

Research Thesis

**ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON IDENTITY FORMATION AND
PASSIVE SUICIDAL IDEATION AMONG ADOLESCENTS**



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**“ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON IDENTITY FORMATION
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DECLARATION

I, Mr. Zuhaib Hassan, bearing Registration No. 480-FSS/MSCP/F23 student of MS in Clinical Psychology, session 2023-2025, hereby declare that the matter printed in the thesis titled: **ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON IDENTITY FORMATION AND PASSIVE SUICIDAL IDEATION AMONG ADOLESCENTS** is my own work and has not been printed, published and submitted as research work, thesis or publication in any form in any University, Research Institution etc in Pakistan or abroad.

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Certified that the research work contained in this thesis titled: **ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON IDENTITY FORMATION AND PASSIVE SUICIDAL IDEATION AMONG ADOLESCENTS** has been carried out and completed by Mr. Zuhaib Hassan, Registration No: 480-FSS/MSCP/F23 under my supervision.

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DEDICATION

All praise and gratitude are due to Almighty Allah (SWT), the Most Beneficent and Merciful, whose divine will and blessings enabled me to reach this significant milestone in my academic journey. It is through His guidance, the heartfelt prayers of my parents, and the unwavering support and dedication of my teachers that I have been able to successfully complete my MS thesis. I would like to dedicate this work to my mother, who carried our dreams through every struggle, and to my father, whose belief in me remained steadfast, even in moments when my own faith wavered. I am deeply thankful to my supervisor, Incharge M/F Department of Psychology, Dr. Mazhar Iqbal Bhatti, for his invaluable guidance, insightful feedback, and continuous encouragement throughout the course of this research. His mentorship has been a cornerstone in the completion of this thesis. My sincere appreciation also extends to my peer group for their encouragement, cooperation, and warm wishes, which have kept me motivated. I am especially grateful to my family for their endless support, love, and motivation that carried me through challenging times.

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I solemnly declare that the current research entitled: “ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON IDENTITY FORMATION AND PASSIVE SUICIDAL IDEATION AMONG ADOLESCENTS” is my personal work. It is not plagiarized nor copied from any other sources, and that I have followed all the research and ethical protocols. I am submitting this research to Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, International Islamic University Islamabad as a partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of MS in Clinical Psychology. I also declare that I will not use this research for my degree program in future

Abstract

The problem of identity formation among adolescents, the use of social media, as well as a passive suicidal ideation, provides a complex understanding of the essence of the psychological conditions that adolescents are exposed to. Adolescence marks the transition from childhood to adulthood, typically spanning ages 12 to 18, during which pubertal and hormonal changes occur. In today's Internet generation, interactive and consumptive media like TV, video games, and smartphones play a significant role in adolescents' lives. This period involves major physical, cognitive, emotional, and social developments that encourage identity exploration, often facilitated by social media usage information on digital devices that enables adolescents to engage in identity-related activities. While social media usage use for purposes like social networking, information, gathering, and gaming can support identity formation, excessive engagement risks negative socioemotional impacts and reduced face-to-face interaction. The study was designed to explore the predictive relationship between social media usage, identity formation and passive suicidal ideation. Measures that used for this study were The Dimensions of Identity formation Scale, The Passive Suicidal Ideation Scale and Social Media Usage Scale. Data was collected from 322 adolescents males and females age between 12 years to 18 years from various schools of Islamabad and Chitral, purposive sampling technique was used in this study. After data collection, it was treated through statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The results indicate significant correlations between social media usage, identity formation, and passive suicidal ideation among adolescents. Ruminative exploration showed the strongest positive association with passive suicidal ideation, while higher social media engagement was also linked to increased levels of ideation. In contrast, commitment making and exploration in depth were negatively correlated with social media use, suggesting that stronger identity formation may buffer against negative

psychological outcomes. Further, the results show that ruminative exploration has a significant predictive effect on high levels of passive suicidal ideation, although only with a slight degree of effect. In contrast, deeper exploration, identification with commitment and commitment making have no significant predictive power over passive suicidal ideation. Furthermore, passive, image-based, comparative, and consumption based forms of social media use were positively correlated with passive suicidal ideation, meaning that the more time spent on these forms of social media may put individuals at risk for unfavorable mental health consequences. Also, a significant difference in the sample according to gender was found. These findings indicate the need for conceptual considerations and awareness-raising on the role of identity struggles in combination with patterns of social media use and their impact on adolescents' mental health. The results indicate that the encouragement of healthy identity formation and a positive social media experience may contribute to the reduction of the risk of passive suicidal ideation in adolescents.

Keywords: Social media usage, identity formation, passive suicidal ideation, adolescents

INTRODUCTION

The study of Identity Formation, social media uses and Passive Suicidal Ideation in adolescents can provide a multi-dimensional understanding of young people's psychological experiences. The foundation of identity theory developed by Erik Erikson is the adolescent phase which exposes the critical importance of the adolescent in a continuous sense of self along with commitment to personal beliefs, values and goals in terms of sameness and continuity (Erikson, 1968). Similarly, Marcia who introduced self-exploration and commitment as central features of identity formation. Marcia's model has since evolved and it is now possible to better understand identity as a fluid, adaptive process, not a fixed state (Granic et al., 2020).

Moreover, the role of social media usage is one that acts as a complex on adolescent identity formation, and offers opportunity as well as challenges. Social media platforms support identity formation by providing them means for self-presentation and feedback, however the availability of dangerous online content, for example self-harm promoting websites, has been associated with maladaptive identity formation, demonstrating the duality of the use of social media as a powerful tool with a cut-edged edge in shaping adolescent identity (Luyckx, 2019).

Social media has become a defining feature of adolescent life and has significant impact on an aspect of the process of identity formation. Platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, etc. are spaces where adolescents may try out being different people, possessing different values, and having different social roles in addition to the combination of identity formation, social media use, and suicidal ideation presents an acute need to address mental health risks for adolescents. Suicide has contributed to the high mortality rates in the youth and incidences

of suicidal intent are higher among youth who have poor peer relationships and are picked on (Lebowitz et al., 2019). Moreover, passive suicidal ideation that is often underresearched regarding suicide prevention is a desire to avoid pain in general, and regardless of existence or absence, the outcomes are not good, like in active suicidal ideation (Liu et al., 2020). The studies revealed that passive ideation may result in severe suicidal thoughts with such risk factors as mental health problems, non-suicidal self-injurious (NSSI), and minority stress (Klonsky et al, 2013; Dickson et al, 2019).

In addition, the risk toward the identity formation of adolescents is also concentrated on the application of social media. Besides, the use of social media networks that can emphasise physical looks and/or material success can introduce undesired standards which in turn may lead to body dissatisfaction as well as low self-esteem attitudes and ideals of adolescents (Chua & Chang, 2016). One of the aspects that might lead to poor self-perception in adolescents is the comparison with idealised images on these platforms where adolescents feel underperforming because the experience in the real world is different than the illusion of perfection created by these social media (Barry et al., 2017).

Understanding the social media interaction with identity formation and possible links to passive suicidal ideation is important in offering support to adolescents during this critical stage of development. Suicidal ideation in adolescents is a significant mental health issue as the passivity of the ideation, meaning a desire to be dead in general, tends to be the precursor to the more active form of ideation and suicide attempt (Bertolote & Fleischmann, 2015). Suicidal ideation in adolescents exists at varying degrees of intensity from passive thoughts to active plans for suicide. Despite being an often-overlooked phenomenon, passive suicidal ideation is linked to serious

mental health difficulties and may be a precursor to more serious suicidal behaviour. (Liu et al., 2020).

Social Media Usage

Adolescents today live and learn in a digital world, and the majority of them own smartphones and use social media several times a day (Odgers & Jensen, 2020). These platforms are not only used for entertainment purposes but also act as a central site for social interaction, identity expression and a developmental milestone. While worries of psychological harms remain an issue, there appears to be emerging evidence portraying both the risks and the opportunities in the way adolescents navigate the digital landscape (Odgers & Jensen, 2020).

Social media has become an all pervasive part of adolescent life - 99% of adolescents in the UK are online for at least 21 hours a week, and similar findings are seen worldwide (O'Reilly, 2020). This is a common usage that has sparked discussions surrounding its effects on mental health issues, from the negative effects on self-esteem, anxiety, and depression, up to the positive effects of stress relief and well-being (O'Reilly, 2020). For these reasons it is advocated that social media use be considered as part of adolescents assessment and care planning procedures by mental practitioners as it is also a period when: the use of risk-taking behaviours is at its peak and they are more influenced by the sector peers (Shulman et al., 2016).

These online practices function simultaneously as a reflection and facilitating mechanism of social encounters, conducted by youths, to shape and express their identities and social relations. The role of social media in the development of mental health, such as suicidal ideation has garnered research interest, especially in the study of technology-driven epidemiology. Adolescents and young adults often use these platforms to express emotional misery, even conveying suicidal

ideation, and thus provide researchers and clinicians with a new detection and prevention tool [Gosling et al, 2021]. Being interactive Internet-based applications, they enable creation, sharing, and curation of user-generated content, since they change not only communication and formation of identities but also at the domestic level up to the global one (Davis, 2016).

Identity Formation

The formation of adolescent identity is one of the major psychological tasks of both the adolescent and the young adult. The adolescents are in the process of development and consolidation of their identities as they pass through the different stages of life they are actively involved in the process. The identity-forming process involves exploration, commitment, and self-reflection and is immensely influenced by people, relationships, and surroundings.

The knowledge of this development has far-reaching implications in instances where adolescents undergo certain life changes which involve exposure to social media, mental problems, and identity crises in personalities. At this age, adolescents become exposed to the issues that could include Identity diffusion particularly through the utilisation of social media, passive suicidal ideation, and overall the Identity formation process (Erikson, 1968).The impact of the online platform, social media, like Instagram and Facebook. With these sites, the young people can express and experiment with their identities in a manner that could not have been done in the traditional social environments (Davis and Weinstein, 2017).

The phase of adolescence is a very crucial stage in identity formation because of the biological, cognitive and social transition. There are several factors that may strongly influence identity formation, including the emergence of social media usage, mental health complications

and the social environment overall (Crocetti et al., 2017). These factors are very critical in shaping personal identity of the adolescent and the psychological wellbeing of the adolescent.

Although it is rather a period of diversified permission in the exploration of the self, it is usually marked by numerous dilemmas, such as power of confusion regarding the identity and mental health problems (Klimstra et al., 2017). Adolescence can be described as a very essential development period, and the experiences of bearing through it are worsened by the mental health issue of depression and suicidal thoughts. The Interpersonal Psychological Theory of Suicide (IPTTS) is a conceptual framework of suicide risk factors that has been made based on three themes- hopelessness, perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness (Joiner, 2005). More specifically, hopelessness is observed to be a predictive factor of suicidal ideation (Beck, 1967).

The recent studies have provided a better definition to the term of hopelessness and have in fact distinctions between pessimism and the absence of optimism as the latter being more indicative of suicidal ideation, which is common in the adolescent cohort (Elledge et al., 2019). Knowledge about how hopelessness and interpersonal processes contribute to suicidal ideation during adolescence can be important to clinical interventions, in particular due to the unique styles of domains in which the emotional distress of teenagers is processed and expressed.

Being an inescapable aspect of the modern youth culture that has since been integrated into the daily life of defining what it means to be a young person, social media create a strong impact in the field of adolescent identity work and sociality. Nevertheless, it introduces also new challenges including to identity which may aggravate the feeling of being isolated and result in mental health issues including the impactful periodical passive suicidal ideation. Identity

formation and suicidality may assist in making effective interventions by identification of the high-risk adolescents, in the context of understanding the world of social media.

Passive Suicidal Ideation

Suicidal ideation (SI) is among the most significant lines of mental health concern that has attracted increasing research in the fields of childhood and adolescence. Although studies on suicidal behaviours have been carried out among adults, the studies among children have been few. The passive suicidal ideation (also known as passive SI), i.e., the situation in which children express the desire to die without a specific intention or a specific plan to commit suicide, is an area of research that has not been thoroughly studied (Van Hove et al, 2023). These associated factors have been found to be significant in terms of their understanding, particularly in children as adolescent of 12 to 18 years to develop more powerful prevention and intervention strategy.

Passive suicidal ideation (PSI) the wish to die without a plan or intent to do it has received less empirical focus compared to active suicide ideation but appears to be very common and major (Horne et al., 2020). It is significant to understand the social, psychological and media-relevant factors to PSI and this is particularly in relation to the assumptions of increasing digital media exposure and the development of identity which is changing in the adolescents. The issue of ideation causing suicide is a significant issue among adolescents, with passive and active ideation being significant to predict future suicide attempts (McGillivray et al., 2021).

Passive suicidal ideation (SI), which principally occurs in adolescence, is a significant social health issue. Research indicates that in most cases, SI is a precursor of greater suicidal behaviours (McGillivray et al., 2021) Suicidal ideation (SI) in the adolescent group is a significant health concern in the world with the symptoms of anxiety that in most cases factors significantly

in the development of SI. The prevalence of anxiety disorders is significantly high during adolescence yet understanding of the relationship of anxiety with suicidality among adolescents has been wanting (Yen et al., 2014).

Literature Review

Social media use has been found to be positively associated with risky behaviours in adolescents, including substances use and risky sexual practises (Vannucci et al., 2020) with small and medium effect sizes found. The influence model for Facebook is that social networks strengthen the effects of peer influence on the attitudes and behaviours of social networks as well as encourage adolescents toward risk taking due to the visible benefits of a like, comment or share it will have on their Facebook account (Moreno & Whitehill, 2014). Adolescents are especially vulnerable to these sorts of environmentally enacted digital peer reinforcements as they may have the effect of making risky behavior seem normal or glamorous (Sherman et al., 2018).

Adolescents who use social media frequently may be more prone to feelings of inadequacy, depression and anxiety and contribute to passive suicidal ideation (Gardner & Davis, 2013). Social media magnifies the pressures of society, as adolescents are likely to compare themselves with idealised portrayals of others and may result in distorted self-image and worsen their feelings of worthlessness and isolation (Weinstein et al., 2015). Although the article does not directly address social media, there is an implied need to discuss the exploration of environmental and contextual factors that contribute to PSI in which social media is a likely contributor given its increasing presence in daily life, as well as being established to be linked to mental health outcomes (Horne et al., 2020).

Social media can be part of the risk factors, but also part of the protective factors when it comes to adolescent mental health. Adolescents have said that platforms such as YouTube have become a source of stress relief and distraction from academic and social pressures (O'Reilly 2020). However, anxiety can also be a cause of psychological strain as the perceived need to

always be connected can increase a sense of mental distress, especially in terms of FOMO and peer relations around online participation (O'Reilly, 2020). Social media provides adolescents with distinctive opportunities to connect with each other, pursue common interests, and define a sense of identity, but it makes them susceptible to risks such as cyberbullying and sleep disturbance (Odgers and Jensen, 2020). Contrary to popular fears, the majority of adolescents perceive their experience online as a positive and use the digital platforms to enhance their well-being and social relationships (Odgers & Jensen, 2020).

However, there is concern about overuse and possible links to depression and anxiety, particularly among vulnerable youth (Odgers & Jensen, 2020). For adolescents trying to make sense of complicated lives - including those questioning gender or sexual identity - social media sites online are providing a space for self-exploration and connexion (Michikyan & Suárez-Orozco, 2016).

Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit are commonly used to convey emotional states such as distress and suicidal ideation (Gosling et al., 2021). For some users, these platforms are real-time diaries with linguistic and behavioural markers that can be used to predict the risk for suicide with some accuracy (in fact, the accuracy is reasonable) using machine learning models (Gosling et al., 2021). However, most of the existing studies are reactive (i.e. post-in suicidal crisis), and not enabling proactive intervention (Gosling et al., 2021). With the possibility of passive observation via social media, comes ethical challenges related to user consent and data privacy (Gosling et al., 2021).

Defined broadly, social media describes the platforms for individual and collaborative creation and sharing of content, such as Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram (Davis, 2016). These

types of platforms have different designs but are united by their interactive architecture. Social network sites, such as Facebook, focus on already existing social connexions, while microblogging sites, such as Twitter, provide quick and brief communication (Davis, 2016). Thus, social media is crucial in the identity formation among the youth. Adolescents use platforms such as Instagram and Facebook to show and curate their identities and provides them a space to explore their identities as well as get validation from their peers (Gardner & Davis, 2013).

Social media has grown into the way of life of an adolescent and it has various aspects of identity formation. Adolescents are proposed to use social media as an area of self-expression and exploration as it is crucial to the formation of identity (Branje et al., 2022). Social media communication through adolescents provides an opportunity in receiving feedback regarding the social circle, which plays a pivotal role in defining the self-perception of the adolescents. Yet, excessive usage of social media has been discovered to lead to the presence of negative outcomes, such as lower self-esteem and heightened identity distress (Branje et al., 2022).

Adolescents are now a part of the social media revolution that is influencing various identities elements. Research indicates that adolescents engage in self-expression and exploration, which are the core concepts of identity formation, through social media (Branje et al., 2022). Social media enables the interactions between the teenagers to provide feedback by the rest thereby vital in the formation of self-concept amongst adolescents. Nevertheless, the excessive use of social media has been discovered to have negative effects, such as the decrease of self-esteem and augmentation of identity distress (Branje et al., 2022).

Impacts of social media on the development of adolescent identity are drastic as the digital media platforms are digitally synthetic platforms of self-expression and validation (Klimstra et al.,

2017). Adolescents use social media to explore and present different aspect of their identity which in most cases leads to an identity foreclosure or confusion due to the pressure to conform to idealised norm (Davis & Weinstein, 2017). The online world offers immediate feedback in the form of likes, comments, and shares that can confirm and/or challenge the self-concept which can affect the formation of one's identity in profound ways (Gardner & Davis, 2013). Research has shown that the pervasive use of social media may increase the problem of feeling inadequate, particularly when adolescents compare their own real life to the idealised and curated life of others (Klimstra et al., 2017).

Adolescents use social media to experiment with and express the various aspects of themselves, which may help to support their sense of self or cause them to become confused, depending on their interactions with their digitally mediated spaces (Davis & Weinstein, 2017).

These kinds of online interactions are especially influential during times of great transition - including changes in life stage such as transitioning to higher education or entering the workforce (Crocetti et al., 2017). Social media platforms like Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook have become an integral part of the lives of adolescents and emerging adults and offer spaces to self-express oneself and communicate (Davis & Weinstein, 2017). These platforms permit people to create and curate their identities and envision personal experiences with a large target audience which may impact themself-concept. The online space makes it difficult for an individual to express their identity since they must balance their digital selves with their real-life identities and as a result there are likely to conflicts between the two (Davis, 2014).

Social media has brought into the teenage life a vital aspect where the social media outlets such as Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat provide means of exploration, self-expression, and

validation. Studies have found out that adolescents are able to assert and enact idealised selves through social media, which might lead to positive and negative consequences of identity (boyd, 2014).

The conflict between aligning an online identity with an offline self may provide additional levels of complication to the identity formation process, particularly with adolescents who might have significant mental health issues (Weinstein et al., 2015). The scientific flow asserts that the higher the use of social media, the more inadequacy and isolation young people can feel, particularly, in case the youth begin to equate with an idealised theme of the other people (Weinstein et al., 2015). These dynamics contribute to the emergence of self-esteem problems and may make one prone to passive suicidal ideation, particularly in individuals who are already coping with identity confusion (Klimstra et al., 2012).

Identity formation is a central task during adolescents involving exploration and commitment to roles, values and beliefs (Erikson, 1968). The co-construction theory postulates that adolescents are active users who use social media to reflect and construct their identity, in correspondence with developmental tasks such as self-presentation and peer connexion phenomenon (Subrahmanyam et al., 2006). This is echoed in the media practise model which puts forward the notion that the social media use of adolescents is one manifestation for their identity exploration (Steele & Brown, 1995). Risky behaviour in this context may be used as a way of claiming an individual status or winning peer approval (Eleuteri et al., 2017).

The article alludes to the issue of identity indirectly through a discussion of how PSI may mirror existential issues and a lack of connexion to roles in society or meaning, especially among marginalised populations. Theoretical models propose that the loss of meaning and identity

disruptions plays a role in suicidal ideation, though that identity formation per se is not at the forefront (Horne et al., 2020). Adolescents use social media as a tool to explore and assert their own identity both in terms of peer interactions and self-presentation (O'Reilly, 2020). However, media pressure for conformity to idealised norms may complicate the process of identity development, particularly during adolescence, when the formation of identity is still fluid (O'Reilly, 2020). Although classical evidence points to the concerns of adults who question digital literacy of adolescents as high, qualitative results indicate that adolescents consider themselves as being competent at navigating the spaces (O'Reilly, 2020).

Social media are identity labs as adolescents experiment with presenting themselves and receiving feedback from peers (Odgers & Jensen, 2020). Social media offers them a way to manage complex identity-related tasks such as autonomy, belonging and self-expression, which play a central part in adolescent development (Odgers and Jensen, 2020). This process is mostly adaptive, but the public and permanent nature of online content brings some new challenges to the traditional models of identity formation (Odgers & Jensen, 2020).

The quality of interactions, not the quantity, is predictive of well-being and social media can offer a supportive space especially useful to marginalised youth such as those in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, intersex or transgender (LGBTQI) adolescents (Reid Chassiakos et al., 2016). Social identity formation, a main developmental task, is significantly affected by digital communication. Online platforms provide opportunities to explore multiple and intersecting identities - of particular importance with immigrant-origin or queer (LGBQ+) youth (Michikyan & Orozco, 2016).

Although it is not the focus of the article, the author points out that online platforms are important spaces for the exploration of identity and social comparison of others, both of which correlate with emotional well-being and suicidal ideation in adolescents (Gosling et al., 2021). The online personas and the curated self-have a role to play in masking distress or being exacerbated through feedback loops of likes, shares or lack thereof contributing to the formation of adolescent identity and mental state (Gosling et al. 2021).

Recent research has been devoted to understanding within-person mechanisms that drive identity formation and emphasise that identity is acted through daily experiences and interactions with people around us (Branje et al., 2022). Longitudinal studies indicate that although there is a considerable stability in one's identity over time, development is more marked at times of transition such as from secondary to tertiary education (Christiaens et al., 2021).

Longitudinal research has underscored that identity synthesis or the formation of a consistent self-concept tends to increase over time with major shifts during transitional periods of life such as transition from secondary to tertiary education (Christiaens et al., 2021). However, identity struggles might become distressing, particularly when adolescents are under the distress of social exclusion, school stress or relationship difficulties, which can make the development of adolescence difficult (Crocetti et al., 2016).

However, in the digital age, this discovery is embellished with the dominance of social media. Online platforms blur the lines between the public and private selves which makes it more difficult for adolescents to experiment freely and resolve their identity conflicts (Davis & Weinstein, 2017)

Recent studies suggest that identity formation does not occur as a one-time event but it is considered a continuous process that entails cycles of exploration, commitment, and reconsideration (Klimstra et al., 2017). It has become a challenging task with the digital age because social media sites have given people a new avenue of self-exploration and have introduced new risks including identity foreclosure, or confusion. The other issue that affects adolescents nowadays, in turn, is that they need to reconcile their online and their offline selves, which might result in additional stress and uncertainty in their identity formation (boyd, 2014).

The identity development in adolescence is a complex action of experimenting with roles and values until they choose the paths in their lives. The school climate has a substantial impact on this process as it provides the adolescent with a chance to experiment in a number of roles, values and beliefs. Studies have shown that schools that offer prospective and potential of exploration and socialicity offer a positive impact in identity formation (Abbasi, 2016). This may be further be promoted with the physical design of learning spaces that facilitate collaborations and social interaction, which is also why it is essential that educators design learning spaces that do not only promote the individuation process but also encourage social integration at this important stage of development (Bertram, 2016).

Major investments that adolescents make during adolescence can be reviewed at some time later. The positive correlations of healthy identity formation lie between psychosocial indicators of health, including the elevated self-efficacy, emotional strength and positive interpersonal relationships (Crocetti et al., 2017). Nevertheless, this can be hindered by the forces of social media and the forces to manage mental illness and this may lead to lifelong cases of identity losses and maladaptation.

Nevertheless, the effects of the modern society and most notably social media have complicated this process and it is both a good and bad factor in letting adolescents experiment with their identities. Social media increases the impact that social comparison has as it is often put under pressure to show their idealised self-to others online (boyd, 2014). McGillivray et al. (2021) identified that factors like gender, sexual identity and the severity of the depression affected the type of suicidal thought of adolescents. Gender differences, in particular, contributed to the differences between passive and active ideation with females more likely to report active suicidal thoughts whereas males were more likely to report passive ideation (McGillivray et al., 2021). The presence of mental health challenges such as depression can hinder from developing a healthy identity, therefore causing confusion, distress and more vulnerable to suicidal thoughts.

The Interpersonal theory of suicidal behaviour suggests that adolescent adolescents having feeling of thwarted belongingness, especially in the family experience, are more prone to have negative self-perceptions and suicidal ideation (Joiner et al., 2009). However, when adolescents perceive themselves to be a burden on their family, or have low levels of family support, adolescents identity formation difficulties may be exacerbated, resulting in feeling more vulnerable to suicide ideation (Opperman et al., 2015).

Proposed that adolescence is characterised by a search for identity and this may be complicated by external pressures including those from family, peers, and social media. Adolescents with family dysfunction, peer rejection and/or a sense of identity confusion are more likely to suffer from emotional distress and passive suicidal ideation (Maree, 2021). Research shows that adolescents in treatment for substance use disorders, those with co-occurring psychiatric disorders in particular, struggle with establishing stable identities. They have a higher

tendency of reporting more passive SI, particularly when their internalising disorders are not treated like depression and anxiety (Tubman et al., 2021).

Adolescence is an important period of identity formation in which the task of developing a stable sense of self is one of the most important tasks for this period in life. However, social media pressure, dysfunction in the family, and rejection from friends can make it even more complicated. Yen, et al. in 2014 highlighted the role of low self-esteem and family function in the formation of identity in adolescents and these variables were significantly related to suicidal ideation and attempts. The pressure of trying to pass a certain image on the internet combined with offline difficulties can make people feel alienated even further, with the risk of passive suicidal ideation (Weinstein et al., 2015).

While topics such as non-suicidal self-injury and suicide attempts are recognised as being potentially violent behaviours, the authors specifically excluded these from the analysis, on the grounds that they are more comparable to internalising disorders (Marchant et al., 2017). Therefore, this aspect is not discussed in their meta-analysis. PSI is defined as desiring to be dead or not alive without any intentions on acting on these thoughts. Self-harming behavior is frequently downplayed in clinical work and yet is correlated with a large amount of subjective distress, psychiatric comorbidities, and risk of escalation to active ideation or ideation attempts (Horne et al., 2020).

While the focusing of this article does not have any direction of solely passive suicidal ideation, the article brings to light adolescent and practitioner worries on how social media directly or indirectly leads to thoughts of death through exposed cyber-bullying, trolling, and self-harm content (O'Reilly, 2020). Practitioners have been confronted with clients sharing images of suicidal

means online, suggesting that there is a connexion between digital communication and passive forms of communication of suicidality (O'Reilly, 2020).

Although not discussed directly in terms of "passive suicidal ideation", the article does point to an alarming connexion between the digital environments and youth mental health outcomes that include a risk of suicide (Odgers & Jensen, 2020). Particular attention is paid to digital stressors such as exclusion and online harassment which can increase psychological distress, a potential precursor of suicidal ideation. (Odgers & Jensen, 2020)

Although it is not labelled in terms of "passive suicidal ideation," the article discusses suicide risks associated with social media through cyberbullying and emotional distress. Cyberbullying affects approximately 23% of adolescents and is highly linked to the risk of depression, which is a precursor to suicidal ideation (Hamm et al., 2015; Mok, Jorm, & Pirkis, 2015). Anonymity and permanence of the online bullying makes it hard to plan the bullying and communicate it to be corrected (Reid Chassiakos et al. 2016).

Although not presented explicitly under the category of passive suicidal ideation, the research is based on the correlation of the use of social media and mental issues, including depression and stress (Moreno et al., 2011; Egan and Moreno, 2011). It has also been linked that false self-presentation on the internet has led to the spread of social anxiety, which is a potential psychological antecedent to suicidal intentions especially among socially anxious teenagers (Michikyan and Subrahmanyam, 2016).

The research points out that active and passive suicidal ideation can be illuminated by social media. For example, phrases such as "I wish I wasn't here" or "I don't want to wake up" are widely spread passive features recognisable with the help of natural language processing

algorithms (Gosling et al., 2021). These indicators offer opportunities for early intervention should they be identified and interpreted properly even though current systems are not walking on par when it comes to identifying the nuance between passive versus an active expression (Gosling et al., 2021).

The article does not address the topic of passive suicidal ideation directly. However, it implies possible psychological effects with references of risky behaviours such as sexting, misuse of personal data and emotionally charged interactions in message boards or blogs. These settings may evoke or highlight emotional vulnerability that may be important in further tests of passive expressions of suicidality (Manning, 2014).

While it is not clearly talking about passive suicidal ideation, Davis presents the impact that social media has in the emotional labour and relationships of its users. The change from active to passive interaction that users are constantly in a state of consumption rather than meaningful connection may lead to loneliness or emotional neglect (Davis 2016). Such factors may insidiously coincide with passive forms of expressive psychological distress in ideological representations, such as idea, especially where users have an imbalance between digital self-deconstruction and inner states (Turkle 2011).

The psychological well-being of adolescents is closely linked to identity formation and those who struggle with identity formation have more passive suicidal ideation. Identity confusion, defined as confusion over one's identity, has been linked to an increase in depressive symptoms and suicide ideation (Branje et al., 2022). Feelings of alienation and despair Adolescents who are struggling with identity formation can experience negative life events and difficult transitions.

The emotional turmoil caused by an exploration of identity, particularly during times of significant change in a person's life, may result in an increased feeling of hopelessness and despair. For instance, ID is a major concern during late adolescence or early adulthood when mental health concerns such as depression and suicidal ideation are at high rates (Christiaens et al., 2021).

Identity confusion is frequently connected with mental health issues, as well as passive suicidal ideation. Erikson (1968) injected the notion that identity formation is a vital task of the adolescent, and if identities are not resolved it can cause emotional distress. Adolescents who feel uncertain of their sense of self are more susceptible to alienation, depression and suicidal ideation. This distress may also be worsened by the social and digital pressures of the social media. As an example, public character of identity-expressions on the internet prevents youngsters to experiment openly with their identities, which fosters confusion and anxiety, which is closely connected with suicidal thoughts (Weinstein et al., 2015). This is why the inability to locate a particular identity may severely impact the mental health of a person and increase the chances of passive suicidal beliefs.

In the social media world, this misunderstanding may be also complicated by the demands of needing to do what the people (and influencers) are doing. Teenagers who struggle to reconcile both the dominance of their online presence and their offline identity and are associated with a sense of isolation and hopelessness, both of which have been attributed to suicidal ideations (Weinstein et al., 2015). Identity distress, heightened by the social comparisons available in social media, is a known risk factor for mental health problems in adolescence, so it is important that school environments provide able spaces to explore oneself and connect with others (Meeus et al., 2010).

Passive suicidal ideation (PSI) refers to desire to be dead, but with no active suicidal ideation/plotting planning, and is an important topic during adolescence. Although active suicidal ideation is more studied than passive ideation, passive ideation is associated with high comorbidity of psychiatric disorders, including depression, anxiety, and psychosis (Liu et al., 2020). Social media is one factor that can make people feel worse when it comes to passive suicidal thinking because adolescents don't like to feel inferior, so they compare themselves to others leading to feelings of alienation, and that is worsened by social media (Weinstein et al., 2015). The authors conclude that passive ideation is not only related to emotional and psychiatric disorders but also to suicide attempt behaviour and highlights its significance in clinical evaluations of adolescent mental well-being (Liu et al., 2020).

Passive suicidal ideation, in which people wish they were dead, without actually planning or attempting suicide, is often linked to mental health conditions, including depression, hopelessness, and unresolved issues of identity. Interpreted best possible (as selected by the reader), hopelessness, specifically lack of optimism, is a strong risk factor for both passive and active suicidal ideation according to the IPTS (Elledge et al., 2019). In a study of inpatient adolescents, lack of optimism was significantly associated with severity of suicidal ideation in the presence of failed interpersonally important needs (Elledge et al., 2019). The results of this study justify the necessity to take into account the fact that hopelessness can be represented as the compartmentalization of pessimism and absence of optimism that can lead to the more specific intervention in regard to adolescents with the passive suicidal ideation.

Several studies suggested that passive suicidal ideation precedes more serious suicidal behaviour and therefore another significant case of early intervention (Elledge et al., 2019). It is also indicated that passive suicidal ideation is a predictor of suicide attempt among adolescents,

particularly when it is observed alongside other emotional disturbance symptoms, including impulsivity, aggression and confusion of identity (Liu et al., 2020). Such social relations (in real-life and online) that may result in the existence of passive ideation may only worsen the social isolation (Weinstein et al., 2015).

A significant problem in childhood and adolescence is passive suicidal thoughts where the patient is confident that he would rather be dead, but he does not wish to recover it with his own hands. This type of thought is also often a symptom of a psychological distress state, including depression, hopelessness, and identity muddiness (Van Hove et al., 2023). Pfeffer et al., (1979), demonstrated that passive SI is correlated with numerous risk factors including psychiatric diagnoses, problems in behaviour and stressful events in the family life. Van Hove et al. (2023) in their study came to the conclusion that passive SI was prone to affect children with psychiatric illnesses like ADHD, learning and autism spectrum disorders. Also, the high impulsivity/high levels of aggression were reported to be major risk factors to passive SI. The family setting like the absence of family integration, hostility between parents, and non-presence of parental supervision also have a critical role in the development of passive SI (Deville et al., 2020). This body of work shows how early intervention is vital and the value of parent support in preventing the development of passive SI which would result into more deadly suicidal behaviour.

The unintentional suicidal ideation, where it involves a desire to die regardless of whatever a particular suicidal plan is being contemplated upon, is prevalent amongst teenagers and a precursor to more serious suicidal behaviour. In their research study, McGillivray et al. (2021) have indicated that 51.6 percent of the respondent students were found to have encountered some suicidal ideation in secondary school, with 19.4 percent of those experiencing passive suicidal ideation and 32.2 percent of the respondent experiencing active suicidal ideation. Depression,

anxiety and negative social relation turned out to be strong predictors of passive suicidal ideation, and the most apparent one was depression (McGillivray et al., 2021). High severity depression adolescents had much higher chances of having had active suicidal ideation than passive ideation (Conway et al., 2017). The risk exposures to passive ideation ought to be comprehended since it might allow the determination of those teenagers who will turn out to be more probable to advance to the next stage of committing more hazardous behaviours, such as committing real suicide.

Passive suicidal ideation or a contemplation about how they wish to die without a fatalistic plan to commit suicide has been one of the greatest issues amongst adolescents. This ideation, in the past, has been observed to be strongly linked with perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness constituting two of the most significant constructs of the interpersonal theory of suicide (Joiner, 2005). Moreover, the problem of depression turned out to be a significant contributor to passive suicidal ideation, which once again underlines the importance of the consideration of emotional and social determinants in preventing suicide (Opperman et al., 2015).

Passive suicidal ideation, which is defined as a wish to be dead and not a wish to die actively, is experienced by the adolescent group of the population, particularly adolescents with substance use disorders (SUDs). Lee and Tubman (2025) examined the predilections to passive SI in outpatient adolescents. They have found that gender, internalisation of psychiatric symptoms (depression and anxiety) and alcohol consumption predicted passive SI at statistically significant levels. Additionally, some studies have reported a positive relationship between the lack of the family relationship and the passive SI among adolescents and this shows that a conducive family environment is the key to reducing the incidence of suicidal thoughts (Sharaf, et al., 2009).

Commonly in the teenage years, confusion over identity is the reason why mental health outcomes are provided as a result of receiving passive suicidal ideas. Adolescents in a state of identity confusion have been found to be more prone to flare depressive symptoms and when the symptoms remain unresponsive may evolve to suicidal ideation (Weinstein et al., 2015). These sentiments can be aggravated by the constant feedback can be found in social media, especially when they think they are disconnected or make them feel inferior to others in their online groups (Klimstra et al., 2017).

Rationale of the Study

This study is necessary by the fact that mental health issues are on the rise among adolescents and more so, the rising rates of suicidal ideation that has attested to be a major concern in the population. Although the social media has been widely used in the identity formation of the adolescents, it has not been clearly known to affect teenagers positively or negatively in terms of mental health. Using a prism of identity theory to the modern use of social media, this study will seek to build a holistic theory of the effects of the online spaces on identity and where it affects mental health as passive suicidal emotions are nurtured. Since passive suicidal ideation is a risk factor yet to be taken into account and implemented in the current studies, this research is an effort to highlight its relevance as a risk factor and examine possible protecting factors, such as productive coping and intervention to develop resilience. The insights gained will be important in educating mental health professionals and teachers about how to focus preventive interventions and help-mechanisms with regards to the conditions in the current digital age that adolescents are going through.

Problem Statement

As the use of social media has increased among adolescents, the question has arisen as to the way adolescents are developing mental health problems and identity through the use of social media. The implication of these findings is that social media are associated with various issues like body image issues, depression, and passive suicidal ideation. Methods through which the social media influences the development of adolescent identity and their mental health have however not been widely studied and as well as its magnitude. These relations are essential in comprehending the factors that may be used to create target-specific interventions to enhance the healthy growth of adolescents. Aim: This research seeks to infer a new role played by the social media on the identity formation process and its linkage with the passivity suicidal ideation held by the adolescents.

Significance of the Study

The current study has much worth to add to the theoretical knowledge of the area concerning the psychological development of adolescents, in particular, identity development, social media usage, and passive suicidal ideation. The research contributes to the body of literature regarding the interaction of internal dynamics of a human being with an environmental technology such as social media because it examines how the process of identity formation occurs in adolescents during an important life period. Also with suicide remaining a influential cause of death among the youth this research explains that passive suicidal thinking serves as a decent antecedent to more severe suicidal behaviours, which serves as a significant gap in suicide prevention studies. Moreover, this research demonstrates that there is a necessity to implement early interventions to minimise the risks of a mental health issue related to social media usage. The

findings have potentially practical implications for educational and mental health settings, and professionals working with adolescents can inform their work on helping the youth to develop healthy identities and prevent mental health crises, especially those related to social media exposure.

Objectives

1. To investigate role of social media usage on identity formation and passive suicidal ideation among adolescents.
2. To examine association between identity formation and passive suicidal ideation.
3. To explore the relationship between social media usage and passive suicidal ideation.
4. To determine the difference between both genders.

Hypothesis

The hypotheses of the present study are as follows:

1. There is a significant predictive relationship between social media usage and passive suicidal ideation.
2. There is a significant predictive relationship between identity formation and passive suicidal ideation.
3. There is significant gender difference on passive suicidal ideation.

Conceptual Framework

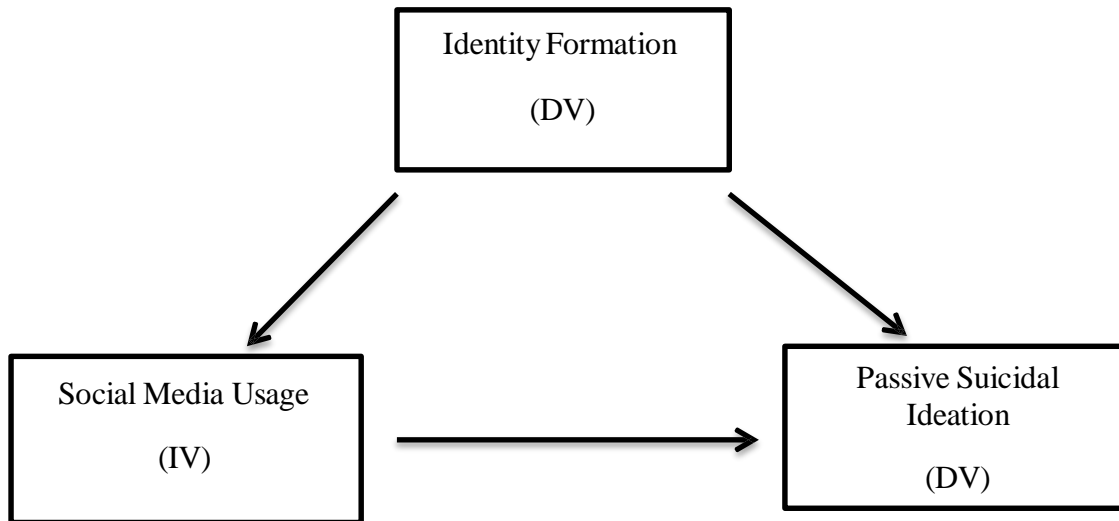


Figure: Conceptual framework depicting relationship among variables

METHOD

Research Design

The research study was a quantitative correlational research design for the investigation the of role social media usage on identity formation and passive suicidal ideation among adolescents. Self-reported-questionnaires was used on the basis of which inferences will be drawn.

Population

The purpose of this study was to investigate the mediation impact of social media usage on identity formation and passive suicidal ideation among adolescents. The target population of this research were 322 adolescents from Islamabad and Chitral with an equal distribution of total no of participants, male and female. Adolescents was further be divided into secondary and higher secondary students.

Sample

The sample was selected using a purposive technique that enables participants to be included based on their accessibility, willingness and specific attributes to participate in the study. It is essential to recognize that the findings may not be generalizable to the entire population. The research seeks to collect relevant data and investigate the mediation impact of social media usage on identity formation and passive suicidal ideation among adolescents. using a sample size of 322 adolescents, comprised of an equal number of males and females. The results of this sample will shed light on the population under investigation, but caution should be exercised when applying the results to a larger.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Participants already enrolled in schools.
2. Adolescents having both parents alive.
3. A minimum age 12 to 18 years

Exclusion Criteria

1. Participants living with single parent.
2. Having physical disability.
3. Not enrolled in school

Operational Definition

Operational definition is the way in which a meaning is given to a construct or it can be further elaborated as conversion of a construct into a measurable form the research study to investigate the mediation impact of social media usage on identity formation and passive and active suicidal ideation among adolescents. the variables will be operationally defined as follows:

Social Media Usage

The frequency, duration, and types of interactions an individual has with social media platforms, such as logging in, posting content, liking, commenting, sharing, messaging, or viewing posts, measured over a specific period (e.g., daily or weekly). It also includes the number of platforms used (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) and the total time spent on these platforms, providing a comprehensive view of an individual's engagement with social media (Sigerson & Cheng, 2018).

Identity Formation

Identity formation is a crucial psychological process during adolescence when individuals start to explore and develop the sense of self in terms of personal values, beliefs, and goals. Erikson's psychosocial theory labels adolescence as the "identity vs. role confusion" stage in which people strive to achieve a sense of consistent identity. Passing this stage successfully helps an individual to have a stronger sense of self, whereas failure may leave an individual puzzled about his/her place and role in society (Erikson, 1968).

Passive Suicidal Ideation

Suicidal ideation, or suicidal thoughts, can be divided into passive and active, where the intention carries different implications and the amount of risk associated with the actions is also different. It is a desire to die without making any actual plans or taking concrete action to end one's life. Individuals with passive suicidal ideation will often ruminate about a desire not to be alive or hope that they won't wake up, however they have no plans or behaviours associated with suicide (Joiner, 2005). Although this kind of ideation is linked with a general sense of hopelessness and may be caused by feelings of being overwhelmed by life circumstances, it is not as immediately dangerous as active ideation (Beck et al., 1979).

Instruments

Dimensions of Identity Developmental Scale

The-DIMs scale (DIDS; Luyckx et al., 2008) was 5-point Likert style scale on five fundamental dimensions of identity formation: Broad exploration (explore identity options), Commitment making (commit to options), Deep exploration (evaluate commitment), Identity with

commitment (internalise a commitment), and Ruminative exploration (repeated indecisive search). It is highly reliable (Cronbach's alpha > 0.70 for all subscale subscales) and has shown validity and relationships to markers of well-being and mental health. The DIDS is used frequently in psychological studies and gives information on adolescents' and young adults' identity formation processes.

The Passive Suicidal Ideation Scale.

The Passive Suicidal Ideation Scale (PASI) created by Jose et al. (2017) is a self-report instrument that assesses passive (wish to die without plans) and active (intent to self-harm) suicidal ideation of the subject. Based on the severity scale, the scale scores suicidal ideation expressed with a Likert type, using the severity and frequency of suicidal ideation within the past period. PASI has good reliability (Cronbach's alpha > 0.80), and it is valid with strong construct, convergent and discriminant validity. It contains two subscales - Passive and Active Suicidal Ideation - which are scored independently for use by clinicians to assess the severity and urgency of suicide risk for specific intervention.

The Social Media Usage Scale

Tuck and Thompson (2024) developed the Social Media Usage Scale (SMUS), which is a psychometric scale to assess a variety of social media use aspects. The use of the social media has been further categorised into four variables using the exploratory factor analysis as belief-based, consumption-based, image based and comparison based social media use. Each subscale is designed to reflect various motivations and patterns of social media engagement. Scale: The scale is a Likert type, which means that the respondents rate their social media behaviours in terms of frequency or degree of agreement with a number of statements. Tuck and Thompson then used

three different studies with college age participants to validate these factors constructing the scale, and they found the reliability and internal consistency of the scale to be acceptable. They found satisfactory internal consistencies for the subscales and support for convergent validity, indicating that the scale can effectively measure multidimensional and complex individual patterns of social media use associated with psychological constructs, such as well-being and social comparison. This scale's purpose is to distinguish between types of social media use to take into account that the way we use social media, whether it means passive use, active social interaction or image-based interaction, may have different psychological consequences.

Procedure

Participants enrolled at different schools would be approached by the researchers after the permission granted by the relevant authorities. A brief introduction would be given about the research and its significance after which an informed consent would be acquired from the participants. Following informed consent data would be gathered from the participants and any uncertainty regarding items will be cleared the participants will specifically asked to answer with utmost honesty and sincerity and after the completion of the process, they will be acknowledged for their assistance and participation. In order to determine the results, SPSS would be used for mediation analysis through PROCESS macro test, simple linear regression and t-test analysis would be utilized with the purpose of understanding the relationship between variables.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using suitable statistical methods. Distributions and characteristics of the variables were examined in the sample using descriptive statistics. Examined the mediation analysis between social media usage, identity formation and active passive suicidal

ideation using PROCESS macro analysis. Conducted simple linear regression analysis to determine the role of social media usage as a predictor of passive active suicidal ideation and identity formation. Used independent sample t-test to identify the mean difference between the two group of male and female. Data was analyzed using IBM SPSS (24th Version).

Ethical Consideration

Ethical approval was obtained from Ethical Review Board, Department of Psychology, IIUI and Ethics Committee of International Islamic University, Islamabad. In addition, all necessary information was provided to the participants and written declaration regarding consent was taken with a total affirmation and assurance regarding privacy and confidentially to the process and gathered data. To ensure confidentiality, the data collected was not shared with anyone and the names of the participants were nowhere mentioned in the report of data file.

RESULTS

Table 1*Descriptive Statistics and Demographic Variables among adolescents (N =322)*

Variable	Category	<i>f</i>	%
Age (years)	Early Adolescents	34	10.5
	Middle Adolescents	226	82.6
	Late Adolescents	22	6.8
Gender	Male	167	51.9
	Female	155	48.1
Socioeconomic status	Lower	43	13.4
	Middle	209	64.9
	Upper	70	21.7
Educational Level	Middle	41	12.7

	Matric	212	65.8
	Intermediate	69	21.5
Purpose / Type pf Content	Memes	77	23.9
	News	52	16.1
	Sefl Improvement	97	30.1
	Influencer	38	11.8
	Other	58	18.0
Average Daily Time on social media	less than 1 hour	126	39.1
	1-3 hours	131	40.7
	4 and above	65	20.2
	5-6 hours	25	14.2
	more than 6 hours	21	11.9

Table 2*Psychometric properties of major study variables*

Variable	No of Items	α	Mean	SD	Range		Skew	Kurt
					Actual	Potential		
Passive Suicidal Ideation	9	.74	20.02	8.70	1	45.00	1.44	1.32
Commitment Making (CM)	5	.83	17.64	5.23	5.00	29.00	-.65	-.23
Exploration in Breadth (EB)	5	.71	16.80	4.39	5.00	25.00	-.50	-.20
Ruminative Exploration (RE)	5	.75	16.36	4.66	5.00	25.00	-.39	-.33
Identification with Commitment (IC)	5	.78	17.13	4.72	5.00	25.00	-.45	-.47
Exploration in Depth (ED)	5	.68	16.10	4.51	5.00	25.00	-.24	-.26
Image Base (IB)	5	.82	11.80	7.47	5.00	40.00	1.14	.66
Comparison Base (CB)	3	.74	8.27	5.91	3.00	24.00	.99	-.07
Consumption Base (CONB)	4	.83	16.26	9.77	5.00	41.00	.55	-.79
Believe Base (BB)	5	.84	9.36	7.15	4.00	25.00	1.47	1.37

Table 2 presents the psychometric properties of major study variables. The table includes the number of items for each variable, along with their reliability coefficients (α), means, standard deviations (Sd), and ranges. The variables show a range of skewness and kurtosis values, which

provide insight into their distribution. The psychometric properties suggest the variables have good internal consistency and provide a solid foundation for further analysis in the study.

Table 3*Pearson correlation of Social Media Usage, Dimension Identity formation & Passive Suicidal Ideation (N=322)*

	PSI_ T	DID_C M	DID_E B	DID_R E	DID_I C	DID-ED	SMU_IB	SMUS_C B	SMUS_BB	SMUS_CO NB
<i>PSI_T</i>	-	-.029	.105	.165**	.106	.074	.157**	.252**	.105	.288**
<i>DID_CM</i>	-.029	-	.607**	.502**	.619**	.597**	-.114*	-.180**	-.216**	-.083
<i>DID_EB</i>	.105	.607**	-	.650**	.655**	.655**	-.123*	-.099	-.160**	-.052
<i>DID_RE</i>	.165**	.502**	.650**	-	.542**	.573**	-.049	.047	-.131*	-.009
<i>DID_IC</i>	.106	.619**	.655**	.542**	-	.620**	-.141*	-.141*	-.212**	-.071
<i>DID_ED</i>	.074	.597**	.655**	.573**	.620**	-	.005	.002	-.065	.013

<i>SMUS_IB</i>	.157**	-.114*	-.123*	-.049	-.141*	.005	-	.555**	.734**	.630**
<i>SMUS_CB</i>	.252**	-.180**	-.099	.047	-.141*	.002	.555**	-	.608**	.564**
<i>SMUS_BB</i>	.105	-.216**	-.160**	-.131*	-.212**	-.065	.734**	.608**	-	.551**
<i>SMUS_CONB</i>	.288**	-.083	-.052	-.009	-.071	.013	.630**	.564**	.551**	-

Table 3 shows the Pearson correlation values between the Social Media Usage (SMU) with Dimensions of Identity Development (DID) with Passive Suicidal Ideation (PSI_T). Significant correlations between several aspects of identity formation and passive suicidal behaviour are found, showing correlation at the .01 level, with DID-Re (Ruminative Exploration) being the most strongly correlated with PSI_T ($r = 0.165$). Additionally, several social media usage variables (*SMUS_IB*, *SMUS_CB*, *SMUS_BB* and *SMUS_CONB*) show a significant positive correlation with PSI_T, suggesting that an increase in social media usage could be associated with an increase in passive suicidal ideation. Some dimensions of identity formation, such as Commitment Making (*DID_CM*), Exploration in Depth (*DID_ED*) have negative correlations with social media usage variables, suggesting an inverse relationship. The results are an insight into both how identity formation and social media usage contribute to mental health results.

Table 4*Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Commitment Making and, Passive Suicidal Ideation**(N=322)*

Predictors	R	R²	F	B	t	Confidence Interval 95%	
						LL	UL
Criterion Variable = PSI							
Model 1	0.29	.00	.27				
PSI				-.03	-.52	[-.23	.13]

Note. β = Beta, CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit, F = Explained Variance, t = mean difference

Table 4 presents the results of the linear regression analysis predicting Commitment Making (DID_CM) and Passive Suicidal Ideation (PSI). The analysis reveals a very small R² value of 0.001, indicating that the predictors in this model explain almost none of the variance in PSI. The β value for PSI is negative (-0.029), with a t-value of -0.520, suggesting that there is no significant relationship between Commitment Making and Passive Suicidal Ideation in this sample. The 95% confidence interval for the β coefficient (-.231, .134) includes zero, further supporting the lack of a significant effect. Overall, the model suggests that Commitment Making does not significantly predict Passive Suicidal Ideation in this dataset

Table 5*Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Exploration in Breadth and, Passive Suicidal Ideation**(N=322)*

Predictors	R	R²	F	β	t	Confidence Interval 95%	
						LL	UL
Criterion Variable = PSI							
Model 1	.10	.01	3.59				
PSI				.10	1.89	[-.01	.42]

Note. β= Beta, CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit, F = Explained Variance, t = mean difference

Table 5 presents the results of the linear regression analysis predicting Exploration in Breadth (DID_EB) and Passive Suicidal Ideation (PSI). The model represents an R2 value of 0.011 that means predictors account for 1.1% of the variance in PSI. The b value for Exploration in Breadth is 0.105 with t-value=1.895 indicating that there is a weak positive relationship between Exploration In Breadth and Passive Suicidal Ideation. The 95% confidence interval for the value of the beta coefficient (-0.008, 0.425) contains no zero, indicating that the effect is statistically significant: While the link is positive, it is fairly weak and appears that Exploration in Breadth has a small impact on Passive Suicidal Ideation in this sample.

Table 6*Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Ruminative Exploration in and, Passive Suicidal Ideation**(N=322)*

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Confidence Interval 95%</i>	
						<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
<i>Criterion Variable = PSI</i>							
<i>Model 1</i>	<i>.16</i>	<i>.03</i>	<i>9.00</i>				
<i>PSI</i>				<i>.16</i>	<i>3.00</i>	<i> [.10</i>	<i> .51]</i>

P < .003 Note. β = Beta, CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit, F = Explained Variance, t = mean difference

The results of the linear regression analysis of predicting Ruminative Exploration (DID_RE) and Passive Suicidal Ideation (PSI) are shown in table 6. The model provides an R2 value of 0.027, which shows that the predictors in the model account for 2.7% of the variance in PSI. The Beta value for Ruminative Exploration is 0.165 with the t-value equal to 3.001. and the result shows that Ruminative Exploration has a statistically significant positive relationship with Passive Suicidal Ideation ($p < 0.003$). The 95% confidence interval for the beta coefficient (0.106, 0.511) doesn't include zero, this is further evidence that the relationship is significant. This gives

us a suggestion in that Ruminative Exploration levels are related to Passive Suicidal Ideation levels, and that the relationship is weak.

Table 7

Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Identification with Commitment in and, Passive Suicidal Ideation (N=322)

Predictors	R	R²	F	B	t	Confidence Interval 95%	
						LL	UL
Criterion Variable = PSI							
Model 1	.11	.01	3.61				
PSI				.10	1.90	[-.01	.39]

P=.05 Note. β= Beta, CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit, F = Explained Variance, t = mean difference

Table 7 shows the results of the linear regression analysis Predicting Identification with Commitment (DID IC) and Passive Suicidal Ideation (PSI). The model has an R2 value of 0.011, which means that the predictors account for only 1.1% of the variance in PSI. The value of the coefficient of determination (v) for Identification with Commitment is 0.106 and t-value = 1.901 indicating that there is a marginal positive relationship between Identification with Commitment and Passive Suicidal Ideation. The 95% confidence interval for the value of beta (v) (-0.007, 0.395) contains zero, which shows that there is no statistical significance in the relationship. Therefore, Identification with Commitment does not notably predict Passive Suicidal Ideation in this sample.

Table 8*Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Exploration in Depth and, Passive Suicidal Ideation**(N=322)*

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	<i>β</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Confidence Interval 95%</i>	
						<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
<i>Criterion Variable = PSI</i>							
<i>Model 1</i>	<i>.07</i>	<i>.01</i>	<i>1.74</i>				
<i>PSI</i>				<i>.07</i>	<i>1.32</i>	<i>[-.07</i>	<i>.35]</i>

p = .18 Note. β = Beta, CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit, F = Explained Variance, *t* = mean difference

The results of the Linear Regression analysis in predicting Exploration in Depth (DID_ED) and Passive Suicidal Ideation (PSI) is shown in table 8. The model reveals an R2 value of 0.005, that is, 0.5% variance in PSI is explained by the predictors. The value of the b for Exploration in Depth is 0.074 and the value of t is 1.320, indicating there is a weak positive link between Exploration in Depth and Passive Suicidal Ideation. The 95% confidence interval for the beta coefficient is (-0.069, 0.353), which contains the value of zero and thus the relationship is not statistically significant. Thus, Exploration in Depth is a poor predictor of Passive Suicidal Ideation in this sample.

Table 9*Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Image Base and, Passive Suicidal Ideation (N=322)*

Predictors	R	R²	F	B	t	Confidence Interval 95%	
						LL	UL
Criterion Variable = PSI							
Model 1	.15	.02	8.10				
PSI				.15	2.84	[.05	.30]

P=. Note. β = Beta, CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit, F = Explained Variance, t = mean difference

Table 9 summarises the findings of the linear regression analysis for the prediction of Image Base (SMUS_IB) and Passive Suicidal Ideation (PSI). Results are, Address variables (Forecasting): The model shows an R² value of 0.025, which means that the predictors account for 2.5% of the variance in PSI. The b is 0.157 and the t-value is 2.846, which is statistically significant relationship that Image Base has a positive relationship with Passive Suicidal Ideation. The 95% confidence interval for the beta coefficient (0.056, 0.309) does not include zero which again supports the significance of the relationship. This then indicates that elevated levels of Image Base usage are related to elevated levels of Passive Suicidal Ideation in this sample.

Table 10*Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Comparison Base and, Passive Suicidal Ideation (N=322)*

Predictors	R	R²	F	β	t	Confidence Interval 95%	
						LL	UL
Criterion Variable = PSI							
Model 1	.25	.06	21.67				
PSI				.25	4.65	[.21	.52]

P=. Note. β= Beta, CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit, F = Explained Variance, t = mean difference

Table 10 illustrates the findings of the linear regression analysis predicting Comparison Base (SMUS_CB) and Passive Suicidal Ideation (PSI). The model has an R2 value of 0.063, which represents the variance in PSI that is explained by the predictors. The Beta of Comparison Base is 0.252, and the t value is 4.655, which shows a positive relationship between Comparison Base and Passive Suicidal Ideation is statistically significant. The confidence interval of the p value of the B coefficient (0.214, 0.527) is not zero, and the confidence degree is 95%, which proves the significance of the relationship. These results indicate that greater use of Comparison Base is related to greater risk for Passive Suicidal Ideation in this sample.

Table 11*Linear Regression Analysis Predicting and, Passive Suicidal Ideation (N=322)*

Predictors	R	R²	F	β	t	Confidence Interval 95%	
						LL	UL
Criterion Variable = PSI							
Model 1	.10	.01	3.56				
PSI				.10	1.88	[-.01	.26]

P=. Note. β= Beta, CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit, F = Explained Variance, t = mean difference

Table 11 presents the results of the linear regression analysis predicting an unspecified variable and Passive Suicidal Ideation (PSI). The model shows an R² value of 0.011, indicating that the predictors explain only 1.1% of the variance in PSI. The β value for the predictor is 0.105, with a t-value of 1.889, suggesting a weak positive relationship between the predictor and Passive Suicidal Ideation. The 95% confidence interval for the β coefficient (-0.005, 0.261) includes zero, indicating that the relationship is not statistically significant. Therefore, the predictor does not significantly predict Passive Suicidal Ideation in this sample.

Table 12*Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Consumption Base and, Passive Suicidal Ideation (N=322)*

Predictors	R	R²	F	β	t	Confidence Interval 95%	
						LL	UL
Criterion Variable = PSI							
Model 1	.28	.08	28.99				
PSI				.28	5.38	[.16	.35]

P=. Note. β= Beta, CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit, F = Explained Variance, t = mean difference

Table 12 presents the results of the linear regression analysis predicting Consumption Base (SMUS_CONB) and Passive Suicidal Ideation (PSI). The model shows an R² value of 0.083, indicating that the predictors explain 8.3% of the variance in PSI. In the case of Consumption Base, the b value is +0.288 with a t=5.384, and so Consumption Base is significantly positively correlated with Passive Suicidal Ideation. The confidence interval (0.163, 0.350) for the value of β is 95%, and it also contains no zero, so it is safe to say that there is a relationship. The results indicated that the level of Consumption Base usage was positively correlated with the level of Passive Suicidal Ideation for this sample.

Table 13

Gender Differences on mean scores of Passive Suicidal Ideation (N=322)

Variable	Male (n=167)		Female (n=155)		<i>t</i> (320)	P	95% CI		Cohen`s d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
PSI	18.71	7.00	21.43	10.03	2.84	.00	.83	4.61	.27

PSI: Passive Suicidal Ideation

Table 13 reports the levels of independent sample t-testing showing that there is a significance between male (M = 18.71, SD = 7.00) and female (M = 21.43, SD = 10.03), $t(320) = 2.84$, $p < .01$, $d = .27$ on passive suicidal ideation variable.

DISCUSSION

The present study addressed on how social media use influenced identity formation and the relationship of social media use with passive suicidal ideation in adolescents. The results add to the emerging body of literature on the psychological and social consequences of digital use in a crucial developmental period. The first hypothesis addressed the relationship between identity formation and suicidal ideation. The study assessed several aspects of identity formation of "Commitment Making" (DID_CM), "Exploration in Breadth" (DID_EB), "Ruminative Exploration" (DID_RE), "Identification with Commitment" (DID_IC), and "Exploration in Depth" (DID_ED). The regression results, however, indicate low or non-significant relations between these variables and passive suicidal ideation (PSI).

Table 4 shows that Commitment Making (DID_CM) had no significant relationship with PSI with $R^2 = 0.001$, $v = -0.029$, and $t = -0.520$ ($p = 0.60$). This suggests that commitment making, which typically involves making firm decisions about personal values and future goals, does not significantly predict passive suicidal ideation in the current sample. The 95% confidence interval for the β coefficient (-.231, .134) further supports this non-significant effect, including zero. The results are in line with a previous study where five identity dimensions (including Commitment Making, Identification with Commitment, and Ruminative Exploration), Identification with Commitment and Ruminative Exploration were significantly associated with depressive symptoms; the other identity dimensions (including Commitment Making) were not significantly associated with depressive symptoms or loneliness in their model (Lindekilde, A., et al., 2018)

Exploration in Breadth (DID_EB), as seen in Table 5, exhibited a very weak but statistically significant positive relationship with PSI ($R^2 = 0.011$, $\beta = 0.105$, $t = 1.895$, $p = 0.057$). Although statistically significant, the weak effect size indicates that exploration in breadth, referring to the process of exploring various possibilities without commitment, has only a marginal influence on passive suicidal ideation.

Ruminative Exploration (DID_RE), however, presented a more substantial relationship with PSI, as shown in Table 6. With an R^2 value of 0.027, $\beta = 0.165$, and a t-value of 3.001 ($p < 0.003$), the results suggest a moderate positive relationship between ruminative exploration and passive suicidal ideation. This finding implies that individuals who engage in more intense self-reflection and rumination may experience higher levels of passive suicidal ideation. This result aligns with previous studies that have linked rumination with suicidal thoughts (Seligman, 2012). Similarly Liu et al. (2021) reported that rumination distinguished adolescents with passive suicidal ideation from those without such thoughts in a large sample of “left-behind” youth, suggesting ruminative processing is a specific cognitive correlate of passive ideation,

Identification with Commitment (DID_IC) and Exploration in Depth (DID_ED) both showed weak or non-significant relationships with PSI (Tables 7 and 8). Specifically, the regression analysis for Identification with Commitment ($R^2 = 0.011$, $\beta = 0.106$, $t = 1.901$, $p = 0.05$) did not provide compelling evidence to suggest a strong relationship with passive suicidal ideation. Similarly, Exploration in Depth ($R^2 = 0.005$, $\beta = 0.074$, $t = 1.320$, $p = 0.18$) did not reveal a statistically significant predictive relationship. These results suggest that deeper levels of exploration or a more committed sense of identity may not directly influence passive suicidal ideation.

In summary, while some aspects of identity formation, especially ruminative exploration, exhibited weak to moderate associations with passive suicidal ideation, the hypothesis proposing a predictive relationship between identity formation and suicidal ideation was largely unsupported by the data. This finding echoes similar conclusions from previous research, where identity formation was found to have a complex and often indirect relationship with mental health outcomes (Arnett, 2004). In the same way a recent research reported that identification with commitment was associated with lower levels of psychopathology, whereas exploration in depth did not significantly moderate the link between childhood adversity and psychopathology, suggesting only a limited direct role for these adaptive identity processes in predicting internalizing outcomes. (Samaey et al., 2025)

The second hypothesis examined the relationship between social media usage and passive suicidal ideation. Among the uses of social media that shown to be included in the study were Image Base (SMUS_IB), Comparison Base (SMUS_CB), Belief Base (SMUS_BB) and Consumption Base (SMUS_CONB).

Image Base (SMUS_IB) which is in Table 9 indicated a positive statistically significant relationship with PSI ($R^2 = 0.025$, $v = 0.157$, $t = 2.846$, $p < 0.01$). The above finding suggests that there is a positive relationship between greater use of social media platforms that focus on photos and consequent appearance comparisons and body dissatisfaction and passive suicidal thoughts. This finding aligns with the earlier studies that link the consumption of social media and specifically image-based sites like Instagram with negative psychological effects (Fardouly et al., 2015).

Passive suicidal ideation was also statistically significantly correlated with comparison base (SMUS_CB): ($R^2 = 0.063$, $\eta^2 = 0.252$, $t = 4.655$, $p < 0.001$), which implies that comparison base users are more susceptible to increased levels of passive suicidal ideation. This is consistent with studies that show upwards social comparison on social media can result in feelings of inadequacy and depression (Fardouly et al., 2015). Irmer et al. (2023) showed that daily social media use predicted lower self-worth through an increase in upward social comparison processes among youth, links to which were mediated through feeling worthless and unhappy. Aubry (2024) also found greater upward comparisons on Instagram correlated with increases in depressive symptoms, which is a known proximal correlate of suicidal ideation.

Lastly, Consumption Base (SMUS_CONB) was the most positively associated measure of the social media variables with a passive suicidal ideation ($R^2 = 0.083$, $B = 0.288$, $t = 5.384$, $p < 0.001$). The finding suggests that increased use of social media and passive consumption of social media content including passive browsing and content absorption is significantly associated with passive suicidal ideation. In line with the existing literature, this study confirms the negative effects of excessive social media use on mental health, and in particular on the increase of feelings of isolation, anxiety and depression (Primack et al., 2017).

In conclusion, the findings five strongly support the second hypothesis, that social media use, specifically image-based involvement, social comparison and passive consumption is an important predictor of passive suicidal ideation. These results are also congruent with an increasing literature linking a detrimental causal relationship between social media use and poor mental health outcomes, particularly amongst adolescents and young adults (Sampasa-Kanyinga & Lewis, 2015). Biddle et al. (2022) reported the qualitative study demonstrated adolescents who experienced acute suicidality often spoke about their social media experience as one characterised

by negative social comparison and exposure to idealisation, which leads to feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness.

Hypothesis 3 was supported by other studies that have reported gender differences in the experience of suicidal ideation. Inconsistent with previous research, Nock et al. (2008) and Weissman et al. (1999) consistently found a higher suicidal ideation rate among females than males, suggesting that the difference may be due to higher emotional distress and rumination among females. In opposition, even though males tend to be less prone to report passive suicidal ideation, they tend to display more fatalistic suicidal attitudes, which can include more direct and lethal attempt behaviours (Schaefer et al., 2017). Li et al. (2024) reported a significantly stronger relation between suicidal ideation, depression, and non-suicidal self-injury in females than males, implying the possible role of emotional and interpersonal aspects in the influence on suicidal thought in adolescent females.

Also, significant difference determined in this study agrees with Emslie et al (2006) that females are more likely to experience passive form of suicidal ideation most frequently in the form of passive thoughts of death than their male counterparts. The small effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.27$) means that the difference is statistically significant, but the difference is only small enough that the difference is of little practical concern.

Limitations and Suggestions

Following are the limitations of the current study:

1. A main limitation of the study is that the study is a cross-sectional design study. Although the study might lead to conclusions about associations between social media use, identity formation and passive suicidal thoughts, it cannot lead to causal conclusions. Given that the data

is cross-sectional (that is, measured at a single moment in time), it is unknown whether social media use causes changes in identity formation or suicidal thoughts or thinking or whether adolescents who have pre-existing mental health problems are more likely to use social media in certain ways. Also, longitudinal studies would be more suited to analyse causal flows.

2. Self-reported measures of social media use and suicidal ideation in the study make it susceptible to various biases. Adolescents may underreport or exaggerate their social media use or mental health symptoms due to social desirability, fear of stigmatisation or self-lack of self-awareness. This could result in incorrect data and reduce the reliability of the findings.

3. The sample for the study is not randomly selected or confined to particular geographic locations, socio-economic origins or school types and it may therefore not be representative of the entire adolescent population. This leaves the results relatively disjunctive for all adolescents, in particular those that may come from a different cultural, economic or family environment. In addition, the sample may be biased towards adolescents who have increased use of social media, which may complicate the researchers' ability to generalise this study to those with lower or no social media use.

4. Suicidal ideation is a subjective and sensitive phenomenon which may be hard for adolescents to accurately communicate, especially passive suicidal ideation, which may be of varying severity. Some inconsistencies were detected in the data, which could be due to varying interpretations by different adolescents of core emotions such as depression, hunger, and anger, and the different ways in which it was described.

5. The study does not consider any other external factors that may affect both social media use and suicidal thoughts, such as family relationships, peer relationships, academic stress, or pre-

existing mental health conditions. Without accounting for these potential confounding factors, it is challenging to determine whether the observed relationships are truly caused by social media use or other factors.

6. Social media use is a broad term, and the study might not be able to distinguish between the effects of different platforms (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, Facebook). Each platform has different types of interaction (visual content, text-based interaction, etc.) that can have different implications on identity formation and mental health. One could argue that to generalise the data across different platforms blends nuanced differences of impact.

7. Adolescents are at different stages of identity progression and this could change over time. If we were to assume that identity formation is a linear process as opposed to being dynamic and multi-faceted in nature, then the study may not be able to account for these developmental changes. Their findings are thus only able to reflect a point in time from a larger developmental pattern.

8. The role of social media in the formation of identity and mental health is multidimensional and multifaceted. The study appears to simplify the effects of social media by considering the social media variable as a one-shot variable (such as eating healthy) missing how the individual variables (such as personality, coping strategies, resilience) and the contextual variables (such as peer support, family) mediate the effects.

9. The study is on adolescents but the link between social media use and mental health might vary among different age groups. The results are not likely to be generalisable to older or younger populations, however, as the developmental and social contexts of adolescents will be different in important respects from those of adults or children.

Following are the suggestions:

1. Future studies should adopt a longitudinal design to explore the causal relationships between social media usage, identity formation, and passive suicidal ideation over time. Longitudinal studies can track changes in social media habits and their potential effects on identity formation and mental health, thus providing stronger evidence for cause-and-effect relationships.
2. The cross-sectional design of the current study limits the ability to infer causal relationships. Longitudinal data would help determine whether social media use leads to changes in identity formation or suicidal ideation, or if pre-existing mental health conditions and identity disturbances make adolescents more likely to use social media in maladaptive ways.
3. Future research should employ a combination of self-report measures, observational tools, and clinical assessments to measure identity formation and suicidal ideation. Utilizing standardized scales, such as the Identity Status Inventory (ISI) for identity formation and the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) or Suicide Behaviors Questionnaire (SBQ) for suicidal ideation, can help improve the reliability and validity of results.
4. Future research should differentiate between different types of social media usage (e.g., passive vs. active engagement) and explore their specific effects on identity formation and mental health. Additionally, distinguishing between different platforms (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, TikTok) may reveal platform-specific impacts on adolescents' well-being.
5. Future studies should consider the role of moderating variables such as social support, coping mechanisms, personality traits (e.g., neuroticism), and resilience. These factors may influence the relationship between social media usage and suicidal ideation.

6. Future studies should aim for a larger, more diverse sample that includes adolescents from varied socio-economic, ethnic, and geographic backgrounds. Including different age groups (e.g., early adolescence vs. late adolescence) could also reveal developmental differences in how social media usage affects identity formation and mental health.
7. Future research should explore cultural and contextual differences in how social media affects identity formation and suicidal ideation. Researchers should consider how cultural factors (e.g., collectivism vs. individualism) and societal norms influence adolescents' social media behaviors and mental health.
8. Future research should investigate intervention strategies aimed at reducing the negative impacts of social media on adolescents' mental health. This could include cognitive-behavioral interventions, social media literacy programs, or mindfulness-based practices designed to mitigate the risks of passive suicidal ideation and enhance identity formation.

Implications of this study

Thus, the results of this study indicate that while some aspects of identity formation, specifically ruminative exploration, were correlated to passive suicidal ideation, the correlation is not particularly strong. Therefore, future research should investigate other possible mediators or moderators of this relation, such as emotional regulation or coping strategies, that could affect this relationship. In addition, the use of longitudinal data may assist in explaining the direction of the relationships.

On the other hand, the strong associations between social media use and passive suicidal thoughts highlight the importance of intervention strategies that target excessive social media use. Nevertheless, the mental health effect of the use of social media might be mitigated by informing

individuals about the benefits of healthy social media use, fostering a feeling of self-compassion, and identifying coping mechanisms that mitigate the impact of social comparison.

Conclusion

To sum up, the evidence presented in the present research suggests the intricate and multifaceted relationship between social media use, identity formation, and passive suicidal thoughts in adolescents. While identity formation was not significantly associated with suicidal ideation, the study did find significant positive associations between the various forms of Advertising 4 SM usage, particularly image-based, comparison-driven, and consumption-based styles and increased passive suicidal ideation. Overall, these results indicate that excessive use of social media, specifically the use of social comparison and a passive viewing of the content, can worsen mental health problems in adolescents. However, the relatively small effect sizes suggest a need for further research to understand more about the underlying mechanisms and consider potential moderating factors.

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APPENDICES

Annexure A: Informed Consent

I, Zuhaib Hassan, a student of MS Clinical Psychology at the International Islamic University, Islamabad. I am conducting a research study titled "Role of Social Media Usage on Identity Formation and Passive Suicidal Ideation among Adolescents". The purpose of this research is to understand how social media usage affects the identity formation and passive suicidal thoughts in adolescents. All scales and information used in this research will be kept completely confidential and used solely for research purposes. The obtained data will be accessible only to the researcher. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you have the full right to refuse participation or withdraw from the research at any stage. Participation in this research will not directly benefit or harm you, but the results of this study may contribute to improving social and scientific understanding.

If you wish to know the results of the research, please contact the given email address.

Zuhaib Hassan zuhaib.psychologist.zeeicareplus@gmail.com

Annexure B: Demographic Sheet

Personal Information

Age: _____ Gender: Male Female Class/Grade: _____

Socioeconomic Status: Lower Class Middle Class Upper Class

Monthly Family Income: _____ Father's Education (Highest Degree): _____

Father's Occupation: _____

Mother's Education (Highest Degree): _____ Mother's Occupation: _____

Number of Social Media Accounts: _____

Average Daily Time Spent on Social Media:

Less than 1 hour 1 to 3 hours 4 hours or more

Purpose of Using Social Media: _____

Type of Content You Engage With the Most:

Memes

News

Self-improvement

Influencer Content

Other: _____

Annexure C: Social Media Usage Scale

SMUS

Directions: Please indicate how frequently you have engaged in each of the following social media activities in the **PAST WEEK** (7 days). Please only include activities engaged in on social networking sites such as Instagram, Facebook, etc.. Do **not** include activities related to direct messaging such as Facebook Messenger or Instagram direct messages. For each activity, please use the following scale:

	1-2	3-4	5-6		2-5	6-9	10-13	
	times	times	times	Once	times	times	times	Hourly
Never	per	per	per	daily	daily	daily	daily	or more
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

- _____ 1. Made/shared a post or story about something positive that was personally about me
- _____ 2. Looked at how many people liked, commented on, shared my content, or followed/friended me
- _____ 3. Read comments to my own content
- _____ 4. Edited and/or deleted my own social media content
- _____ 5. Played with photo filtering/photo editing
- _____ 6. Compared my body or appearance to others'
- _____ 7. Compared my life or experiences to others'
- _____ 8. Reminiscenced about the past
- _____ 9. Made/shared a post or story about something negative that was personally about me
- _____ 10. Made/shared a post or story about something negative that was NOT personally about me
- _____ 11. Commented unsupportively or disliked/"reacted" unsupportively on other's post(s)
- _____ 12. Sought out content that I morally or ethically disagreed with
- _____ 13. Scrolled aimlessly through my feed(s)
- _____ 14. Looked at others' stories
- _____ 15. Navigated to others' profiles in my social network (e.g., friends or friends of friends)
- _____ 16. Navigated to others' pages who I do not know (e.g., influencers or other famous people)
- _____ 17. Watched videos such as memes, news content, how-tos/recipes, etc.

Annexure D: Passive Suicidal Ideation Scale

PASIS B

Please mark how often you have had each of these thoughts in the past 7 DAYS

	Several times every day	6 to 7 days a week	4 to 5 days a week	2 to 3 days a week	1 day a week	Not in the past 7 days
1. I thought my life was not worth living.	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. I thought it would be better if I were dead.	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. I wished that I could go to sleep and never wake up.	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. I wished I was dead.	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. I wished my life would end.	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. I wished I wasn't alive anymore.	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. I thought it was too hard to keep living.	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. I wished something would happen to end my life.	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. I wished I had never been born.	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. I wanted to die.	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. I wanted to kill myself.	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. I thought about killing myself.	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. I thought about the ways I could kill myself.	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. I thought of how I would kill myself.	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. I thought of when I would kill myself.	5	4	3	2	1	0
16. I thought of where I would kill myself.	5	4	3	2	1	0
17. I thought about how to get what I needed to kill myself.	5	4	3	2	1	0

Annexure E: The Dimension Identity Development Scale

DID

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither disagree / Neither agree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree
1. I have decided on the direction I am going to follow in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have plans for what I am going to do in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I know which direction I am going to follow in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I have an image about what I am going to do in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have made a choice on what I am going to do with my life.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I think actively about different directions I might take in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I think about different things I might do in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am considering a number of different lifestyles that might suit me.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I think about different goals that I might pursue.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am thinking about different lifestyles that might be good for me.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am doubtful about what I really want to achieve in life.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I worry about what I want to do with my future.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I keep looking for the direction I want to take in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I keep wondering which direction my life has to take.	1	2	3	4	5
15. It is hard for me to stop thinking about the direction I want to follow in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
16. My plans for the future match with my true interests and values.	1	2	3	4	5
17. My future plans give me self-confidence.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Because of my future plans, I feel certain about myself.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I sense that the direction I want to take in my life will really suit me.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am sure that my plans for the future are the right ones for me.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I think about the future plans I already made.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I talk with other people about my plans for the future.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I think about whether the aims I already have for life really suit me.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I try to find out what other people think about the specific direction I decided to take in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I think about whether my future plans match with what I really want.	1	2	3	4	5