

Big Five Personality Traits and Self-Disclosure on Secondary Instagram Accounts: A Study of Indonesian High School Students

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Abstract: This study examined the relationship between Big Five personality traits and self-disclosure behavior among high school students using secondary Instagram accounts. A quantitative correlational design was employed with 213 students (grades 10-11) from SMAN 2 Bengkulu City, Indonesia, selected through purposive sampling. Personality was measured using the IPIP-BFM-25 (Indonesian version), and self-disclosure was assessed using an adapted Self-Disclosure Scale. Pearson correlation analysis revealed a very strong, significant relationship between personality types and self-disclosure ($r = 0.996$, $p < 0.001$). All five dimensions Extraversion ($r = 0.992$), Agreeableness ($r = 0.984$), Conscientiousness ($r = 0.992$), Neuroticism ($r = 0.991$), and Openness to Experience ($r = 0.991$) showed significant correlations. Neuroticism was the most prevalent dimension (96.7% of respondents). The findings provide empirical support for integrating personality frameworks into digital literacy interventions and guidance counseling services for adolescents.

Keywords: Big Five Personality Traits, Secondary Instagram Accounts, Self-Disclosure on Social Media

A. Introduction

The development of information and communication technology has transformed the way high school students interact and express themselves. Social media, especially Instagram, has become one of the most widely used platforms for identity formation and self-expression for high school students (Muharromah, 2023; Safitri, 2021; Syafrina, 2025; Widiyaningrum, 2025). This platform provides features such as stories, feeds, live broadcasts, and reels for sharing content. Through these features, users can convey personal experiences, thoughts, and emotions, often engaging in self-disclosure (Putri et al., 2024; Siahaan, 2025).

Self-disclosure is an interpersonal communication process in which a person intentionally and voluntarily shares personal information, thoughts, feelings, and experiences with the public (DeVito, 2016). Self-disclosure is driven by psychosocial factors such as the need to build self-image, obtain validation, and emotional support, and serves as a means of identity experimentation (Anggraini et al., 2024). Direct

feedback through likes, comments, and shares also intensifies self-disclosure. However, excessive self-disclosure can increase the risk of digital crime (Johana et al., 2020). This condition increases vulnerability to privacy violations, such as identity theft, as well as the risk of cyberbullying and online predation, which negatively impact the psychological well-being, sense of security, and self-confidence of adolescents who are still in the stage of searching for their identity (Rapina & Albuchori, 2025; Zamzamima et al., 2024).

Negative experiences on first accounts encourage users to migrate their self-disclosure activities to more private accounts on Instagram (Zahra et al., 2023). This phenomenon is facilitated by the multiple account feature, which enables the management of multiple digital identities (Herna & Sari, 2023; Permana, 2021). High school students, members of Generation Z, are reported to be the most frequent users of second accounts, with the primary motivation being to express themselves more privately (Munawaroh & Syukriah, 2023). Pre-surveys indicate that secondary accounts serve as a safe space by limiting followers to trusted friendship circles, enabling more authentic self-expression (Aristyawati et al., 2023; Lisa & Irma, 2025). Thus, self-disclosure on secondary accounts is not only a form of communication but also an adaptive strategy for maintaining privacy, managing emotions, and exploring identity in the digital space.

Previous research has shown that self-disclosure on social media is influenced by various factors, such as group size, interpersonal closeness, competence, topic, gender, and personality (DeVito, 2016). Among these factors, personality is a variable that consistently explains variations in self-disclosure levels, as it represents a relatively stable character pattern and influences how individuals think, feel, and behave (Feist et al., 2013). In this regard, the Big Five Personality model is widely used to understand differences in self-disclosure behavior because it can comprehensively describe individual psychological tendencies (Akhtar & Sumintono, 2023; Saraswati, 2023).

Theoretically, each dimension of the Big Five contributes to the formation of distinct patterns of self-disclosure, both as a form of self-expression and as a means of managing social relationships (McCrae & Costa, 2006). Individuals with high Agreeableness tend to engage in self-disclosure due to their trusting and friendly nature (Saraswati, 2023), whereas Extraversion encourages self-disclosure to facilitate social interaction and network expansion (Utami et al., 2023). Conscientiousness results in selective and responsible self-disclosure, considering the consequences (Stieger et al., 2020). On the other hand, Openness to Experience is related to openness of expression, particularly through second accounts, which provide a free space for self-disclosure (Kamilah & Lestari, 2020; Putri et al., 2024). Meanwhile, high Neuroticism is associated with greater intensity of self-disclosure as a means of seeking emotional support and validation for perceived anxiety or vulnerability (Muflih et al., 2024).

Although previous research has established a relationship between personality and self-disclosure on social media, two important gaps remain in the literature. First, most studies examine self-disclosure on primary accounts without distinguishing between public and private digital spaces, even though these are fundamentally different in terms of audience composition, privacy norms, and levels of psychological safety. Second, most studies use samples of young adults or college students, leaving this group of adolescents, who are at a crucial stage in identity development and emotional regulation, underexplored. Therefore, it is important to examine how personality influences self-disclosure in a more specific context, namely, the use of secondary Instagram accounts by high school students in Indonesia. This context provides a new perspective because secondary accounts function as safer, more controlled spaces, allowing for the emergence of different self-disclosure patterns than in primary accounts.

The practical implications of the relationship between personality type and self-disclosure in second-account users form the basis for developing guidance and counseling services in schools. Guidance and counseling teachers can implement a proactive, preventive approach through personality-based digital literacy, individual counseling, and the use of digital communication to facilitate safe self-disclosure (Purnamasari et al., 2024). Furthermore, peer-support-based group guidance helps increase empathy and privacy awareness and prevent cyberbullying (Purbasafir & Fasikhah, 2024). Thus, guidance and counseling services support the healthy use of digital spaces while meeting students' psychosocial needs.

Based on this framework, this study aims to examine the relationship between the Big Five Personality traits and self-disclosure behavior in high school students who use secondary Instagram accounts. By focusing on a more specific digital context, this study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the role of personality in shaping adaptive communication strategies in adolescents, while also addressing the limitations of previous research that still views social media use as a homogeneous context.

B. Methods

This study uses a quantitative correlational approach to identify the relationship between personality types (independent variables) and self-disclosure (dependent variables). The study population was 456 students of grades X and XI at SMAN 2 Kota Bengkulu in the 2026 academic year. The sample was determined using the Slovin formula, with a 5% error rate, yielding 213 respondents. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, with the criteria of students who have a second Instagram account and actively upload content. Data collection for this study was conducted on January 19–23, 2026, via an online survey in Google Forms.

Table 1. Examples of Big Five Personality Instrument Items

Variable	Dimension	Item
Big five personality	Extraversion	Liven up the atmosphere at an event
	Agreeableness	Sympathize with other people's feelings
	Conscientiousness	Carry out activities according to schedule or agenda
	Neuroticism	Easily feel stressed
	Openness to Experience	Have a very strong imagination

Personality type variables were measured using the Indonesian version of the IPIP-BFM-25 scale (Akhtar & Azwar, 2018), which has good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70 for each Big Five personality dimension. The Big Five scale consists of 25 items.

Table 2. Examples of Self-Disclosure Instrument Items

Variable	Aspect	Item
Self-disclosure	Beliefs	I feel like my second account is the only place I can truly express myself freely.
	Relationships	I feel like the content on my second account can be a bridge to deeper conversations with close friends.
	Personal Matters	I feel like there's a side of my personality that only comes out on my second account.
	Interests	I often post photos and videos that I consider too personal on my second account.
	Intimate Feelings	I feel like my second account is a platform for me to express myself fully.

The self-disclosure variable was measured using an adapted version of the Self-Disclosure Scale (Magno et al., 2008). The reliability test results showed a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.966, indicating a very high level of internal consistency. At the same time, the validity test showed that all items had correlation coefficients above the r table ($r > 0.361$), indicating they were valid. The self-disclosure scale consists of 50 items, and both instruments in this study used a 5-point Likert scale.

To ensure that the research results were not susceptible to common-method bias, Harman's single-factor test was conducted via an exploratory factor analysis without rotation. The results showed that the first factor explained 18.156% of the total variance, thus concluding that common method bias was not a significant problem. Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics in several stages: prerequisite tests (normality, linearity, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity) and the Pearson correlation test to test the research hypothesis. The One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed a p -value > 0.05 , indicating that the data were normally distributed. All parametric analysis assumptions were met, so the correlation analysis was declared suitable for use.

C. Results and Discussion

The results of this study indicate a very strong relationship between personality type and self-disclosure among high school students' second Instagram account users, as measured by the Big Five Personality Framework. This study provides a foundation for a more comprehensive understanding of how characteristics shape high school students' self-disclosure strategies in both informative and audience-oriented digital spaces. The findings of this study provide important context for understanding how high school students use their second Instagram account as a medium for self-expression tailored to their emotional and social needs.

Table 3. Descriptive Analysis Results of Self-Disclosure Category

Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
≤ 162	Low	42	19,7 %
163 – 189	Medium	142	66,7 %
≥ 190	High	29	13,6 %
Total		213	100 %

The descriptive analysis results in Table 3 show that the majority of respondents' self-disclosure levels were in the moderate category, indicating that students conducted self-disclosure through their second Instagram account in a proportional and controlled manner. Second accounts were perceived as a relatively safer, more private communication space than first accounts, allowing students to feel more comfortable expressing their thoughts, emotions, and personal experiences while still respecting certain boundaries. This finding aligns with research showing that self-disclosure on Instagram is influenced by closeness to the audience, level of interpersonal trust, and considerations of privacy and emotional closeness in determining the extent to which adolescents disclose themselves (Novanra et al., 2022; Nanda et al., 2025).

Table 4. Descriptive Analysis Results of Dominant Categories of Big Five Personality Types

Dimensions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Extraversion	4	1,9 %
Agreeableness	3	1,4 %
Conscientiousness	0	0 %
Neuroticism	206	96,7 %
Openness to Experience	0	0 %
Total	213	100 %

The descriptive analysis results in Table 4 show that the Neuroticism dimension had the highest percentage among respondents. This finding indicates that the majority of high school students who use second Instagram accounts tend to experience more intense negative emotions, such as anxiety, emotional instability, and sensitivity to social pressure (McCrae & Costa, 2006). This emotional vulnerability drives individuals to seek a safer space to express their thoughts and feelings, so that second accounts function as a medium for emotional regulation and a freer channel for

feelings. This condition provides an initial overview of respondents' psychological characteristics, which can serve as context for understanding the high tendency toward self-disclosure in the use of second Instagram accounts.

Table 5. Pearson Correlation Test Results of Personality Type and Self-Disclosure

Variable	Pearson (r)	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Description
X-Y	0,996	< 0,001	Significant

The Pearson correlation test results in Table 5 indicate a very strong, significant relationship between personality type and self-disclosure among high school students using second Instagram accounts. Thus, the research hypothesis is accepted, indicating that the relationship is not coincidental but rather statistically significant. This finding confirms that personality type plays a dominant role in shaping self-disclosure behavior in private digital spaces. Furthermore, second Instagram accounts can be interpreted as a medium for self-expression that reflects individual personality characteristics, not merely a means of digital communication (Ramadhani et al., 2025).

Based on the findings of this study, the analysis continued at the level of each personality dimension. Although the descriptive analysis only identified the dominant dimension, all Big Five dimensions still showed relevant score variations for analysis. This is because correlation testing focuses on the strength of the relationship between variables. Therefore, testing continued to examine the relationship between each personality dimension and self-disclosure separately.

Table 6. Pearson Correlation Test Results of Big Five Personality Dimensions and Self-Disclosure

Variable	Self-Disclosure (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)	Description
Extraversion	0,992	< 0,001	Significant
Agreeableness	0,984	< 0,001	Significant
Conscientiousness	0,992	< 0,001	Significant
Neuroticism	0,991	< 0,001	Significant
Openness to Experience	0,991	< 0,001	Significant

The Pearson correlation test results in Table 6 show that all Big Five dimensions have a very strong and significant relationship with self-disclosure behavior among high school students using second Instagram accounts. This finding confirms that self-disclosure results from multidimensional interactions among personality dimensions. Although Neuroticism is the most descriptive, the strongest relationships are with Conscientiousness and Extraversion. This suggests that the dominance of a dimension does not necessarily reflect the strength of its relationship with self-disclosure behavior (Backstrom et al., 2020). Thus, each personality dimension contributes to shaping self-disclosure patterns on social media (Alwahaishi et al., 2024; Kordzadeh & Bozan, 2024).

Compared with prior studies, this study's results indicate that the Big Five Personality dimensions shape two main tendencies in self-disclosure behavior on second Instagram accounts. First, self-regulation-oriented dimensions, such as Conscientiousness and Agreeableness, tend to encourage more selective and controlled self-disclosure. Individuals high in Conscientiousness engage in self-disclosure cautiously to minimize social risks and maintain reputation, while individuals high in Agreeableness consider interpersonal consequences and place greater emphasis on relationship harmony (Cong et al., 2025; Iasya et al., 2024; Stieger et al., 2020). In this context, second accounts are utilized as a safe yet socially managed space.

Second, the self-expression-oriented dimensions, namely Extraversion, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience, tend to encourage more spontaneous, emotional, and exploratory self-disclosure. Individuals with high Extraversion express themselves more freely and authentically in supportive environments (Rahardjo et al., 2020). Meanwhile, Neuroticism encourages self-disclosure as an emotion regulation strategy, in which individuals use second accounts to channel negative feelings and obtain psychological support (Fombouchet et al., 2023; Maharjan et al., 2025). On the other hand, Openness to Experience is related to a tendency towards reflective and exploratory self-disclosure, such as sharing the meaning of experiences and constructing self-identity (Muflih et al., 2024).

The results of this study are generally consistent with previous findings that the Big Five Personality dimensions are significantly related to self-disclosure on social media (Tamara & Hamid, 2023). This confirms that personality is an important factor in determining the pattern and intensity of self-disclosure. However, compared to previous studies, which generally found moderate relationships, this study shows a much stronger relationship. These findings should be interpreted cautiously, as very high correlation coefficients may indicate measurement overlap or the influence of a single measurement method, even when a common-methods test shows insignificant results.

On the other hand, this study's results differ from previous studies that found no significant relationship between personality and self-disclosure (Putri et al., 2024). This difference indicates that the relationship is contextual and influenced by sample characteristics and the social media usage environment. High school students are in a more dynamic phase of identity development and emotional regulation than college students, so personality plays a stronger role in guiding self-disclosure behavior. Furthermore, using a second account as a more private digital space allows individuals to manage their audience, increase their sense of psychological safety, and express themselves more authentically (Christiaan & Murti, 2025).

Theoretically, these findings broaden our understanding of the role of the Big Five in digital contexts, particularly in private spaces such as second accounts. Personality

not only functions as a predictor of social behavior but also as a psychological regulatory mechanism for managing emotions, identity, and interpersonal boundaries. Thus, self-disclosure in second accounts can be understood as an adaptive strategy reflecting the interplay between the need for self-expression and social control in a safer environment.

Practically, the results of this study have implications for the development of guidance and counseling services in schools. Understanding the relationship between personality and self-disclosure can inform the design of more personalized digital literacy-based interventions to help students manage emotions, maintain privacy, use social media more healthily and reflectively, and reflect on their use of social media (Butar Butar & Arsini, 2024). However, this study has limitations, primarily due to the sample size being limited to a single school and the use of a self-report-based correlational design. Therefore, generalizations and causal inferences should be made with caution. Future research is recommended to use more diverse samples and a more comprehensive methodological approach.

D. Conclusions

The results of this study indicate a very strong and significant relationship between personality type and self-disclosure behavior in high school students using second-person Instagram accounts. All Big Five personality dimensions Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience, were found to correlate significantly with self-disclosure in more private digital spaces. Descriptive findings indicate that the level of self-disclosure was mostly in the moderate category, indicating that students tend to disclose themselves proportionally, selectively, and still consider social and privacy boundaries. Furthermore, the Neuroticism dimension was found to be the most dominant characteristic among respondents, reflecting a high tendency to experience negative emotions such as anxiety and social sensitivity. However, the strongest relationship with self-disclosure was only found in the Conscientiousness and Extraversion dimensions. This suggests that the dominance of a personality type does not always directly correlate with its influence on self-disclosure behavior. In other words, self-disclosure results from the complex interaction of multiple personality dimensions operating simultaneously. In this context, this study confirms that self-disclosure on a second Instagram account is not merely a digital communication activity but also a reflection of adolescents' psychological dynamics in managing emotions, self-identity, and interpersonal boundaries. The second account serves as an adaptive space that fosters a sense of psychological safety, enabling individuals to express themselves more authentically while remaining in control. In practice, these findings highlight the importance of developing guidance and counseling services in schools, particularly by designing interventions grounded in digital literacy and a personality approach. Guidance and counseling teachers can help students develop privacy awareness, emotional regulation skills, and healthier and more responsible social media use.

Future research is recommended to involve a broader, more diverse sample and to employ a longitudinal or mixed-methods approach to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics of adolescent self-disclosure in the digital age.

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