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Social Media: Why does it even Exist?

The values system gets developed by our interactions with our parents and gets affected when ~~it gets~~ influenced by the outside world. According to research on personal identity, an individualistic approach to exploration tends to find more valuable meaning through suffering and adversities, to have a greater purpose in life by accepting reality, leading to ~~more significant~~ mental health. This exploration is fueled by the complex meaning-making strategies that started as parent-child interactions. (McAdams, D. P., & McLean, K. C)

The upcoming generation grows up watching Papa Pig more than their parents, leaving no room for interactions between parents and their children. Resulting in an identity development significantly influenced by what they watch; in that case, leaving no room for cultural teachings nor a well-taught value system.

The advancement of technology has gotten to a point where people prefer texting their thoughts over verbal communication. The world is running behind a social realm pretending to be their perfect selves to present to the outside world. This has become ~~more of~~ a competition to see who does that better. But this, as a whole, has been significantly influencing an individual's characteristic development, hindering their identity.

A particular study investigates real-world elements of identity-building in relation to problems with online communities and social media. It also examines "the spiral of transformation," or how the growing phase precedes the internet and moves into real life, and the

likely causes behind why people need to establish a virtual identity for themselves. The study also examines the social, cultural, and political characteristics and values of emerging virtual communities in social networks. (Gündüz, U)

The most crucial time for children is adolescence, when cultural and social formation occurs, as previously said. To form a sense of social identity, the adolescent will spend most of their time studying and reflecting on the common beliefs and behaviours they see unless their family and school don't provide any guidance, attention, or follow-up on how the child has been brought up. They determine how to maintain good relationships with their classmates, act according to their social obligations, and make decisions based on a variety of views, ideas, and possibilities that helps them feel distinct and independent as they work to create their own identity development. In this context, adolescents are exposed to an identity crisis. (Elsayed)

Taking a step back from the human psychological aspects, Social media can be an excellent way for adolescents to socialise and stay connected, but it can also have adverse effects if used excessively or inappropriately. It is essential for adolescents to use social media responsibly and to be aware of the potential risks and dangers. While social media has ability to tailor one's feed to their specific interests and preferences may seem like a positive development, it has also had a detrimental effect on the individuality and identity of individuals. (Buckingham)

The personalised nature of social media feeds means that users are only presented with information that aligns with their beliefs and opinions. This can create an echo chamber effect, where individuals are only exposed to information that confirms their existing beliefs, leading to a lack of diversity in their perspectives. As a result, individuals may become more entrenched in their thoughts and less open to new ideas.

Furthermore, the personalised nature of social media feeds can create a false sense of self. Individuals may begin to define themselves based on the information they consume and share on social media rather than their own unique experiences and personalities. This can lead to a loss of individuality and a lack of authenticity in one's persona. (Wu)

Additionally, the targeted nature of social media advertising can negatively affect individuals' identity and individuality. Using algorithms to present users with ads tailored to their interests and behaviours, social media platforms can create a highly personalised advertising experience. This can lead to making things similar of consumer behaviour, as individuals are shown products and services similar to those with similar interests and behaviours have purchased. This can stifle individuality and creativity in consumer choices. This, combined with the constant stream of information on social media, can make it difficult for individuals to focus and process information effectively. This can lead to a lack of critical thinking and an inability to form independent opinions, which can further impact the formation of one's identity. (Pan et al.)

The ability to communicate with others and ourselves by accessing digital media through various devices and systems is what defines this continuous connectivity that characterises contemporary culture. This situation significantly impacts younger generations since, for some time now, teenagers have believed that they live in a multiscreen society. These screens, however, are not just another accessory in a teenager's possession; they are the scenario, place, scene, or context that allows the inclusion of communication, interaction, and action processes. Additionally, screens' social and personal capabilities have improved astoundingly. (Wu)

The show Social Dilemma, which was broadcasted on Netflix in 2019, presents us with factual and statistical information, that the developers of the social platforms achieved to do. The

developers' thoughts were profit and engagement driven, and the consideration of human ethics and emotional well-being was compromised to the extent that we don't know what we are. Summarising how the money-making industries have deeply influenced human psychology. (Minow)

In conclusion, social media's personalised and targeted nature has negatively impacted individuals' individuality and identity. However, by actively seeking out diverse perspectives, limiting the personal data they share, and prioritising self-awareness and self-regulation, individuals can protect their individuality and identity in the face of personalised social media.

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