.

1. Introduction

Increasingly sophisticated technological developments can lead many individuals to change their behavior patterns and daily habits, for example, in interactions, which are now carried out through internet-based communication media, commonly referred to as social media (Fajar Rezki Wahyuni et al., 2022). Social media has become a central pillar of life because it makes it easy to present oneself, convey information, and interact with others (Hidayatullah & Winduwati, 2023). In short, social media provides various access to stay connected with other individuals, allowing them to learn about a wide variety of activities without any demographic, social, cultural, or other limitations (Martha, 2021).

The increasing diversity of social media can attract individuals to try them, such as the arrival of Instagram in 2010, which still has a large user base (Hidayatullah & Winduwati, 2023). A report from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (2024) revealed that Instagram ranks fourth as the most accessed social media platform in Indonesia. Instagram is widely used because of its engaging features that enhance creative posts (Walmarwa & Rizal, 2024). However, Instagram has also become a popular platform for selfies, offering a platform for showcasing high-quality activities and lifestyles to followers (Siregar et al., 2024).

Instagram users are also typically Gen Z users. This is because Gen Z is closely connected to technology (digital natives) and lives alongside the advancement of mobile phones and computers. Furthermore, they are more open to all types of social media than previous generations (Sakitri, 2020). This is in line with a report from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (2024), which revealed that Instagram is the most widely used social media platform among Gen Z compared to other age groups. Furthermore, Gen Z

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uses Instagram to share experiences, daily activities, selfies, popular trends, and even intimate photos (Aprilia et al., 2023). According to Kindangen et al. (2023) in Wandira and Insan (2024), the freedom to use Instagram to post photos and videos can make individuals appear more confident, but it can also lead to narcissistic tendencies.

According to Raskin and Terry (1988), narcissistic tendencies involve a sense of self-admiration characterized by a tendency toward fantasies or admirable things, defensiveness when criticized, distrust in interpersonal relationships, a tendency toward exploitation, and low empathy. Research conducted by Ali (2022) in Maulani et al. (2024) explains that excessive use of social media on Instagram typically involves portraying oneself as idealized and perfect as possible. This can increase the desire for validation on their Instagram account. Therefore, it can be said that individuals who display themselves excessively with the goal of gaining recognition or validation are characteristic of narcissistic tendencies (Palupi & Noorizki, 2023).

According to the DSM-V in Silalahi et al., (2023), several characteristics of narcissistic tendencies include: a) feeling the need to admire oneself; b) being filled with fantasies of perfection; c) expecting others to respect oneself and to be treated appropriately; d) wanting to be constantly praised or receive attention, while also expecting special treatment; e) expecting many or even many benefits for oneself; f) lacking or low empathy; g) feeling jealous of others and feeling that others are also jealous of them.

In general, individuals with narcissistic tendencies will never be satisfied and find it difficult to build healthy and warm social relationships. Individuals with narcissistic tendencies can exhibit unethical attitudes such as manipulation, aggressive behavior, and deception, which will easily affect their social relationships because it triggers bad behavior (Harahap et al., 2023). Furthermore, according to Nitya Santi (2017) in Nurazizah et al., (2023), individuals with narcissistic tendencies often exploit others through Instagram rather than face-to-face interactions because they can more easily gain attention and achieve satisfaction. They also feel superior and deserving of praise, but their self-confidence is compromised by low self-esteem due to their sensitivity to criticism (Zaeni, 2022). In short, individuals with narcissistic tendencies will become very angry, feel threatened, and feel like failures when they see others posting photos or videos that surpass their own on social media (Lestari & Wulanyani, 2024).

Raskin and Terry (1988) outlined seven aspects of narcissistic tendencies: authority, self-sufficiency, superiority, exhibitionism, exploitation, vanity, and entitlement. It is seen that various measuring instruments are now used to measure narcissistic tendencies and use various aspects or dimensions. One of them is the Narcissistic Personality Inventory-40 (NPI-40) from Raskin and Terry (1988) which consists of seven aspects. In a study conducted by Kartika et al., (2024) measured narcissistic tendencies in early adulthood with an adaptation from Lestari using six aspects from Raskin and Terry (1988) namely authority, exhibitionism, exploitativeness, entitlement, superiority, and self-sufficiency. Based on this study, it can be seen that there is a correlation between self-acceptance and narcissistic tendencies in early adult women who use TikTok, but the level of relationship is still low.

Further research conducted by Setiyowati et al., (2023) measured narcissistic tendencies based on the theory of Raskin and Terry (1988) with seven aspects, namely authority, exhibitionism, exploitativeness, entitlement, vanity, superiority, and self-sufficiency. The number of respondents was 287 high school students who use TikTok. Based on this research, it can be seen that there is a positive relationship between conformity and loneliness towards narcissism, but loneliness has no relationship with narcissism and must be countered by other variables. In addition to research using aspects of Raskin and Terry (1988), there are other studies that modify or create measuring instruments for narcissistic tendencies. Such as research conducted by Tjepsukarsan et al., (2022) using the Narcissistic Personality Inventory-16 (NPI-16) measuring instrument and developed by Ames, Rose, and Anderson (2006). The respondents in this study were 135 college students who used TikTok. The results showed no significant relationship between narcissistic personality traits and TikTok addiction.

None of the previous studies described used Raskin and Terry's (1988) Narcissistic Personality Inventory-40 (NPI-40), which measures seven aspects: authority, exhibitionism, exploitativeness, entitlement, vanity, superiority, and self-sufficiency. Most studies also used English; therefore, this study will adapt and translate the NPI-40 into Indonesian to better suit the local context and culture in Indonesia. Furthermore, several studies focused solely on college students, young adult women, and high school teenagers. None have examined Gen Z as a whole. In the research, the context will be adjusted to the existing topic, namely for Instagram social media on Gen Z. This is done because Gen Z is a generation that is close to narcissistic tendencies, this is in line with the research of Sissoko and Prasetyawati (2022)

which explains that Gen Z has a need to always be active on Instagram to express themselves and fulfill their lifestyle. In a report written by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (2024) which revealed that Instagram is the most used social media in the Gen Z age group than other age groups. So based on the research and studies that have been presented, this study aims to develop the NPI-40 measuring tool from Raskin and Terry (1988) which consists of seven aspects into Indonesian by adjusting the vocabulary for the narcissistic tendencies of Instagram users in Gen Z.

2. Materials and Method

This research method is quantitative and aims to develop the NPI-40 measurement tool from Raskin and Terry (1988), which is structured around seven aspects: authority, exhibitionism, exploitativeness, entitlement, vanity, superiority, and self-sufficiency.

The population in this study was Gen Z Instagram users residing in West Bekasi, East Bekasi, South Bekasi, and North Bekasi. Furthermore, the sample size was calculated using Gpower, resulting in a minimum of 134 respondents.

This study used a purposive sampling technique to collect data from various respondents. Data were then distributed via Google Form to Gen Z individuals born between 1997 and 2012. The scale used was developed from the NPI-40 measurement tool through a review of aspects of Raskin and Terry's (1988) narcissistic tendencies, which describe narcissistic tendencies in Gen Z Instagram users.

This study used validity and reliability tests. The validity results will serve as conclusions based on the collected test scores. There are two types of validity used in this study: content validity and convergent validity. The first is content validity with a discriminatory power above 0.135 or above the table r value. The second is convergent validity by correlating factors within the construct. Reliability uses internal reliability, then the reliability test uses the Cronbach's Alpha technique. The data obtained in this study will be analyzed using Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) Version 27 for Windows.

3. Results and Discussion

This study obtained 210 Gen Z participants, individuals located in the Bekasi area, including 34 individuals in North Bekasi, 49 individuals in South Bekasi, 83 individuals in East Bekasi, and 44 individuals in South Bekasi. Then based on age there is 1 individual aged 12-15 years, 15 individuals aged 16-18 years, 100 individuals aged 19-21 years, 88 individuals aged 22-24 years, and 6 individuals aged 25-27 years. It was also obtained regarding the gender of the individuals in this study, the majority were female, namely 148 female individuals, and 62 male individuals.

Table 1. Respondent Profile.

Profile	N	Percentage
Gender		
Male	62	29.5%
Female	148	70.5%
Age		
12-15	1	0.5%
16-18	15	7.1%
19-21	100	47.6%
22-24	88	41.9%
25-27	6	2.9%
Residence		
Bekasi Utara	34	16.2%
Bekasi Barat	49	23.3%
Bekasi Timur	83	39.5%
Bekasi Selatan	44	21.0%
Total	210	100%

Narcissistic tendencies are more often experienced by women in general, this is because women always upload photos or videos related to themselves in getting attention or being seen by other individuals (Wati, 2023). In addition, it is also explained about the use of Instagram in Gen Z individuals who use Instagram, including the duration of Instagram use of around 118 individuals using 3-4 hours a day, then 75 Gen Z individuals using 5-7 hours a day, then 17 individuals using more than 7 hours a day. The number of Instagram uploads was also obtained, namely around 199 individuals uploading 4-5 times a day, then 11 individuals uploading more than 5 times a day. Then the types of posts on Instagram were obtained, namely 134 individuals posting daily activities, 20 individuals posting experiences, 26 individuals posting trends, and 30 individuals posting something viral.

Table 2. Respondent Profile Based on Instagram Usage.

Profile	N	Percentage
Usage Duration		
3-4 Hours	118	56.2%
5-7 Hours	75	35.7%
More than 7 Hours	17	8.1%
Upload Frequency		
4-5 Times per Day	199	94.8%
More than 5 Times per Day	11	5.2%
Daily Activities	134	63.8%
Post Type		
Experience	20	9.5%
Trend	26	12.4%
Something Viral	30	14.3%
Total	210	100%

The high level of Instagram usage aligns with research by Kholisah and Suhesty (2025), which found that high usage can be influenced by several factors, including demographics, gender, and age. It's also known that Instagram involves a lot of visual content.

In the dimensions of narcissistic tendencies above, referring to Raskin and Terry (1988), the first dimension of authority is shown by the attitude of individuals who prefer to dominate or have a leading attitude on Instagram, the second dimension of self-sufficiency is shown by individuals who feel that their abilities are greater than other individuals seen on Instagram, the third dimension of superiority is described by their attitude of always feeling the most perfect compared to followers on Instagram, the fourth dimension of exhibitionism is shown by the desire when they want to always be the center of attention on their Instagram, the fifth dimension of exploitativeness is when they use other individuals to raise their self-esteem so that they are seen by followers on Instagram, the sixth dimension of vanity is when individuals are excessively amazed by the attitude of comparing themselves with followers on Instagram, the last dimension of entitlement is regarding the belief that followers on Instagram admire them and have the right to be treated specially.

Table 3. Respondent Profile Based on Instagram Usages.

Dimensi	Nomor	Pernyataan	Dimensi
Authority	1	Saya suka jika menjadi sosok yang di idolakan seperti yang ada di instagram	Authority
	7	Saya melihat diri saya seperti sosok pemimpin yang ada di instagram	
Self Sufficiency	15	Saya suka memiliki kekuasaan pada pengikut/followers di Instagram saya	Self Sufficiency
	18	Saya dapat mempengaruhi pengikut/followers lewat unggahan instagram	
	19	Pengikut/followers Instagram saya mengakui kekuasaan saya di instagram	
	30	Saya bertanggung jawab dalam membuat keputusan seperti postingan saya di instagram	
	17	Saya merasa lebih mampu daripada pengikut/followers Instagram saya	
Superiority	25	Saya berusaha memahami berbagai hal yang saya lakukan untuk postingan instagram	Superiority
	29	Saya percaya bahwa saya akan lebih sukses dari pengikut/followers Instagram saya	
	6	Saya berharap suatu hari nanti pengikut/followers saya menulis biografi tentang saya di instagram	
	20	Saya tahu bahwa saya baik karena pengikut/followers berkomentar demikian di instagram	
	22	Saya merasa bahwa saya adalah orang yang paling spesial di akun Instagram saya	
<i>Exhibitionism</i>	26	Saya suka jika mendapat pujian di instagram	
	2	Saya suka mencoba <i>trend</i> di instagram	
	5	Saya senang saat memposting foto, lalu mendapatkan perhatian dari pengikut/followers di instagram	
	11	Saya akan melakukan apapun jika diberi tantangan untuk mengunggah <i>story/feeds</i> di Instagram	
	13	Saya kesal jika pengikut/followers saya tidak melihat penampilan saya di <i>story/feeds</i> instagram	
	21	Saya suka menonjolkan diri di instagram	
Dimensi	Nomor	Pernyataan	
<i>Exploitativeness</i>	28	Saya senang mengunjungi tempat yang sedang viral dan memposting di instagram agar menjadi pusat perhatian	
	9	Saya merasa mudah dalam memanipulasi pengikut/followers melalui postingan instagram yang saya unggah	
	12	Saya dapat membuat pengikut/followers saya percaya dengan perkataan saya di instagram	
<i>Vanity</i>	24	Pengikut/ followers saya di Instagram suka menonton konten Instagram saya	
	3	Saya suka melihat bentuk tubuh saya yang ideal seperti orang-orang yang ada di instagram	
<i>Entitlement</i>	27	Saya suka menampilkan fisik saya yang ideal untuk mengunggahnya di instagram	
	4	Saya tidak akan pernah puas sampai mendapatkan semua seperti orang-orang pada umumnya di instagram	
	8	Jika suatu saat saya menguasai dunia, mungkin akan lebih baik daripada pengikut/followers saya di instagram	
	10	Saya ingin dipandang dimata pengikut/followers saya, maka saya mengunggah postingan instagram	
	14	Saya memiliki keinginan untuk berkuasa agar mengetahui berita terkini di instagram	
	16	Saya bersikeras mendapatkan rasa hormat yang seharusnya saya sudah dapatkan dari pengikut/followers Instagram saya	
	23	Saya berharap banyak dari pengikut/followers saya di instagram	

Content Validity

The initial step in measuring content validity is to examine the item's discriminatory power. Based on the test results, one item, item 30 (0.219), was identified as having low discriminatory power, located on the authority dimension. However, the remaining 29 items had high discriminatory power, exceeding 0.30. The next step was to examine the r-table score. The total number of respondents in this study was 210 individuals, and the df (degrees of freedom) score was 208. Therefore, the r-table score used was approximately 0.135. Based on the calculations, all 30 items were above the r-table score and were declared valid.

Table 4. Content Validity.

Dimensi	No	Pernyataan	KRIT
<i>Authority</i>	1	Saya suka jika menjadi sosok yang di idolakan seperti yang ada di instagram	0,586
	7	Saya melihat diri saya seperti sosok pemimpin yang ada di instagram	0,499
<i>Self Sufficiency</i>	15	Saya suka memiliki kekuasaan pada pengikut/ <i>followers</i> di Instagram saya	0,646
	18	Saya dapat mempengaruhi pengikut/ <i>followers</i> lewat unggahan instagram	0,686
	19	Pengikut/ <i>followers</i> Instagram saya mengakui kekuasaan saya di instagram	0,657
	30	Saya bertanggung jawab dalam membuat keputusan seperti postingan saya di instagram	0,247
<i>Superiority</i>	17	Saya merasa lebih mampu daripada pengikut/ <i>followers</i> Instagram saya	0,669
	25	Saya berusaha memahami berbagai hal yang saya lakukan untuk postingan instagram	0,519
	29	Saya percaya bahwa saya akan lebih sukses dari pengikut/ <i>followers</i> Instagram saya	0,571
	6	Saya berharap suatu hari nanti pengikut/ <i>followers</i> saya menulis biografi tentang saya di instagram	0,528
	20	Saya tahu bahwa saya baik karena pengikut/ <i>followers</i> berkomentar demikian di instagram	0,614
	22	Saya merasa bahwa saya adalah orang yang paling spesial di akun Instagram saya	0,564

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was conducted using seven dimensions: Authority, Self-Sufficiency, Superiority, Exhibitionism, Exploitativeness, Vanity, and Entitlement, all of which correlate with the total score. Based on the research results, all items correlated positively with the total score. The Authority dimension had the strongest correlation coefficient of 0.895, with a p-value <0.01 , indicating convergent validity. Entitlement followed with a correlation coefficient of 0.882. Superiority had a correlation coefficient of 0.33, and Exploitativeness had a correlation coefficient of 0.783. Self-Sufficiency also had a correlation coefficient of 0.785, similar to the Exploitativeness dimension at 0.783. Vanity had the lowest correlation, at 0.624.

In the authority dimension, the item correlation coefficient ranges from 0.247 to 0.686. Furthermore, in the self-sufficiency dimension, the correlation between items ranges from 0.519 to 0.669. In the superiority dimension, the correlation between items ranges from 0.504 to 0.614. In the exhibitionism dimension, the correlation between items ranges from 0.524 to 0.693. In the exploitativeness dimension, the correlation between items ranges from 0.555 to 0.589. In the vanity dimension, the correlation between items ranges from 0.430 to 0.785. Finally, in the entitlement dimension, the correlation between items ranges from 0.507 to 0.634.

Reliability

This study used internal consistency and a Cronbach’s alpha reliability test. The results showed a reliability of 0.930 for the 30-item narcissistic tendencies scale for Instagram users in Gen Z. This indicates that the research scale is credible, as it is highly reliable and suitable for measuring narcissistic tendencies among Instagram users in Gen Z.

Table 5. Reliabilitas.

Cronbach’s Alpha	N Item
0,930	29

The variant also explains the factors that contribute most to the narcissistic tendencies of Instagram users in Gen Z. It is known that authority is 74.4%, self-sufficiency is 61.1%, Superiority is around 67.1%, Exhibitionism is around 78.4%, Exploitativeness is 60.7%, Vanity is 36.0%, and finally Entitlement is 77.9%. It can be said that the Exhibitionism factor contributes greatly to the narcissistic tendencies of Instagram users in Gen Z.

Table 6. Varian.

Dimensi	R Square	Sig.
<i>Authority</i>	0,800	<,001
<i>Self Sufficiency</i>	0,616	<,001
<i>Superiority</i>	0,694	<,001
<i>Exhibitionism</i>	0,766	<,001
<i>Exploitativeness</i>	0,613	<,001
<i>Vanity</i>	0,389	<,001
<i>Entitlement</i>	0,778	<,001

The authority dimension of narcissistic tendencies is interrelated with the characteristics of wanting to stand out and appear more dominant on Instagram. It can be seen that if authority is high, the individual’s attitude to stand out is also higher. This is because they have an excessive view of life. Also found is the dimension with the lowest variation, namely vanity or arrogance which describes feelings of excessive admiration for oneself, in this case the variation is the lowest and has a small contribution in forming narcissistic tendencies. In line with the research of Hardika et al., (2019) that the level of narcissism will increase if an individual experiences loneliness. This occurs because lonely individuals do not have effective communication and social skills, which results in individuals tending to withdraw and be more active on social media because they feel comfortable when receiving attention from social media.

Discussion

This study aims to develop a measurement tool for the Narcissistic Tendency Scale, which has been developed with 30 favorable items adapted from the original English instrument, the NPI-40 scale from Raskin and Terry (1988). This adaptation is also considered the appropriateness of the items to the context of Instagram use. Twenty-nine items required further modification or revision for use in research. These items required modification due to their low discrimination power. Furthermore, the reliability results also achieved high reliability. Furthermore, of the seven dimensions of narcissistic tendencies, the Authority dimension exhibits significant variation and contribution to narcissistic tendencies. This means that high authority leads to an individual’s desire to assert themselves, often

through frequent photo posting and following various trends and viral content to feel dominant on Instagram. Furthermore, the vanity dimension does not significantly explain variations in narcissistic tendencies.

It is known that individuals with narcissistic tendencies can affect daily activities, for example, individuals will try to appear ideal as their existence in order to get a lot of attention and post it on social media, especially Instagram (Maulana, 2023). Generally, individuals really want a like or comment on Instagram in order to stand out from other individuals, this is a form of describing themselves, and appearing good and ideal (Wibowo et al., 2023). Then the generation that is usually close to narcissistic tendencies is Gen Z, this happens because usually Gen Z tends to follow various standards and Instagram is an effective social media as a place to show off or fulfill a lifestyle so that other individuals pay attention to themselves on Instagram (Permatasari et al., 2024).

5. Conclusion

The narcissistic tendencies scale of the NPI-40 is suitable for use in the context of Instagram use in Gen Z. This is because it is appropriate to the context and can adjust the characteristics of Gen Z. Researchers who will use this narcissistic tendencies measurement tool are expected to make modifications or revisions related to items with low discrimination power, in addition, it is also expected to be able to predict bias so that this narcissistic tendencies scale can be used in all ages. It is also ensured to ensure that the subjects in the study match the characteristics of Gen Z and Instagram users.

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