ONLINE IDENTITY FOR SOMALI YOUTH ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

A STUDY OF MOGADISHU YOUTH

Master Thesis

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Eskişehir, 2019

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MASTER THESIS

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Eskişehir

Anadolu university,

Graduate School of Social Science, June 2019

FINAL APPROVAL FOR THESIS

This thesis titled "**Online Identity For Somali Youth On Social Media: A Study of Mogadishu Youth**" has been prepared and submitted by **Nasro ABDI OSMAN** in partial fullfillment of the requirements in "**Anadolu University Directive on Graduate Education and Examination**" for the Master of Arts in **Department of Communication Design and Management** has been examined and approved on **20/08/2019**.

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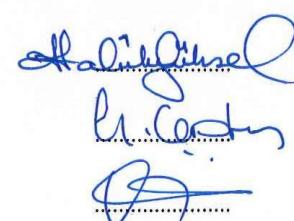
20/08/2019

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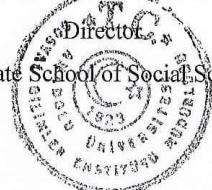
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ABSTRACT

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Social media has increasingly become a significant part of many Somali young people's lives. Researches on social media and other new media in Somalia is very limited. This study however aims to examine Somali young people's use of SNSs and their identity expression. The study is conducted through qualitative interviews with twenty Somali young people living in the capital city of Mogadishu. The participants range in age from 18- 25 years old. The results show that Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter are the most used by young people. The predominant motivations for using these platforms include seeking information, sharing ideas and thoughts, communication, meeting new people and entertainment. The findings also reveal that young people experience different identity expression on social media based on their audience. Young people selectively self-present on Facebook while Instagram and Snapchat are more open, comfortable and free to express their identity. Furthermore, the study explains Somali young people's online identity management. Overall, the results may provide some insights into understanding Somali youth's online identity on social media. Finally, this study contributes to address a gap of knowledge in social media usage and online identity expression of Somali youth in Mogadishu.

Keywords: Social media, Social network sites, Identity, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Somali, Young people.

ÖZET

SOMALİ'Lİ GENÇLERİN SOSYAL MEDYADAKİ ÇEVRİMİÇİ KİMLİKLERİ: MOGADİŞU GENÇLİĞİ ÜZERİNDE YAPILAN BİR ÇALIŞMA

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Anadolu Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Haziran 2019

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Sosyal medya, gittikçe artarak Somali'li gençlerin hayatlarının önemli bir parçası haline gelmektedir. Sosyal medya ve diğer yeni medya üzerinde yapılan araştırmalar Somali'de çok sınırlıdır. Bununla birlikte bu çalışma, Somali'li gençlerin sosyal medya kullanımını ve kendilerini ifade etme şekillerini incelemeyi amaçlar. Bu çalışma, başkent Mogadişu'da yaşayan yirmi Somali'li genç ile yapılan nitel çalışma sonucu gerçekleştirilmiştir. Katılımcılar 18 ile 25 yaş arasındadır. Sonuçlar, Facebook, İnstagram, Snapchat ve Twitter'ın en çok gençler tarafından kullanıldığını gösteriyor. Bu alanları kullanmalarının en önemli sebepleri; bilgi edinme, fikir ve düşüncelerin paylaşımı, iletişim, yeni insanlarla tanışmak ve eğlencedir. Bulgular ayrıca, gençlerin sosyal medyada, izleyiciler bazında farklı kimlik ifadeleri yaşadıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Gençler, İnstagram ve Snapchat'te daha açık, rahat ve serbest bir şekilde kendilerini paylaşırken Facebook'ta daha seçici olarak kendilerini ifade etmektedirler. Ayrıca araştırma, Somali'li gençlerin çevrimiçi kimlik yönetimini açıklamaktadır. Genel olarak, sonuçlar Somali gençliğinin sosyal medyadaki çevrimiçi kimliğini anlama konusundaki bilgi açığını gidermeye katkıda bulunacaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Sosyal medya, Sosyal iletişim ağları, Çevrimiçi Kimlik, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Somali, Gençler.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND RULES

I hereby truthfully declare that this thesis is an original work prepared by me; that I have behaved in accordance with the scientific ethical principles and rules throughout the stages of preparation, data collection, analysis and presentation of my work; that I have cited the sources of all the data and information that could be obtained within the scope of this study, and included these sources in the references section; and that this study has been scanned for plagiarism with "scientific plagiarism detection program" used by Anadolu University, and that "it does not have any plagiarism" whatsoever. I also declare that, if a case contrary to my declaration is detected in my work at any time, I hereby express my consent to all the ethical and legal consequences that are involved.
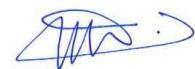
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MoPIED   : Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development

SNSs   : Social network sites

UNDP   : United Nations Development Programme

UNFPA   : United Nations Population Fund

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of a brief description of Somalia, problem of statement, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study and the structure of the study.

1.1. A brief description of Somalia

Geographically, Somalia is located in Horn of Africa. It is bordered by Ethiopia in the west, Kenya in the south, Djibouti in the northwest, the Indian ocean in the east, the Gulf of Aden in the north. Somali has gained its independence from Britain and Italy on 1960 (Muxumed, 2000, p. 137). The population of Somalia is estimated at 12.3 million (UNFPA, 2014, p. 31), about 73% population in Somalia are under the age of 30 years (UNDP, 2012, p. 48) similarly, after two years of UNDP's study another study by UNFPA (2014, p. 42) found that 75% of Somalis is aged below 30 years, which means that the majority of the Somali people are young. Culturally, Somalia is the most homogeneous country in the Africa (Samatar, 2016, p. 9). The official language of the country is Somali. Furthermore, Somalis highly value family, clan, and religion and it is extremely important to the sense of their identity (Lewis, 1993, pp. 12-21). Somali has two rivers: Shabelle and Jubba. Thus, currently, Somalia's economy mostly dependent on agriculture (MoPIED, 2017, p. 3).

The capital city of Somalia is Mogadishu, and it is also known as "Hamar". Mogadishu has the largest population in Somalia with a total of 1.6 Million people (UNFPA, 2014, p. 34). All the participants of this current study live in this city.

1.2. Problem of Statement

As the internet became popular in the early 1990s, it has caused to bring out much technological innovations including social network sites (Lukes, 2010, p. 415). SNSs offer tremendous opportunities to people to connect with friends and family across geographic borders (Chambers, 2013, p. 10). It has been described as the main tool of communication used by contemporary young people (Ravhuhali, et al, 2015, p. 275; Bicen and Cavus, 2010, p. 578). Furthermore, research suggested that young people of 18-29 years old of digital

online users have mostly adopted SNSs (Perrin, 2015) moreover, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat are the most leading SNSs among young users (Lenhart, 2015).

In Somalia, the use of internet services started to become widely used in late 2000s (Dhaha and Igale, 2013, p. 300). With the development of Internet in Somalia, the last six years social media has increasingly become a significant part of many Somalis. For example, Dhaha and Igale (2013, p. 300) reported that there is a strong online presence for Somalis on social media. However, these social media platforms provide new affordances for people's identity performance (Buckingham, 2008) and the existence of online identity expression is always shaped by social settings (Baym, 2015 and Boyd, 2014). Thus, inspire of the prevalent use of social media by Somali youth, a few studies that used quantitative approach have investigated SNSs use by Somali youth, with most of the research focused on Facebook. Therefore, there is a need to explore Somali young people's use of SNSs and their identity expression on different social media sites to fill this gap knowledge. To address this gap literature, this study uses a qualitative approach and seeks to answers to research questions:

1- Which social media are mostly used by Somali youth, their preferred ones and reasons, and also motivations for engaging with social media sites?
2- How do Somali youth engage with online identity of social media?
3- How social media has shaped or changed Somali youth's personal identity?

1.3.   Objectives of the Study

In general, the main purpose of this study is to address a gap in the literature by examining Somali young people's use of SNSs and their online identity expression. More precisely the study has these following three specific objectives:

1- To know the most used and preferred social media sites by Somali youth, their reasons and the motivates for engaging in online identity.

2- To explore Mogadishu youth's online identity expression and their strategic self-presentations on social media sites.

3- To determine the change that Somali youth have encountered in the use of social media sites.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study will be significant to the following:

Literature. There have been a very limited number of studies of SNSs usage among Somali youth. However, none of the previous studies on Somali youth shed light on how Somali youth in Mogadishu self- present or express their identity on social media. Hence, this study would potentially fill a big gap of knowledge in social media usage by Somali youth in Mogadishu and their identity expression.

Young people. Research has suggested to be considered SNSs as a significant part of contemporary young people's lives (Lehdonvirta and Räsänen, 2009, p. 91). Therefore, the findings of this study would also take part to increase Somali youth's awareness of social media usage.

Society. This study is important to the society especially parents and educators. It will help them to gain some insights into understand how Somali youth use SNSs. Thus, the finding will provide valuable suggestions to parents and other adults on how they should react about young people's identity expression on social media.

1.5. Limitations of the Study

Every study has its own of limitation. This study will focus on Somali youth from 18 to 25 years old, especially those are based the capital city of Somalia, Mogadishu. The researcher chooses to conduct the research in Mogadishu because according to UNFPA's study on population estimation survey 2014 in Somalia found that Somalia's population is young, with over 70% under the age of 30 years old and most of them live in Mogadishu (UNFPA, 2014, p. 42).

1.6. Structure of the Study

In order to achieve the goals of this thesis, the study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 presents background of the study, problem of statement, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study and the structure of the study.

Chapter 2 consists of five parts. First part reviews social media concept and its various tools. The second section covers social network sites and young users. The third part of this chapter focuses on identity and online identity. This includes a comparison between offline identity and online identity. The fourth part discusses identity expression and online interaction. Lastly, the fifth part focuses on theoretical foundation of the study. In addition to that, this chapter is also based on the key theories and studies to be discussed in this present study.

Chapter 3 generally covers the chosen methodology and procedures applied in conducting this present study. Thus, this chapter subsequently covers research design, participants of the study, data collection instrument and procedures, data analysis of transcripts, ethical considerations and limitation of the methodology.

Chapter 4 consists three main themes with ten list of sub-themes that presents the findings of the participants of this current study. Data was collected from Somali youth living in the capital city of Mogadishu and thematic analysis of transcribed semi-structured interviews was used to analyze the gathered data.

Chapter 5 contains three sections: conclusion, discussion, and recommendations. The first section summaries the key findings of this study. The second section discusses the findings of the current study in relation to relevant literature. Lastly, the third section provides recommendations for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter consists of five parts. First part reviews social media concept and its various tools. The second section covers social network sites and young users. The third part of this chapter focuses on identity and online identity. This includes a comparison between offline identity and online identity. The fourth part discusses identity expression and online interaction. Lastly, the fifth part focuses on theoretical foundation of the study. In addition to that, this chapter is also based on the key theories and studies to be discussed in this present study.

2.1. Social Media Concept and Platforms
2.1.1. Concept of social media

In the past few years, the term of social media site has become a worldwide phenomenon for its various types of interactive technologies such as microblogging, photo and video sharing platforms, and collaborative wikis (Fuchs, 2014, p. 32).

The definitions of social media have been provided by in several disciplines including communication disciplines. Here are several definitions of social media which was offered in the previous studies:

❖ "Social Media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, p. 61).

❖ "Social media consists of (a) the information infrastructure and tools used to produce and distribute content that has individual value but reflects shared values; (b) the content that takes the digital form of personal messages, news, ideas, that becomes cultural products; and (c) the people, organizations, and industries that produce and consume both the tools and the content" (Howard and Parks, 2012, p. 359).

❖ "Social media are Internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively Self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and

narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others" (Carr and Hayes, 2015, p. 50).

❖ "A social network site is a networked communication platform in which participants 1) have uniquely identifiable profiles that consist of user-supplied content, content provided by other users, and/or system-provided data; 2) can publicly articulate connections that can be viewed and traversed by others; and 3) can consume, produce, and/or interact with streams of user generated content provided by their connections on the site" (Boyd and Ellison, 2013, p. 159).

2.1.2. Social media platforms

Although there is tremendous variety of social network sites, Facebook and Twitter are the most platforms that many previous studies of social media have focused (Miller, et al., 2016, p. 1). These two online applications/ platforms according to Carr and Hayes (2015, p. 46) are the most likely to mention by any group of society whenever ask to name social media platforms. But in the following review will highlight Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat, which are according to Lenhart (2015) the most leading social media platforms.

2.1.2.1. Facebook

Historically Facebook was founded in 2004 by Harvard undergraduate student Mark Zuckerberg, initially, the site was supposed merely to be online social network for Harvard University but later two years became an opened to users throughout the world (Hew, 2011, p. 663). The number of Facebook users is overwhelming and It is the most popular social media platform that has more than 2 billion active users (Voivonta and Avraamidou, 2018, p. 1) where users according to Chen (2014, p. 1208) enables to share their personal information and photographs additionally to connect and communicate one to another. Furthermore, it is familiar with a variety of social games both on and offline which may reinforce the connectivity among its users especially young people (Kirman, Lawson and Linehan, 2009, pp. 627-632).

It has been suggested that young people are still highly active users of Facebook (Alhabash and Ma, 2017, p. 1) in contrast, teens (13- 18) have been moving away from Facebook, and embracing new platforms in particular Instagram and Snapchat, which they reported that they feel more comfortable than other sites (Kiss, 2013, as cited in Herring and Kapidzic, 2015, p. 2).

An early study examined the motivations for using the internet and virtual community, these motivations include information seeking, entertainment, convenience and pass time. The strongest motivations were identified as information seeking and entertainment (Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000, p. 185). In this regard, according to Chen (2014, p. 1) these all motivations also linked to Facebook.

Meanwhile, many institutions have preferred Facebook as a tool to communicate and to reach out to the public. In addition to that Facebook has been criticized and blamed on issues related to privacy (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p. 294). However, it has been reported that young people and teens users overshare their private information on Facebook, which may affect social settings (Agger, 2011, pp. 20-27).

2.1.2.2. Twitter

Twitter is a microblogging site, which users can use to share thoughts, news, links, images, videos or other information with their community on Twitter (Lacy, 2010, p. 1). Historically Twitter was founded in 2006 to gather by four entrepreneurs named Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Williams but in terms of the idea, it was behind by co-founder Jack Dorsey (Comm, 2010 p. 20). Twitter, at the time of its beginning, was an SMS phone service used by the company's staffs and that SMS message was generally limited to about 140 characters (Comm, 2010 pp. 22- 23). But recently according to Rosen (2017) the maximum character of the site that has used was doubled, which makes 280 characters limit per tweet. Regarding the number of users Twitter, it has reached 321 million active users monthly (Stipp, 2018). However, a study of young people in college reported that most of them access through a mobile internet connection (Al-Bahrani, Patel and Sheridan, 2015a, p. 37).

Twitter like most other social media has improved people's communication, which takes part to unite people on a huge platform for the achievement of some specific objectives such as donating and advocating human rights issues (Lacy, 2010, p. 1). Hashtag, which is part of Twitter features contribute to categorize any specific event or topic that users have discussed on Twitter (Fitton, Poston and Gruen, 2009, p. 127) therefore it enables to the users to find easily for contemporary issues on Twitter. This also made easy for new users of the twitter to connect their community and discover about their interest tweeted of past terms (Al-Bahrani and Patel, 2015b p. 59). Moreover, even someone who does not have an account on Twitter can access to follow the hashtags (Small, 2011, p. 874).

2.1.2.3. Instagram

Instagram is photo sharing application launched in October 2010 which has photo capturing and sharing functions. Being the most mobile photo sharing network (Hu, Manikonda, and Kambhampati 2014, p. 595) it has reached one billion monthly active users (Aslam, 2019).

Since Instagram is based on photo sharing application, there are eight kinds of photo categories which based on their content: "self- portraits, friends, activities, captioned photos (pictures with embedded text), food, gadgets, fashion, and pet", the first six groups are more popular than the last two types (Hu et al., 2014, p. 595). With the rapid development of smartphones technology, Instagram enables users to share pictures or videos which are 15 seconds or [more than] with their network communities, additionally their Instagram posts can be share at the same time with other social media sites like Facebook and Twitter (Al-Bahrani and Patel, 2015b p. 60). Teens are reported that they spend more time on Instagram than Facebook (Salmon, 2013, p. 409). Another study conducted in America found that the highest number of internet users aged between 18-29 years old, 53% of them used Instagram (Lenhart et al., 2015, p. 2).

Similarly, to Twitter, the hashtag is an important feature to Instagram users, allows expressing their feelings through photo, video and links with other users of similar interests on Instagram. However, there is no much research done for Instagram, but despite for its

popularity of photo sharing application, scholars have recently begun to focus on it (Hu et al., 2014, p. 595).

2.1.2.4. Snapchat

Snapchat is a mobile application which users can access to share photos, videos, and direct messages with their community on Snapchat, this also called snaps. In addition to that the user of snap have the ability to collect the number of snaps sequentially in to a story which demonstrates the events of users encounter on their daily lives and it disappears after 24 hours (Spinda and Puckette, 2017, p. 2).

This application found in 2011 by Evan Spiegel, Bobby Murphy and Reggie Brown (Spinda and Puckette, 2017, p. 2). Since the foundation the number of users has reached 186 million daily active users (Greenfield, 2018). The platform has become renowned among teens and young people. In addition, it was rated as the third most-popular after Facebook and Instagram. In comparing Snapchat to the other social media sites, Snapchat users have the opportunity of more private communication in their intimates and any kind of personal sharing, while the other social media sites mostly require self- censorship since it is often visible to a massive audience than Snapchat (Utz, Muscanell, and Khalid, 2015, p. 1).

Moreover, Snapchat is considered as part of social network site, messaging application and ephemeral social media, furthermore, the affiliation motivation is the main reason behind for Snapchat use (Makki, Decook, Kadylak and Lee, 2018, p. 410). The affiliation motivation was described as "a concern over establishing, maintaining, or restoring a positive affective relationship with another person or group of persons" (Heyns, Veroff, and Atkinson, 1958. cited from Koestner and Mcclelland, 1992, p. 205).

Overall, the indicated above social media platforms are merely the top 4 social media (Lenhart, 2015). However, Carr and Hayes (2015, p. 50) provided in the following table 2.1 examples of what social media and not social media types are, based on their definition of social media that offered in the previous topic.

Table 2.1. *Contemporary examples derived from Carr and Hayes' Definition of social media (*Carr and Hayes, 2015, p. 50)

Social Medium	Not a Social Medium
• Social network sites (e.g., Facebook, QQ, GoogleC, YouTube, online, Yelp, Pheed • Professional network sites (e.g., LinkedIn, IBM's Beehive) • Chat-boards & discussion fora • Social/Casual games (e.g., Farmville) • Wiki "Talk" pages • Tinder • Instagram • Yik Yak	• Online news services (e.g., NYT PerezHilton.com) • Wikipedia • Skype • Netflix • E-mail • Online news • SMS/Texts • Tumblr • Whisper

As shown in the table 2.1, Carr and Hayes (2015, p. 50) listed different types of social media and not social media. For example, the types of social media platforms included all social networking, microblogging, photo-sharing and video-sharing platforms.

2.2. Social network sites and Young users

Before the development of technologies, people have used primarily to communicate through media into two ways: public broadcast media which is broadcasted by traditional media (Television, radio, and newspaper) and private communication between two persons such as through telephone. But since the rise of the internet, technologies have provided people more possibilities to communicate and interact with each other (Miller, et al., 2016, p. 2). As the internet became popular in the early 1990s, today's generation have no wonder about the notion of internet as a reason that they have grown up immersed in digital

technology (Lukes, 2010, p. 416)   for this reason, contemporary youth were referred as "digital natives", "net-generation" (Shaw and Krug, 2013, p. 241).

The rise of internet has also caused to bring out much technological innovations including social network site (Lukes, 2010, p. 415) the beginning of this concept which was 1997, Six degees was considered to be the first social network site. The terminology of *"social networking sites", "online social networks",* and social networks was used as interchangeable (Boyd and Ellison, 2007, p. 214). Moreover, Boyd and Ellison (2013, pp. 151-158) have suggested that the term of a social network site is more suitable to be used than the others.

Although there are many scholars across different disciplines defined the concept of SNS, Boyd and Ellison (2013, p. 157) who are both pioneering scholars in this field offered the following definition as the suitable definition of SNS:

> "A social network site is a networked communication platform in which participants 1) have uniquely identifiable profiles that consist of user-supplied content, content provided by other users, and/or system-provided data; 2) can publicly articulate connections that can be viewed and traversed by others; and 3) can consume, produce, and/or interact with streams of user generated content provided by their connections on the site" (Boyd and Ellison, 2013, p. 157).

Although SNSs help people to connect with friends and family through news, links, images, thoughts or other information (Chambers, 2013, p. 10) but what makes remarkable relates to its offer that allows users to meet strangers who share common interests and values across geographic borders (Boyd and Ellison, 2007, p. 211; Chambers, 2013, p. 12).

 Reviewing the available literature of this area, SNS usage by youth is limited. The American population is where most studies have studied as a sample. Furthermore, despite the existence of some studies which focused on more different approach of social media, the majority of scholars of SNSs have examined the uses and gratifications of SNSs (e.g., Brandtzaeg and Heim, 2009, p. 150; Kim, Sohn and Choi, 2011, p. 365; Barker, 2009, p. 212).

For example, Brandtzaeg and Heim (2009, p. 150) identified four reasons why people use SNSs. These reasons are: Information, entertainment, social interaction, and personal

identity. Similar motives were found by Kim et al. (2011, p. 365) in a study of 589 college students. The motives were identified by Kim et al. (2011, p. 365) are: seeking friends, social support, entertainment, and information. In addition to that, another study of young people by Barker (2009, p. 212) found gender differences in motivations for SNS use. Females in the study by Barker reported that they used SNSs for communication, entertainment, and passing time, whereas males stated that they used it for social compensation, social identity gratification, and learning.

SNSs are the main tool of communication used by contemporary society in general young people in particular (Ravhuhali, et al, 2015, p. 275; Bicen and Cavus, 2010, p. 578). Further, SNSs are widely popular among youth (Boyd and Ellison, 2007, p. 212; Chambers, 2013, p. 12; Perrin, 2015). An early study of 52 young people by Bicen and Cavus (2010, p. 578) found Window Live Spaces and Facebook as the most preferred SNS by young people. Furthermore, according to a survey conducted by Pew found that young people of 18-29 years old of digital online users have mostly adopted SNSs (Perrin, 2015) in addition to that, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat are the most leading SNSs among young users (Lenhart, 2015). Moreover, a recent study conducted in the UK found that teens use five or six different SNSs (Miller, et al., 2016, pp. 3-4). However, Lehdonvirta and Räsänen (2009, p. 91) have suggested to be consider SNSs as a significant part of contemporary young people's lives.

Regarding the use of SNSs, simultaneously it has a number of risks for young people along with more advantages. According to Sinha, Yadav and Kanodia (2016, pp. 488- 489) SNSs decrease youth's academic performance, it also has caused to youth to waste their time and overshare more their personal issues with their online community, furthermore, addiction of internet leads youth's dependency of SNSs which can cause sleep deprivation. Nevertheless, despite these risks indicated there is another number of advantages that youth encounter from SNSs usage. It has provided to make easy to connect and reconnect to friends and family, in addition to that SNSs help young people to experience more social connectedness (Wood, Bukowski, and Lis, 2016. p. 165) and other potential opportunities for learning new thing and creativity (Livingstone, 2008, pp. 394-395).

2.3. Identity and Online identity concepts

The term of identity has been described by various scholars using diverse aspects of identity such as personal identity and social identity (Subrahmanyam and Smahel, 2010. p. 62). Personal identity involves an individual's difference from other people (e.g. who they are) and social identity refers to an individual's inclusiveness of a group (e.g. race, religion, nationality, etc.) (Subrahmanyam and Smahel, 2010. p. 62). Further, Buckingham (2008, p. 2) depicted identity as a complex, he argues that a person presents different identities in different social contexts. Thus, identity is shaped through social interaction (Baym, 2015, p. 118). Following and applying Buckingham's definition on identity which above indicated, Gee (2000, p. 100) have divided identity into four types as shown in the table 2.2:

Table 2.2. *Four ways to view identity* (Gee, 2000, p. 100)

Process	Power	Source of power
1. Natural-Identity:		
a state developed from	forces	in nature
2. Institution- identity:		
a position authorized by	authorities	within institutions
3. Discourse- identity		
an individual trait recognized in	the discourse /dialogue	of/with "rational" individuals
4. Affinity-identity		
experiences shared in	the practice	of "affinity-groups"

In the table 2.2 Gee (2000, p. 100) stated four useful and interconnected perspectives on identity. First perspective is natural identity (N-identity), which refers to the unchangeable biological aspects of people such as sex, age and ethnic background. Gee argued that these

characters are defined by and developed from forces in nature. Second perspective is institutional- identity (I-identity) which relates to an identity set by authorities within an institution. Thus, this identity determined by people's placement in society.

The third perspective of Gee's identity theory is what he calls discourse identity (D-identity). Discourse identity refers to an individual trait in society which is recognized by others. The final perspective is affinity identity (A-identity). The fourth perspective in Gee's perspectives on identity is built by shared experiences in the practice of an affinity group membership such as communities of scholars. These four perspectives to view identity are interconnected in complex ways. However, Gee (2000, p. 99) defined identity as "being recognized as certain 'kind person', in a given context."

Moving to the online technology's perspective, the online identity includes both personal identity and social identity. Personal online identity is where individuals create their social profile to represent or self-present themselves. Social online identity is where individuals who create profiles belong to in the social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram (Subrahmanyam and Smahel, 2010, pp. 62-63).

However, Kim, Zheng, and Gupta (2011, p. 1762) have summarized in the following table 2.3 the difference between offline identity and online identity.

Table: 2.3. *Comparison between offline identity and online identity* (Kim, Zheng, and Gupta, 2011, p. 1762)

Dimension	Offline identity	Online identity
Context	Face-to-face	World wide web
Development	The development of an offline requires considerable time and effort since a person has to build relationships and friendships that portray his or her identity	The development of an online identity is relatively fast because a person exhibits the identity, he or she wishes
Control	One cannot control how others perceive oneself. One cannot hide his or her name and other personally identifiable information	The portrayal of one's identity is under one's control. One can hide his or her personally identifiable information
Presentation	It is difficult to hide one's identity and one's identity is revealed in due course through interactions with others	One can portray his or her identity selectively and differently to different groups of people
Constraints	One's physical situation plays a strong role in defining one's identity. For example, a poor person may not be able to form an identity amongst rich people	One's identity is dependent on the characteristics of the system one is using

Table 2.2 reveals what offline identity differs from online identity. Kim, Zheng, and Gupta (2011, p. 1762) focused on several differences between offline and online identities. For example, the first dimension of the comparison relates to context of the two personas. An individual who might be introvert and shy may become a more social person in the digital environment as compared to face-to-face interactions. Second, an identity formation in real life requires time and effort because of the process by which an offline- identity needs to develop. While developing an online identity is relatively fast.

Third, the nature of an offline identity (e.g., race, age, gender) can control or effect on his/her self-presentation in real life. But in digital environment, one can hide and display any identity nature that he/she wishes to portray. Fourth, certain parts of an offline identity cannot hide, in contrast an individual can selectively self- present on social media or another digital environment. Lastly, one's image in real-life is controlled by his/her physical situation. Whereas one's image in digital environment is constrained by the online system. Thus, in this last view, one's offline identity is mostly not related to mirror his/her offline identity.

2.4. Identity expression and Online interaction

Although online identities of SNSs allow people to connect with friends and family (Chambers, 2013, p. 10). But the list of friends on their social media profiles does not separate from family members, close friends, former friends and teachers (Donath, 2007, p. 238). This has led to young people being misunderstood by their parents and other family members when sharing contexts and expressing their online identities (Boyd, 2014, p. 36) because, the existence of identity expression is always shaped by social setting- including contexts and audiences (Baym, 2015, p. 118). Moreover, Goffman (1959, pp. 2-4) identified two aspects of communication: expression *given* and *given off*. The first expression refers to when an individual intends to communicate in order to make a good impression, but with the latter reflects what an individual reveal unintentionally which are received by audiences.

To further knowledge on identity expression, online interaction and young people, there has been a number of studies that explored online identity (e.g.; Fu, 2017, p.12; Lehdonvirta and Räsänen 2011, p.91; Boyd, 2014, pp. 25-53).

Fu (2017, p. 12) has conducted a qualitative study regarding young Chinese internet users, especially this study focused on Weibo and WeChat platforms and their identity experiences. The author found that there is a distinction between Chinese youth's online identity of Weibo and WeChat. For example, participants of the study indicated that they openly and willingly express their identity on Weibo because the vast majority of their audience of this platform are strangers, while on WeChat they mostly connected with their

family members and peers, as a result, they selectively self-present on WeChat. However, the author concluded that there is a correlation between youth's engagement with SNSs and the sense of well-being.

Lehdonvirta and Räsänen (2011, p. 91) conducted a study with a diverse cultural sample from the UK, Spain and Japan on *how young people identify with various online and offline peer groups*. They found that participants experienced more socialization and identification on SNS compared to their offline situations. However, the authors have suggested keeping in mind that games and SNSs as a significant part of contemporary young people's lives.

Boyd (2014, pp. 25-53) has conducted a qualitative and ethnographic study on a variety issue of youth engagement with SNSs in America during from 2003 to 2012. She intensely discussed *context collapse* and young people's *intended audience*, the author found that young people are misunderstood by adults- including parents and teachers- when sharing contexts and expressing their online identities. Context collapse happens when "people are forced to grapple simultaneously with otherwise unrelated social contexts that are rooted in different norms and seemingly demand different social responses" (Boyd 2014, p. 31). Her study has suggested adults to understand teens and young people's engagement with social media sites and their behaviors. Findings also indicated that technology has nothing to do with teens and young people more than culture.

2.5. Theoretical Foundation of the Study

2.5.1. Uses and gratifications theory

The "uses and gratifications approach" (U&G) also known as "needs and gratification theory" is one of the most popular mass communication theories. This theory focuses on why people use media (Roy, 2009. p. 878). Thus, according to McQuail et al. (1972, as cited in McQuail, 2010, p. 424) it has four basic motivational needs and it categorize as follows:

1- Diversion: escape from routine or problem, emotion release

2- Personal relationships: companionship, social utility

3- Personal identity: self-reference, reality exploration, value reinforcement

4- Surveillance: (forms of information seeking)

According to Brandtzaeg and Heim (2009, p. 144) these four motivational needs of U&G also apply to SNSs. However, this can be the reason why most of previous studies on SNSs users' motivations have examined mainly from U&G approach.

2.5.2. Self-identity theory

Identity can be described as an individual's sense of self in which imbodies both personal and social identities (Baym, 2015, p. 118). Self-identity refers to how an individual understands his/ herself (Giddens, 2005). However, self- identity is dynamic and it is developed through social interactions (Baym, 2015, p. 118), these interactions assist an individual to mirror about his/herself based on what other people perceive. Thus, the developmental self-identity mainly happens through socialization.

Self-identity occurs through identity construction (Papacharissi, 2010). Identity construction can be defined as "the sense-making process by which people selectively organize their experiences into a coherent sense" (Papacharissi, 2010, p. 233). However, self-identity is influenced by many factors, this includes social roles, social contexts and audiences (Baym, 2015, p. 121). In this view, collectivistic cultures can cause individuals to always negotiate their self-identities more than in the individualist cultures because in the collectivistic cultures, identity is dictated or manipulated.

2.5.3. Dramaturgical theory of the self

One of the pioneers who studied the concept of identity was Goffman. In his book *the presentation of self in everyday life*, presented dramaturgical approach of the self in which he basically argued that there is no true self at all but he considered identity as a series of performances based on time, place and audiences. In other words, identity is nothing but performances in the social settings. Goffman (1959, p. 22) defines performances as "activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set observer and which has some influence on the observers". Thus, dramaturgical

approach also emphasizes the significance of context or setting in the performance which is always based on the value, beliefs, habits and interaction that an individual learns from social institutions and interactions with others.

Within dramaturgical approach, Goffman (1959) also uses the analogy of a stage which is the key concept of this theory, it consists of front stage and back stage. In the front stage people display their "ideal" self, in other words, front stage is a carefully crafted representation of the self. While back stage as Goffman (1959, p 112) defines, is "a place, relative to a given performance, where the impression fostered by performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course". This concept of Goffman about identity is called in the literature as multiple identities, and each of the people has multiple identities (Baym, 2015, p. 119). Multiple identities are formed by a combination of personality, situational, contextual, and audience dynamics (Burke and Stets, 2009, p. 130). However, Goffman's dramaturgical approach can offer good explanation about online self-presentation (Hogan, 2010, p. 379).

2.5.4. Self-presentation and social media profiles

The term of self-presentation which also called impression management (Goffman, 1959) entails "the process by which individuals attempt to establish an identity by controlling the images of self-available to others" (Arkin, Lake and Baumgardner, 1986, p. 190).

Jones and Pittman (1982, pp. 234-246) developed five different styles of self-presentation: "self-presentation, ingratiation, self-promotion, exemplification, intimidation and supplication". *Ingratiation* occurs when an individual convinces other people that he/she is likeable. For example, in study of identity construction on Facebook Zhao, Grsmuck, and Martin (2008, p. 1830) discovered that Facebook users want to had socially desirable identities. Similarly, in a study of *constructing the self through the photo selection* found that young people described the beauty and the attraction of their pictures as a central when selecting photos to post on their SNSs profiles (Siibak, 2009). However, continuing the other definitions of the five different styles of self-presentation, *Self-promotion* occurs when an individual seeks the attribution of competence by telling others about his/her quality. *Exemplification*, refers to when individuals attempt to create elicit perceptions. *Intimidation*

occurs when an individual wants to be believed or to be feared. Lastly, *supplication* refers to "advertising one's dependence to solicit help". Furthermore, these scholars stated that ingratiation and self-promotion are the most common strategies of all self-presentational styles in everyday life (Jones and Pittman, 1982, pp. 234-246).

From social media sites perspective: self-presentation plays a significant role in the digital media, social media sites in particular (Hogan, 2010, p. 377). "in any type of social interaction people have the desire to control the impressions others people form of them" (Goffman, 1959 cited from Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 62). Blocking some audience on SNSs and creating fake or anonymous profiles on SNSs to connect with "like minded" people are the main self-management strategies that young people do to control the impressions from people especially parents and other family members (Fu, 2017, pp. 9-12).

Self-presentations on social media sites are mostly related to mirror offline identities (Chambers, 2013, p. 62) in contrast, Turkle (1997) argued that one's online self-presentation may not be a true representation of his/her offline identity. However, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 62) explain that the self-presentation of one's identity often happens through conscious or unconscious identity sharing. In addition, the structure of SNSs inspires users to display their personal information on their social media profiles (Marwick, 2005, p. 4). Thus, previous research has examined online identity mainly from self-presentation perspective (Marwick, 2013, p. 1).

Based on the main concepts of the literature review, a proposed conceptual work has been developed and illustrated in figure 2.1
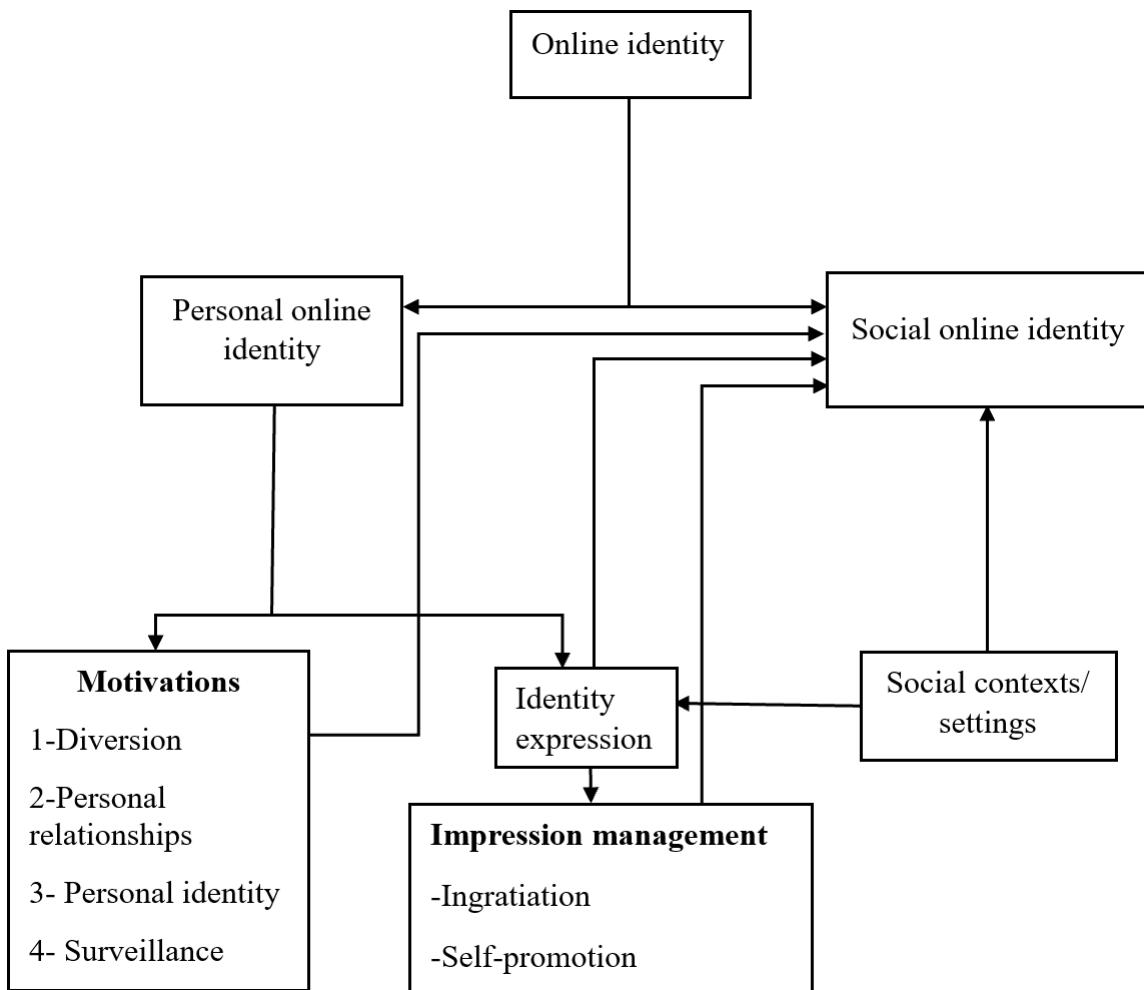
Figure 2.1. *Conceptual framework*

Source: adapted from Subrahmanyam and Smahel (2010); Baym, (2015); Goffman (1959); Boyd (2014); Jones and Pittman, (1982); McQuail et al. (1972).

As illustrated in the figure 2.1, an individual's identity in the digital environment consists of personal online identity and social online identity. Personal online identity is where

individuals create their social profile to represent or self-present themselves. Social online identity is where individuals who create profiles belong to in the social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram (Subrahmanyam and Smahel, 2010, pp. 62-63). In this view identity is always social (Baym, 2015) and the existence of online identity expression always is shaped by social setting- including contexts and audiences (Baym, 2015; Boyd, 2014; Goffman 1959). Thus, in any social interaction individuals attempt to manage or influence the perception of other people about themselves (Goffman 1959). Furthermore, ingratiation and self-promotion are the most common strategies of all self-presentational styles in everyday life (Jones and Pittman, 1982, pp. 234-246).

Finally based on the uses and gratification approach, individuals use social media for information, entertainment, social interaction and personal identity (McQuail et al., 1972).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, participants of the study, data collection instrument and procedures, data analysis of transcripts and limitation of the methodology.

3.2. Research Design

This study is based on a qualitative research approach. Braun and Clarke (2013, pp. 3-4) explains that "the most basic definition of qualitative research is that it uses words as data… collected and analyzed in all sorts of ways". But the purpose of qualitative research relates to understand people's attitudes, interests and opinions (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015, p. 15). However, this qualitative study was established to answer the following questions:

1- Which social media are mostly used by Somali youth, their preferred ones and reasons, and also motivations for engaging with social media sites?
2- How do Somali youth engage with online identity of social media?
3- How social media has shaped or changed Somali youth's personal identity?

These questions can be answered with qualitative or quantitative approach but qualitative research method has been adopted this study which primary aims to provide a rich and in-depth perspective of Somali youth's online identity expression.

3.3. Participants of the Study

To conduct this research, a number of criteria were required for the participants in this study. First, they had to live in Mogadishu. Second, they needed to be ranged in age from 18 -25 years old. Lastly, they had to use more than one social media.

Snowball sampling was employed to recruit 20 Somali young people. Snowball sampling is the most generally used form of purposeful sampling. This sampling relates to select few participants who fit the criteria of the study first and then the other participants with the characteristics of this study were reached by the first few selected participants (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015, p. 98).

3. 4. Data Collection Instrument and Procedures

Interview method is the most commonly used data collection tool in qualitative research (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015, p. 108). In this study, semi-structured interview technique was collected data. According to Mason (2004, p. 1020) semi-structured interview enables the researcher to ask participants follow up questions about outside of the interview guide questions. However, data was collected from Somali youth living in the capital city of Mogadishu.

The interviews were conducted in December 2018 and January 2019 and it took place in Mogadishu. An appointment was made for each of the participants before the interview. Furthermore, before starting the interview, the purpose of this study and the confidentiality of the information were explained to all the participants. Moreover, a great majority of the participants were not able to speak English, therefore the interviews were conducted in Somali, which is the official language of the country. In addition, Interviews were recorded with audio recorder and field notes were taken during the interviews by the researcher. Finally, each interview of all the participants in the form of face-to-face interviews took approximately 20 minutes.

3. 5. Data Analysis of Transcripts

As described previously, data was collected from Somali youth living in Mogadishu. Thematic analysis of transcribed semi-structured interviews was used to analyze the gathered data. Thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of data analysis within qualitative research. It deals with patterns about the collected data on the research (Braun et al., 2019, pp. 845). Moreover, Boyatzis (1998, pp. 4-5) described thematic analyze as follows:

- A way of seeing,
- A way of making sense out of seemingly unrelated material,
- A way of analyzing qualitative information,
- A way of systematically observing a person, an interaction, a group, a situation, an organization, or culture.
- A way of converting qualitative information into quotative data.

Boyatzis (1998, p. 4) defined theme as the main ideas or patterns that explored in a story or a phenomenon. Therefore, similar patterns, ideas, phrases and words from the participants were identified to develop relevant themes which meets the objectives of this study. Therefore, the findings reported are based on these themes or categories. Moreover, in order to better understand participant's perspective, direct quotations from interviews were included in the section of the findings.

3. 6. Limitation of the Methodology

Every study has its own of limitation. This present study had two limitations. First, although Somalis are culturally homogeneous, this study is limit to Mogadishu youth, which means the participants of this study may not represent all Somali youth.

Second, the participants described their perspective on how their parents react for their identity expression on Facebook, in addition they were able to provide suggestions for them. Thus, this study was not able to investigate the participants' parents' perspectives towards how should Somali young people behave on social media. It would be great if parents of these young people would participate in this study.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter reports the different findings of this present study on online identity for Somali youth on social media. Thus, the findings reported are based on these categories. The following table 4.1 offers an overview of the categories and sub-categories of this study.

Table 4.1. *Categories and Sub-categories*

Research Question	Categories	Sub-categories
1- Which social media are mostly used by Somali youth, their preferred ones and reasons, and also motivations for engaging with social media sites?	Social media	Most used and preferred social media Motivations for using social media
2. How do Somali youth engage with online identity of social media?	Online identity	Social media profiles False online identities Online identity expression Suggestions for parents Maintaining relationships Self-presentation strategies Comfortable expressing online identity than offline identity Feelings about using online identity
3. How Social media has changed Somali youth's personal identity?	Personal identity changes	

Table 4.1 provided a much more detailed of the categories and sub-categories on each research question. This table consists of three main categories with ten sub-categories. Thus, these categories and sub-categories were generated from the transcripts and notes taken during the interviews.

As an introductory of the semi-structure questions of the study, participants were asked what personal identity means to them. The following table 4.2 provides each participant's identity.

Table 4.2. *Identity of participants*

Participant	Personal identity
Participant 1	Somali and Muslim
Participant 2	Man, student and employer
Participant 3	Man, Somali, Muslim and student
Participant 4	Girl, Somali and Student
Participant 5	Somali and Muslim
Participant 6	Somali, youth, and an Active man
Participant 7	Somali
Participant 8	Somali and Muslim
Participant 9	Girl and Student
Participant 10	Boy and student
Participant 11	Student
Participant 12	Somali and student
Participant 13	Girl, Somali, and Muslim
Participant 14	Somali, student
Participant 15	Girl, Somali and Muslim
Participant 16	Boy, Somali, single and student
Participant 17	Girl, Muslim, African and Somali
Participant 18	Girl and Somali
Participant 19	Somali and Muslim
Participant 20	Quit person, reader and an active person

Table 4.2 revealed that the vast majority of the participants identified themselves as being a Somali, Muslim and Student.

Participant Demographics

This study was conducted with 20 Somali youth who are living in Mogadishu, the capital city of Somalia. As shown in the following overview of participant information table 4.3, the participants' names were not used, in the study, each participant was assigned as a participant with a certain number. For example: participant 1, participant 2, … participant 20.

Table 4.3. *Overview of participant information*

Participants	Age	Gender	Education level
Participant 1	24	Male	Associate degree
Participant 2	22	Male	Undergraduate
Participant 3	19	Male	High school
Participant 4	21	Female	Undergraduate
Participant 5	22	Female	Undergraduate
Participant 6	22	Male	Undergraduate
Participant 7	19	Female	High school
Participant 8	23	Male	Undergraduate
Participant 9	22	Female	Last semester of undergraduate
Participant 10	18	Male	Last semester of undergraduate
Participant 11	22	Male	Last year of undergraduate
Participant 12	20	Female	Undergraduate
Participant 13	22	Female	Undergraduate
Participant 14	24	Male	Undergraduate
Participant 15	24	Female	Third year of undergraduate
Participant 16	22	Male	Undergraduate
Participant 17	25	Female	Undergraduate
Participant 18	23	Female	Undergraduate
Participant 19	20	Male	Third year of undergraduate
Participant 20	21	Male	Last year of undergraduate

Table 4.3 indicated that this study has managed almost to achieve an equal balance of gender. 11 of the participants were male, while 9 of the participants were female. In regarded

to age, participants ranged in age from 18- 25 years old. In terms of education level, a majority of respondents were bachelor degree level. However, the demographic overview is important to understand online identity for Somali youth on social media.

4.2. Social Media

Research question 1: Which social media are mostly used by Somali youth, their preferred ones and reasons, and also motivations for engaging with social media sites?

In response to question 1, the study was divided into two sub-categories (see Table 4.1).

4.2.1. Most used and preferred social media
The responses of participants about the most used social media sites are: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter.

Table 4.4. *The most used social media by Somali youth*

Participant	SNSs	Daily time spent
Participant 1	Facebook and Twitter	10 hours
Participant 2	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp and Viber	7- 6 hours
Participant 3	Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp	5 hours
Participant 4	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and Snapchat	2- 3 hours
Participant 5	Facebook Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp	6 hours
Participant 6	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp	18 hours
Participant 7	Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat	5 hours
Participant 8	Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat	6 hours
Participant 9	Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp	6 hours
Participant 10	Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp	4 hours
Participant 11	Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat	16 hours
Participant 12	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp	10 hours
Participant 13	Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Snapchat	8 hours
Participant 14	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat	18 hours
Participant 15	Facebook, Twitter-ka, Instagram, Snapchat and LinkedIn	2 hours
Participant 16	Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp	2 hours
Participant 17	Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat	2 hours
Participant 18	Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat	8 hours
Participant 19	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp	7 hours
Participant 20	Facebook and Twitter	8 hours

As indicated in the above table 4.3, Facebook was used by all of the participants of the present study, Instagram was the second top by using 18 of 20 the participants, this followed by Snapchat and Twitter which was chosen by 12 and 9 of the participants.

As previously described, social media site was used by all the participants of this study and each of them indicated using more than one social media. When asked which social network site that they preferred to the other social network sites and reasons behind, most of the participants (thirteen respondents) mentioned that Facebook is their preferred social media site, while six of interviewees on each two participants described Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter as their preferred ones. Furthermore, only one respondent indicated WhatsApp as the preferred one. In addition to that, the participants had similar and different reasons for their preference on a particular social media site. Here is what some participants who had similar reasons said:

"Because I am a Somali, I speak to Somalis, I write in Somali. So, this makes possible for me to communicate with my fellow Somalis who are also using the Facebook I believe that 80% of Somalis of SNSs users are from Facebook" Participant [1]

"The reason is that the environment in which we live, people are often interested in Facebook. It is where we get the most updated news. Most of my friends are also there, it is where most people are connected to. That is why I often spend most of my time on Facebook" Participant [2]

"The reason is; I can get Facebook what I cannot find Instagram or WhatsApp, this includes events, news, the community I keep in touch with. In addition to that, I feel relaxed, when I use it." Participant [9]

"The reason I like Twitter is that I find lots of information. I find easily to know what happens in the world. Using hashtag feature of Twitter is the best way to follow up on a meeting or event that has taken place." Participant [15]

In these quotes from the respondents demonstrated seeking information and desire to keep in contact with friends and family members as the core reasons of their preference on a particular social media site. Here is also what the other different participants said:

"Despite having many friends on Facebook, I have a lot of followers who are interested in what I post and share, the place where you are interested daily by your audiences, definitely you will be more interested and excited in it too, that is the reason I love

Facebook. Sometimes when I disappear on Facebook, my friends or some other followers ask me: What happened to you, these days you did not post or share anything. When people are interested in what you post or share, you love their feedbacks. "Participant [4]

"Comedians regularly use Facebook. There has been a highly increased of broadcasting live comedy shows on Facebook which I am interested in. In the beginning of the Facebook live feature, I was kind of shy to go live in Facebook. But, now it's different. Even, I sometimes watch funny programs on Facebook at midnight, that is the reason Facebook attracts me when compared to the other social media sites". Participant [5]

"I met my first girlfriend on Facebook; therefore, I believe that Facebook is where I can find another girlfriend, that is the reason I love Facebook" Participant [11]

"Privacy issues with Snapchat is very strong. If someone screenshot what I have posted to the story feature, Snapchat will notify me that action. Furthermore, your snaps will automatically disappear once your post is viewed. That is why I love Snapchat more." Participants [12]

"Facebook is where my social media usage has started, I have been using since 2009. Facebook is a place where I had a lot of benefits, for example: meeting new people. In addition to that I have found to learn new things on Facebook such as: how people communicate and interact with each other. Therefore, Facebook is a great place for me" Participant [14]

"Because, I found Instagram as the best entertainment tool for me." Participant [17]

"I love Twitter, because Twitter is where the impact of your tweets is mostly considered while Facebook and other social media is based on your fame" Participant [20]

4.2.2. Motivations for using social media

Participants stated seven key motivations for using social media sites. The first motivation was to seek information. This motivation was mentioned by the most participants of this study as exemplified by Participant [20]: "What motivates me to use social media is to seek information."

The second motivation was sharing ideas and thoughts, as Participant [15] demonstrated: "to present and share my ideas with my society, in order to point out the negative and positive issues of the society." following the quote from Participant [15] showed

what motivates is posting her ideas and thoughts on social media towards her society. This motivation was also shared by some of the other participants.

The third motivation was communication. Similarly, to the second one, the third motivations was indicated by some of the participants, as Participant [13] illustrated: "I am encouraged to use social media by what I find from it, this includes to keep in contact with my family and friends who live in different cities and different countries."

The fourth motivation was to meet new people on social media. Very few participants reported this motive. Participant [3] demonstrated this: "I use social media to meet new people, because I want to make friends everywhere, I go." The fifth motivation was entertainment. Two participants of the study included this motive when asked the major motivations of Social media use.

The sixth and the seventh motivations were passing time and becoming famous. These two motivations were separately indicated by two participants. they expressed as the following:

"The motive I use is to pass time, the reason I am saying this relates to my friends. Because my friends in the neighborhood have emigrated from the country. We used to play and walk together" Participant [11]

"I use social media to become famous and have more followers. I don't want to tell anyone my background, I want them to recognize me whenever I walk on the roads or pass an area." Participant [4]

Finally, what noteworthy is that some of the participants had in common with these motivation factors: seeking information, sharing ideas and thoughts, communication and meeting new people A relevant and succinct response of these four motivations from those participants was provided in the following quote by Participant [19]:

"What motivates me to use social media is to share my views and believes, to meet new people and to take advantage from other people's views/ ideas on social media. So, these are the most important things to me."

Research question 2: How do Somali youth engage with online identity of social media?

4.3. Online Identity

The previous themes summed up the types of social media sites used by participants, their preferred ones and reasons behind. Additionally, their motivations for using social media. Thus, this category presents eight sub-categories from findings of the participants which aims to build a rich and in-depth perspective of Somali youth's online identity. The eight sub-categories were provided in the table 4.1.

4.3.1. Social media profiles. When asked about types of personal information posted on social media. Most of the participants (fourteen respondents) mentioned that they disclosed certain kinds of personal information on social media. This personal information included:

- Real full names to their profiles
- Photo of themselves
- Their education levels
- Town or city they live or come from
- Their profession or the place they work
- Gender
- Birth date

In addition to that, three participants mentioned that they also revealed all the above personal information, except the place they live in. Two of these three participants reasoned this for security issue, while the other participant argued that it is not necessary for her to disclose the place, she lives in. Moreover, the other three participants also stated that they disclosed all the information indicated above with added relationship status.

Note for social media profiles, participants were allowed to check their social media profiles to confirm the indicated personal information. And it was as the same as they said in the interview. Furthermore, Facebook and Twitter were the most social media sites that all participants have used to reveal the indicated personal information.

Whereas most participants expressed that they were conscious enough to have shared their identity information on social media, several participants (seven respondents) explained that they were unconscious situation at the first time they had created their social media accounts especially on Facebook and Snapchat. They also stated after a few years of using social media that they became more aware of the importance of being conscious of the identity information on social media. Eventually this led them to modify their profile information, as exemplified these three participants:

"When I started using Facebook, I posted on Facebook some pictures of myself which I never thought would have a negative effect on me. My pictures were taken and badly used by some websites. My parents were angry with me and stopped me from using social media….. when I was also creating my Snapchat, I have created it with a name that I regret till now and I cannot change it. So, now I know the importance of being aware of your identity on social media. Year after year, I feel that my awareness of social media usage is increasing." Participant [12]

"I was unaware when I was putting my identity information on Facebook. I wrote on Facebook that I am married while I am still single. I also said that I attended a university which I am not registered…   after a while I changed this false information and I understood what I should and should not be posted on my Facebook profile about my identity information." Participant [19]

'I started using Facebook in 2013, I did not care what I put on my profile regarding my identity information. At that time, I claimed that I work with a popular page on Facebook which was called 'I need Allah in My Life'. I also claimed that I was student at Admass University which was both untrue. However, I later corrected my identity information on my profile." Participant [20]

 In these above quotes, these three participants demonstrated how unconsciously they did not provide an accurate identity information when they were creating their social media profiles particularly Facebook and Snapchat. They also stated that they modified after they had gained more knowledge about social media usage and the experiences they had gone through However, consciously or unconsciously providing personal identity details on social media might put youth at risk for identity theft as once happened to one of the respondents when she shared publicly some pictures of her on Facebook and was used badly.

In terms of profile pictures, when asked how they select their profile pictures on social media. A large majority of the participants (seventeen respondents) had similar responses. They mentioned that selecting very beautiful picture for their profile was extremely important

to them, which, they also stated that they had to be very cautious about it, in addition to that, two of those seventeen participants indicated that they also consider events that occurs daily on their city and life. Furthermore, another two of those participants added that avoiding doubts and recognizing their appearance from their audiences was also pivotal on selecting profile pictures, which apparently means having an identifiable online presence. Below is illustrated quotes from some of the participants:

> "I select my profile picture by valuing the beauty of my picture, and also how it is more beautiful than my other pictures" Participant [3]

> "I always use two methods for selecting my profile picture: First, I choose my most beautiful picture. Second, it must be a photo that shows an event I taken part so I can seem like a very famous person who is connected to other famous people such politicians when people see the people, I am included in the picture I have uploaded in my profile. Participant [6]

> "It is important for me to be recognized immediately by my audiences. my picture should not be doubted and must be physically attractive. Participant [8]

For other participants (three respondents) had different perspective from the participants when selecting profile pictures. Two of these three Interviewees mentioned that they merely considered their identity background in order to select profile picture, "My way of selecting profiles is; first, it should be a picture of me that I like most…. this picture should also demonstrate two things of my identity: being a Muslim and being a Somali." Participant [17]. While the other interviewee stated that he did not pay much attention and time on this issue at all: "I just take three photos of myself, and put one of them rapidly on my profile without thinking and wasting my time". Participant [1]

The single most surprising result to emerge from the profile pictures was that some of the participants (seven respondents) those who responded to the beauty of the picture as a core of selecting their profile pictures mentioned that they consult with their close friends and family members before posting their profile pictures:

> "it is very hard to select display photo for your profile if your motive is to be famous on social media like me. It takes me a lot of time to capture a good picture and upload it on my Facebook profile I must be very careful about the clothes I wear, the place and the weather as well. I share it with my friends before I upload to seek their feedback. So, when six or seven of my friends agree with me the best photo to upload, that when

I do it.. The reason I do this is to attract the attention of my audience (laughing)."
Participant [4]

"Initially, I send several of my photos to my friends through Facebook Messenger. I ask them this question: which one is the most beautiful to choose for my profile. Their responses mean a lot to me, because that picture is not for myself, it is for my audience. So, I act accordingly. I want everyone to see the best side of me. Participant [11]

"I seek feedback from my parents, family members and some of my close friends to select a profile picture. I do this to satisfy my audience. Participant [12]

As above quotes from some participants showed how they extremely concerned with attention and social validation through social media when selecting profile pictures, because they care more how their social media audience receive and respond to their profile pictures. On the other hand, there were no significant differences between females and males in terms of seeking feedback from audiences but differences were found the age of the participants. Those who are seeking feedback when selecting profile pictures are between 18- 22 years old, while all the participants of this present study ranged in age from 18 to 25 years old.

4.3.2. False online identities. Although all participants of this study had real identity on social media which they had provided their real personal information background, very few participants (five respondents) mentioned that they created false identity profiles on social media, particularly Facebook and Instagram. Three of those five participants indicated that they regularly use it, - this is the case for Participant [10], Participant [11] and Participant [14]-, while the other two respondents stated that they stopped using false identities, this is also cases for Participant [12] and Participant [14].

The three participants who daily use false identity profile had different intentions of using fake identities. For example, Participant [10] said that he uses a fake identity profile on Instagram to get more 'followers' 'likes' and 'comments' for his real Instagram account, he also highlighted his primary motive is to boost his own popularity on Instagram by false means:

"I use a fake Instagram account with an intention of getting more 'followers', 'likes' and 'comments' for my real Instagram identity profile. I feel happy to use this fake, because people think that I am famous. For this reason, many users have followed me on Instagram, in the future, I want to become an influencer or a famous on Instagram."

For Participant [11], posting inappropriate content which might contradict Somali norms was his motive for using fake identity on Facebook:

"I would never post on my real Facebook the pictures I post on my fake Facebook identity because of my cultural expectation. Romantic gestures are what I mostly post on my fake account. I really love it because I connect with other users of similar interests. The funny thing is some of my family members and real friends have sent me friend requests on that fake Facebook and none of them know that I use this fake identity. Also, none of my fake virtual friends knows my real identity too. In the end, nobody judges you."

Regarding Participant [14], who mentioned that he uses more than twenty fake identities on Facebook explained his motive behind: "I am a public servant and I use nearly thirty Facebook fake accounts in attempts to politically influence Somalis on Facebook and to manipulate those who oppose my institution's policy." he also added that he believes a high political influence could be achieved in this way.

For other two interviewees, who used to have but lately stopped for using fake identity on social media had also different purposes. For example, one of these two participants said that her motive was to express her thoughts without giving consideration to what people would say: "the reason I had fake identity on Facebook was to share my thoughts without fear", she also added: "sometimes I also used to blackmail some of my friends, I was felt more satisfied with this action but I no longer use it because it's just very time-consuming." The other interviewee said that he had several fake identities on Facebook, his intention was to get more 'likes' and give himself flattering 'comments' on his real Facebook identity in order to compete his Facebook teenage friends. He also mentioned that he became mature enough to stop for using fake identities at all: "I stopped using fake identities, now I know the true meaning of 'likes' and 'comments', I consciously comment what I want and give 'likes' what I really liked". Interestingly however, the participants who responded that they had created and used false identities on social media were all male except one female.

4.3.3. Online identity expression. As previously described, the use of various social media sites become routine to the participants of the present study. Each of them indicated using more than one social media. When asked if they knew all their friends or followers on social media in real life, a great majority of the participants (seventeen respondents) indicated

that they did not know the majority of their friends/followers on social media, while a few of other participants (three respondents) stated that they knew half of their friends/followers. However, all the participants mentioned that they had different audiences on social media. For example, they are mostly connected with their like-minded young people on Instagram and Snapchat while Facebook connects them with family members, relatives, neighbors, teachers, old and new friends.

For this different audiences, when also asked how they express their identity on that various social media platforms. Most participants' identity expression varies based on their social media audiences. For example, they self-present in carefully different ways when on Facebook versus when on other social network sites like Instagram and Snapchat. On Facebook, they felt reluctant to express their identity, because they were concerned that Facebook audiences especially family members could influence their real life, while on Instagram and Snapchat many of them felt were open, comfortable and freedom to express their identity as exemplified some of the respondents in the following:

"My personality is totally different based on my social media friends, for example my uncle and other relatives are included my Facebook friends. When you look Somali culture it's a conservative one, so I am sometimes afraid of to post or share something I desperately want to share on Facebook, for example I love singing and some sometimes share Somali songs on my platforms but I come from a strict and conservative family background, they have expect me not to do such things so I afraid to be reprimanded … but on Instagram I can post whatever I want, no one judges. When I am using Instagram, I feel more freedom, Although Facebook is my favorite social network site, I don't have freedom even to post my pictures as I want." Participant [9]

"On Facebook I present myself as a professional, more stable and charismatic person, sometimes I don't even leave a comment on some places on Facebook because I am connected with my family, workmates and my university professors so I am extremely cautious to express myself on Facebook,… but Snapchat has more freedom for me because I can post my thoughts and feelings, I love my Snapchat's self-presentation because I am more real, , I do what I want because all my Snapchat friends are youth who understand me, they don't judge me because we have lots of common interests." Participant [12]

"Yes of course it is different, for example when I am using Snapchat my personality is totally different than my Facebook personality. I solely connected with especial friends on Snapchat, I post whatever I want but Facebook is not like that because my parents

and teachers are there, they can watch everything I share or post, therefore I am a high-value person who shows high moral standards on Facebook" Participant [16]

"When I use Instagram and Facebook, my personality is different. I may only put a photo of me that I took at work on Facebook but on Instagram I have uploaded videos of me with songs in wedding parts. I cannot share that kind of videos on Facebook because my relatives on Facebook will say: 'why do you share this with us, this is not good'. So, I feel more comfortable expressing myself on Instagram." Participants [17]

In these quotes from the respondents explained how social media audiences influence their identity expressing are different, however, one reason most of the participants might not be comfortable in identity expression on Facebook was because of their family members and teachers and relatives' expectations, who are part of their audiences on Facebook.

On similar note, two participants who also mentioned feeling reluctant to express themselves on Facebook also indicated that they used WhatsApp status and another Facebook account to self-present as they want:

"I have two Facebook accounts, one I post and share for what my family and society expected me to do, but I utilize the other one to do whatever I want from my feelings, none of my family and real friends know that I use this second Facebook account" Participant [11]

"On Facebook I have connected with my father and other people who know and respect me for my religious family background, … I like to express my feelings in songs and share it with my friends, well, I merely prefer to post these songs on my WhatsApp status than Facebook. Because, on Facebook I will be judged and some people would feel offended because of my family background, although I don't agree with their thoughts, I don't want to hurt those people, I want to respect their feelings. [...]" Participant [19]

Interestingly, though these participants did not self-present on Facebook as much as they would like, and still most of them previously described Facebook as their preferred social media network. However, a few of the participants used numerous online identity management to manage the impression from their family members when they desperately wanted something about their self- presentation to post on Facebook. For example, Participant [11] mentioned that he used to restrict his parents from what he feels unacceptable in his family, for example pictures with his girlfriend that he has posted on his real Facebook identity: "there is something my parents cannot tolerate to post on my Facebook like pictures with my girlfriend, but I need my friends to see my pictures with my girlfriend on Facebook

so I block my parents seeing these kind of pictures." Facebook provides its users a feature to hide their special posts from certain people that they don't want to see their posts by choosing "custom" feature from the menu while posting. Further, another online identity management explained by Participant [9]: "I calculate any risks that will occur about my posts before posting anything on Facebook and I will act accordingly."

Apart from the influence of the family members on most participants' identity expression on Facebook, there were also a cultural expectation that also shaped what should and should not posted by most participants on Facebook. In regards to what issues they posted on social media especially on Facebook, a great majority of the participants used to post their images, feelings and also to discuss social affairs on social media site. However, most participants were reluctant to share and post some pictures, ideas and thoughts on Facebook because of their cultural expectation. For this reason, some participants were very selective about what kind of pictures and other issues they would have posted on Facebook, as exemplified these respondents:

> "Whenever I take a few pictures and want to post on Facebook, I ask myself: is it culturally suitable to post. If it seems to me an uncovered picture I don't post on Facebook, because I am worried about what my online community will think about my pictures. Uncovered pictures are unwelcomed in my culture." Participant [7]

> "There are many things that I personally cannot post on Facebook because of my culture, for example, there was a time a famous Sheikh called Sheikh Kenyawi came to my city in attempts to give a lecture on forgiveness, most people were happy for his intention but I was not, so, I indirectly comment my thoughts about his coming and posted on Facebook. If I did not do that people will perceive me as I was against him totally, and maybe they would lose their respect for me as well, therefore I used a tactic to deal with this by commenting indirectly and I do so." Participant [19]

These responses illustrated how strongly their culture background had influence on their self-presentation and thought sharing on Facebook. In addition, apart from Facebook audiences' influence on most participants, there was only one respondent who once experienced cultural influence on Instagram: "our society is conservative; I was sent many life-threatening and offensive messages while I posted my picture with a dog on Instagram." Participant [12], However, while most interviewees described the influence of their audiences on Facebook and culture had on expressing their online identity, very few participants also expressed that they did not have any concerns from culture about expressing

their online identity on Facebook and other social media as participant [20] stated "no, it does not make me afraid to share my thoughts on social media, I believe that sometimes culture itself can be wrong, I can defend my posts from culture."

To sum up, most of the participants seemed that their identity sharing was dictated by their cultural and family members' expectations about what was acceptable and unacceptable to post on Facebook while they had on the other social media site like Snapchat, Instagram more comfortable and freedom to self-present themselves as they wanted. However, when it comes family expectation there were a significant gender difference. Females in the present study expressed more family expectations when they self- present on Facebook than males.

4.3.4. Suggestions for parents. Somali parents might concern about their young people usage of SNSs, to give them more awareness and understanding of young people's SNSs usage, the participants in the present study were asked to provide suggestions to parents. Thus, there were several suggestions by participants for parents and other adults on social media to know about how young people express their identity on social media specially on Facebook where the majority of Somali adults might use. Some participants suggested parents to not worry at all on how they use social media:

"Freedom is important, parents should allow us to express our freedom as adults on social media express their freedom" Participant [9]

"Parents should not be worried about us, I would suggest to them to not look or react everything I post, because some of my posts were only intended for my friends not my parents." Participant [10]

Some other participants suggested parents to worry about them but not to control, instead of controlling they requested parents to compassionately give them advise:

"My father worries about how I use social media; I am okay with that but I want my father to remember that today's life was not the life he used to live when he was teenager like me, my father ordered me completely to not use social media, and yet I use it, I would suggest him to give me a balanced advice, which makes possible to let go his teenage nostalgia and would also set me free to use social media as contemporary youth do.[…]" Participant [19]

"I would suggest parents to create an environment where teenagers and young people can feel meaningful friendship with their parents. No pressure, …don't tell your children that you want to control on their self-presentation, just be our friend that we

can share everything, my mother did this to me and I was absolutely comfortable with." Participant [12]

Finally, a few other participants suggested parents themselves to understand how social media and other online technology works, as Participant [4] illustrated: "they should not be worried about us, SNSs would not harm us. I would call parents themselves to understand deeply how social media and other technology are very important to the world."

4.3.5. Maintaining relationships. Despite the cultural and audience expectations on Facebook. Most of the participants expressed that social network sites in particular Facebook was vital in maintaining relationships, specifically relationships with friends and families who live inside and outside of Somalia, as two of the participants illustrated, how social media are important to Somali youth:

"Social media is important tool for me, it facilitates me to easily keep in contact with my friend who live in abroad." Participant [11]

"I can say 90% of my relationship with my friends rely on social media. Messages from social media are the first thing I have seen in the morning and the last thing to check before bed. My classmates and I used group call on Facebook messenger to discuss and talk about our assignments. I believe this group call with my friends helped me to better understand my courses in college" participant [12]

4.3.6. Self-presentation strategies. SNSs were extremely important to the participants in this present study. Although a few participants mentioned previously using numerous online identity management to manage the impression from their family members on Facebook. Participants management of their social media profiles were also asked by forming two self-presentation strategies: *Ingratiation* and *self-promotion* which was described as the most two common strategies of all self-presentational styles in everyday life (Jones and Pitman, 1982, p. 234-246).

In terms of *Ingratiation*, of the twenty participants, nine of them described using *ingratiation* as self-presentation strategy. For example, most of these participants stated that they self-present themselves on social media as more patient and happier than in real life in an attempt to become more likeable person on social media. This was illustrated here by two of these respondents:

"I convince my friends on social media that I am happy, funny and compassionate person by loving and complimenting their comments on my posts. Even if it seems harsh comments, I put on their comments laughing face sticker." Participant [5]

"Yes of course, Social media is the only place I use it to proof my friends that I am likeable person. Sometimes, my friends say to me angry things yet I laugh and smile but in reality, I am burning inside. My aim of this is to hear from my friends: that person is a good person. I want to make a good impression on my friends." Participant [11]

Regarding *self-promotion*, twelve participants stated using *self- promotion* strategy for self- management, most of these respondents drew on their individual academic and work background in order to determine what kind of self-promotion they have shown on social media. A great majority of these respondents mentioned that they displayed their own talents and skills on social media. However, most the participants shared similar skills, while some of them had different skills and talents. Here is what some participants who had similar skills said:

"yes, I also use social media to reveal and promote my professional career in journalism. I write articles about social and political issues." Participant [4]

"I am adept at writing, collecting and analyzing historic events. I usually post on social media. I need to be acknowledged and appreciated by people for this skill (laugh)." Participant [19]

Here is also what the other participants who had different skills and talents said:

"I am an eloquent speaker, who posts wise words on social media, for this reason I was attracted by my friends" Participant [3]

"Yes, I sometimes post my talent of doing henna tattoos, […] it gives me immense pleasure to expose the henna pictures from my clients on social media." Participant [9]

"As IT student, I show people animation videos and high-quality pictures. Besides this, I am good at football and I also show to them." Participant [11]

"I share my academic achievements. I also do my best to take selfies and snaps at work to show people the incredible things I have accomplished at a young age. The more I promote my self is the more I gain more followers on social media." Participant [12]

"I am motivational speaker by sharing my herbal life experience with girls on social media. I even advise them privately. Participant [17]

In addition to that, two female respondents who shared the indicated above some qualities with other participants also added that they use their pictures as self-promotion on social media especially on Instagram and Snapchat as one of them exemplified: "I believe

beauty is part of the qualities. On Instagram I expose my beauty by wearing clothes which can feature my body. I want to attract people specially to men". Furthermore, when was asked them a follow up question about how people in real life will perceive them if they wear the same clothes they showed on Instagram while walking on the streets: "If I walk in the streets with wearing some clothes that appeared on my pictures on Snapchat, for sure, I will be in trouble, even children will throw stones at me." However, what noteworthy to mention is that this the case of the two females was the case for participant [4] and participant [12].

4.3.7. Comfortable expressing online identity than offline identity. Some of the participants (nine respondents) mentioned that they felt more comfortable and confident when they express their identity on social media than in real world. When asked a follow up question about how social media was more comfortable to them in expressing identity than in real life, only a few of them responded and explained in the following:

> "I feel more confident when it comes to social media than real world, because I have enough time to think about my posts and messages. But in real world when I meet someone or friends, I cannot express my feelings as I want." Participant [11]

> "Yeah, I like my online identity than my real identity. I feel comfortable on social media because I have many fans who support my online identity because I pretend that my life is perfect. I am always good, nice and a lovely girl. But in my real identity I am depressed which is opposite to my online identity" Participant [12]

> "I can say even my normal life became social media life. I spend it more time, Facebook is where I put everything about me, it feels like a home to me" Participant [14]

These responses from the participants seemed that they had very similar responses. They expressed how they strongly felt more confident and comfortable linked to their interaction on social media such as Facebook than in their real life.

4.3.8. Feelings about using online. When asked about their feelings about using social media, a great majority of the participants (nineteen respondents) explained that they had positive feelings about having identities on social media. They felt happy for using social media. They also felt it provided many benefits to them, as two of the participants illustrated, how they felt about using social media:

> "I am not brave enough to talk someone in real life, which means I am not good at chatting with people face-to-face communications, but social media provides me to

easily connect with people and ask them whatever I want. For this reason, using social media make me happy" Participant [11]

"I am very happy to live in this 21st century and use social media. We are more lucky than previous generations. Using social media has enabled me to live in Mogadishu and easily to know what is going on around the world today. I am happy for that" Participant [20]

In addition to that, one participant from those who felt happy to use social media also added that she felt sometimes guilt and sad about using social media because of some negative events that she encountered while posted some pictures on Facebook:

"Some of the photos that I post on social media can hurt my reputation in society. It happened once when some of my pictures were taken and used badly by some websites. Whenever I remember this it makes me feel sad, guilt and anxious. And the other hand, social media is where my best and lovely friends belong to, its where I had the best moments of my life" Participant [12]

Moreover, one participant of the twenty participants expressed that he felt neither happy nor sad but neutral feeling: "I used to be happy for it, but now I am having a normal feeling. But for sure, it has offered me what I cannot get in real world." Participant [19]

4.4. Personal Identity Changes

A great majority of the participants experienced several different personal changes when asked how their personal identity was changed by social media. Some of the participants (nine respondents) expressed an increased sense of social connectedness and support networks as compared to offline identity experience. Consequently, four respondents from these participants also mentioned that using social media as a habitual behavior has led them to become popular on social media. As explained by two of these nine respondents:

"People who just know me would never know me if I had not used social media. For example: The last three years (2016, 2017, 2018) most of my friends those we introduced each other or know me come from social media. without social media I would only know some friends in the school or city and my family members." Participant [4]

"Well, sometimes when I walk on roads in my city there are people who called me by my name on social media and saying: Hi. Some of them even messaged me through Facebook for this reason. I consider myself as a famous person because of social media." Participant [14]

In addition, three of the 20 participants stated an increased open-mindedness that linked to their interaction on social media. they also stated that social media helped them to access and gain more knowledge: "My personality has changed since I began to use social media. my way of thinking and knowledge are developed. I have connected with diverse people on social media." Participant [9]. Furthermore, two other participants experienced an increased creativity. Social media provided them an opportunity to develop their creative thinking in solving environmental and social problems by interacting people and sharing their ideas and opinions with them:

> "My mind is always focused on the ideas I should share and post on social media. each day I ask myself: what should I post today and will post tomorrow as well on social media, whether it's a new idea or a solution to a social problem in my society" Participant [8]

Moreover, two other participants who might be introverts stated that social media helped them to become open which also led them to authentically connect with others as compared to face-to-face communication experiences:

> "Social media shifted in my identity in a variety of ways. For example: I become more open and more effective on social media which helped me to make friends and connect with more people. But in my real life I cannot approach people and introduce myself to them, because I afraid to do that." participant [19]

Furthermore, one participant indicated that using Instagram enabled him to be more stylish by monitoring and watching on some fashion designers on Instagram: "I have learnt to dress myself better than how I used to dress before using Instagram." Participant [10]. However, it also important to note that another participant experienced double-standard life in her online identity and offline identity: "I put pressure on myself to appear perfect on social media, while in my offline identity I felt more depressed". Participant [12]. Finally, interestedly, of the twenty participants, three of them indicated that they experienced neither positive nor negative changes on social media.

5. CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine Somali young people's use of SNSs and their identity expression. Qualitative interviews with Somali youth in Mogadishu city were used to answer the research questions. However, this chapter consists of conclusion, discussion and recommendations.

5.1. Conclusion

The use of various social media sites become routine to the participants of the present study. Each of them indicated using more than one social media. Furthermore, based on the findings the most used SNSs by the participants of this current study were: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter. However, Facebook and Instagram were the most two prominent and the most preferred SNSs among the participants.

The participants in this study stated seven key motivations for using social media. These seven motivations are indicated by the participants in descending importance, as follows:

1. Seeking information
2. Sharing ideas and thoughts
3. Communication
4. To meet new people
5. Entertainment
6. Passing time
7. Becoming famous

The participants in this study mostly connected with their like-minded young people on Instagram and Snapchat while Facebook connects them with family members, relatives, neighbors, teachers, old and new friends. As a result, most participants' identity expression varies based on their social media audiences. They self-present in carefully different ways when on Facebook versus when on other social network sites like Instagram and Snapchat. On Facebook, they felt reluctant to express their identity, because they were concerned that

Facebook audiences especially family members, teachers and relatives could influence their real life, while on Instagram and Snapchat many of them were more open, comfortable and free to express their identity.

Interestingly, though these participants did not self-present on Facebook as much as they would like, and still most of them described Facebook as their preferred social media network which of course they experienced sense of belonging and maintaining community ties. Moreover, a few of the participants used block certain people as online identity management to manage the impression from their family members when they desperately wanted something about their self- presentation to post on Facebook. However, they were able to provide suggestions for their parents and other adults who use Facebook. Some of the participants suggested them to not worry how they use social media, while some other participants requested to parents to compassionately give them advise instead of controlling.

SNSs were extremely important to the participants in this present study. Most of the participants expressed that SNSs in particular Facebook was vital in maintaining relationships, specifically relationships with friends and families who live inside and outside of Somalia. Moreover, all the participants in this current study viewed social media positively. Most of participants mentioned that they experienced several different personal identity changes. These changes include an increased sense of social connectedness and support networks, an increased open-mindedness, an increased creativity and gaining knowledge.

5. 2. Discussion

The discussion section presents the key findings on each research question and it also situates these findings in the context of existing literature.

Research question one: which social media are mostly used by Somali youth, their preferred ones and reasons, and also motivations for engaging with social media sites?

Based on the findings the most used SNSs by the participants of this present study were: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter. This concurs with a previous study in the literature which stated that Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter were the most leading social media platforms (Lenhart, 2015). Furthermore, one important finding was that Facebook and Instagram were the most two prominent and the most preferred SNSs among the most participants of this study, this finding confirms one finding and contradicts with another finding from an early study of young people by Bicen and Cavus (2010, p.578) who found Window Live Spaces and Facebook as the most young people's preferred SNS. This study supports Facebook as it still remains one of the preferred SNSs by young people while it disagrees that Window Live Spaces as a preferred one, this may be caused by the date difference between Bicen and Cavus's study and this current study. It also may be caused by the fact of the other increasing SNSs among young people. However, it is significant to note that all the participant in the present study used Facebook, this finding therefore reaffirms a recent study by Alhabash and Ma (2017, p.1) who suggested that young people are still highly active users of Facebook.

The participants in this study stated seven key motivations for using social media. These seven motivations indicated by the participants in descending importance, as follows:

1- Seeking information
2- Sharing ideas and thoughts
3- Communication
4- To meet new people
5- Entertainment
6- Passing time

7- Becoming famous

This finding of this study however, concurs with Brandtzaeg and Heim (2009, p. 150) who identified information, entertainment, social interaction, and personal identity as the predominant motivations for SNSs use. Similarly, the finding also agrees with mostly findings that Kim et al. (2011, p.365) reported. These researchers found these factors: seeking friends, social support, entertainment, and information. In addition, this finding of the current study also contradicts claims made by Barker (2009, p.212) who found gender differences in motivations for SNS use. Barker reported that females used SNSs for communication, entertainment, and passing time, whereas males stated that they used it for social compensation, social identity gratification, and learning. However, the result of the current study shows no significant differences between females and males in motivations for SNSs use.

This finding of this study may also be related to U&G theory of McQuail et al. (1972, as cited in McQuail, 2010, p. 424). Thus, the following table 5.1 offers further details about what may U&G theory relate to this present study's findings.

Table 5.1. *U&G theory and the study's findings*

No	U&G theory	The study's findings
1	Diversion	Entertainment, Passing time
2	Personal relationships	Communication, to meet new people
3	Personal identity	Becoming famous, Sharing ideas and thoughts
4	Surveillance	Seeking information

Research question two: how do Somali youth engage with online identity of social media?

The participants of this study revealed identifiable personal information on social media profiles. Some of the participants mentioned that they were conscious to put their

personal details on social media profiles while some of other indicated that they were unconscious. A previous study by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 62) previously noted this, they stated that the self-presentation of one's identity often happens through conscious or unconscious identity sharing.

Most of the participants indicated that selecting very beautiful picture for their profiles was extremely important to them. This finding reflects Siibak's (2009) study who mentioned that the beauty of the picture and its attraction was important for young people using SNSs. Furthermore, in this current study, the single most surprising result to emerge from the profile pictures was that some of the participants (seven respondents) those who responded to the beauty of the picture as a core of selecting their profile pictures mentioned that they consult with their close friends and family members before posting their profile pictures.

Most participants' identity expression varies based on their social media audiences. these participants mostly connected with their like-minded young people on Instagram and Snapchat while Facebook connects them with family members, relatives, neighbors, teachers, old and new friends. As a result, they self-present in carefully different ways when on Facebook versus when on other social network sites like Instagram and Snapchat. On Facebook, they felt reluctant to express their identity, because they were concerned that Facebook audiences especially family members, teachers and relatives could influence their real life, while on Instagram and Snapchat many of them were more open, comfortable and freedom to express their identity. This finding mirrors Goffman's dramaturgical approach which he argued that one's self plays different parts based on his/her contexts and audience (Goffman, 1959). For example, following the sense of Goffman's dramaturgical approach, one of the participants in this study clearly depicted in the following quote how Goffman described his dramaturgical approach:

"On Facebook I present myself as a professional, more stable and charismatic person, sometimes I don't even leave a comment on some places on Facebook because I am connected with my family, workmates and my university professors so I am extremely cautious to express myself on Facebook,… but Snapchat has more freedom for me because I can post my thoughts and feelings, I love my Snapchat's self-presentation

because I am more real, , I do what I want because all my Snapchat friends are youth who understand me, they don't judge me because we have lots of common interests." Participant [12]

This finding also concurs with Gee's (2000, p. 99) defined identity as "being recognized as certain 'kind person', in a given context."

This finding is also almost similar to the results of a previous study by Fu (2017, p. 12), he found that there is a distinction between Chinese youth's online identity of Weibo and WeChat. For example, participants of Fu's study indicated that they openly and willingly express their identity on Weibo because the vast majority of their audience of this platform are strangers, while on WeChat they mostly connected with their family members and peers, as a result, they selectively self-present on WeChat. Interestingly, though these participants of the current study did not self-present on Facebook as much as they would like, and still most of them described Facebook as their preferred social media network which of course they experienced sense of belonging and maintaining community ties. This result also concurs with Fu's study (2017, p. 10), who reported that Chinese youth felt a sense of belonging to their community when using WeChat. Another significant finding was that some participants in this study used to block certain people and using fake identities as online identity management. Similarly, Fu (2017, pp. 9-12) reported that Blocking some audience on WeChat and creating anonymous profiles on Weibo were used as self-management strategies by Chinese youth.

It is important to note that one of the participants' response matches Goffman's impression management – expressions *given* and expressions *given off* (Goffman, 1959). This participant posted her picture with a dog on Instagram expecting that she made a normal impression but instead she was sent many life- threating and offensive messages. The "*given*" performance in this participant's picture might not align with what her audience interpreted from the *"give off"* in her picture because of the cultural expectation society.

Most of the participants strongly expressed that SNSs in particular Facebook was vital in maintaining relationships, specifically relationships with friends and families who live inside and outside of Somalia, this finding aligns with previous studies by Ravhuhali, et al

(2015, p. 275) and Bicen and Cavus (2010, p. 578) who reported that SNSs are the main tool of communication used by young people.

Online identity management were used by most participants. They self-present themselves on social media as more patient and happier than in real life in an attempt to become more likeable person on social media. Some of other used to share their own talents and skills. These findings related to previous research by Jones and Pitman (1982, p. 234-246) which described Ingratiation and *self-promotion* as the most two common strategies of all self-presentational styles in everyday life. Furthermore, the first finding of online identity management concurs with a previous study by Zhao, Grsmuck, and Martin (2008, p. 1830) who discovered that Facebook users want to had socially desirable identities. Moreover, these findings may also be explained by Goffman's (1959) Impression management as most of the participants of the current study wanted to make a good impression on their audiences on social media.

Research question three: how social media has changed Somali youth's identity?

All the participants in this current study viewed social media positively. Most of the participants mentioned that they experienced several different personal changes. Some of these participants expressed an increased sense of social connectedness and support networks. This finding is consistent with a previous result in the literature which found that SNSs offer young people to experience more social connectedness (Wood, Bukowski, and Lis, 2016. p.165). Furthermore, two participants stated an increased open-mindedness and learning new things, while other two participants experienced an increased creativity. These results are similar to the finding of a previous study by Livingstone (2008, pp. 394-395) who reported that SNSs provide users potential opportunities for learning and creativity.

Figure 5.1 has attempted to summarize the findings of these concepts based on the main parts of the literature review.
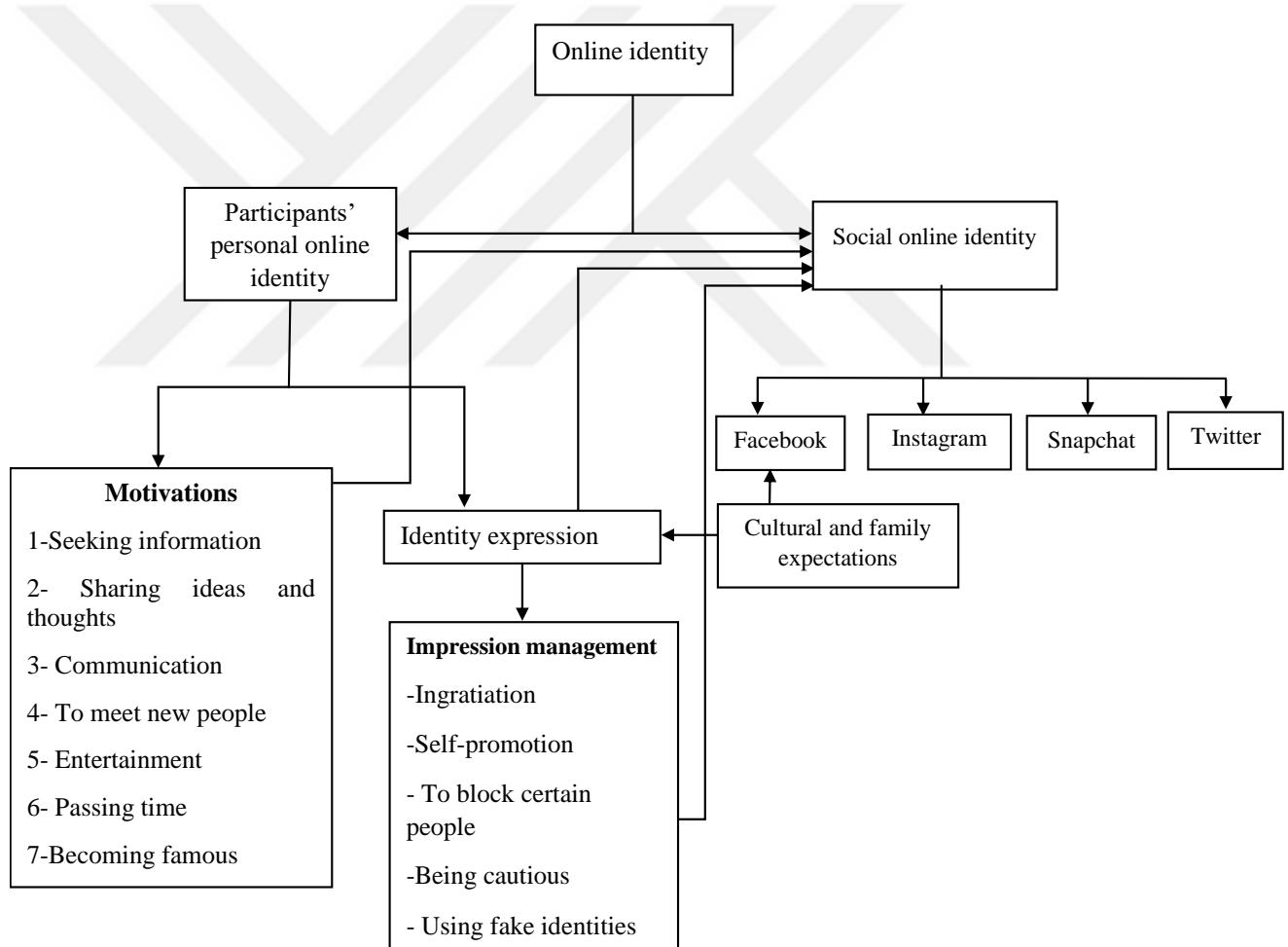

Figure 5.1. *Conceptual frame work of online identity for Somali youth on social media*

Source: adapted from Subrahmanyam and Smahel (2010); Baym, (2015); Goffman (1959); Boyd (2014); Jones and Pittman, (1982); McQuail et al. (1972).

As illustrated in the figure 5.1, the participants' identity an individual's identity in the digital environment consists of personal online identity and social online identity. Based on the findings the most used social online identities by the participants of this present study were: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter.

In terms of identity expression, they self-present in carefully different ways when on Facebook versus when on other social network sites like Instagram and Snapchat. On Facebook, they felt reluctant to express their identity, because of their family and cultural expectations. Though these participants of the current study did not self-present on Facebook as much as they would like, and still most of them described Facebook as their preferred because they experienced sense of belonging and maintaining community ties. Furthermore, most participants used numerous online identity management to manage the impression from their audiences such as using ingratiation and self-promotion tactics. However, the participants in this study stated seven key motivations for using social media, namely: seeking information, sharing ideas and thoughts, communication, meeting new people, entertainment, passing time and becoming famous.

5.2. RECOMMEDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this study answered some important questions, it is only scratched the surface in understanding how Mogadishu' youths SNSs use and their identity expression on social media. Future studies should expand to this study to other cities in the country by using the same interview questions. Moreover, future studies might investigate the relationship between Somali youth's online and offline identities. In addition, to address one of the limitations of this current study, future studies should consider to voice parents and other adults' perspectives towards how should Somali young people behave on social media. Furthermore, in the future studies should also investigate collapsed contexts of Somali youth on social media. However, to dive deeper into understanding all these recommended future studies, researchers should employ qualitative based studies rather than quantitative.

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APPENDIX

1- Interview Guide Questions

Introductory question

1- What does your personal identity mean to you (Who are you, what kind of person are you, what are your characteristics)

What is Somali youth's favorite social media site, reasons and the motivates for engaging in an online identity?

2- Which social network sites do you use?

3- Which of these sites attracts you most and the reasons behind?

4- What is the time you spend on social network per day?

5- What do you mostly use social media for?

How does Somali youth engage their online identity on social media?

6- Do you reveal your own picture on your social media profiles?

7- How do you select for your profile picture on social media?

8- Do you reveal your personal information in your social media profiles such as; your full name, country, city, age, work, education, gender, interests, likes, etc.?

9- When you sharing your personal information on social media sites, are you mostly in conscious or in unconscious situation?

10- How do you express your identity on your various social media platforms?

11- Do you convince your audiences of social media that you are likeable?

12- Do you self- promote by telling/ sharing with them your qualities?

13- What kind of content do you mostly share in your timeline of social media sites?

14- In a sharing moment, do you hesitate what you share on social media because of your social contexts? Please how do you manage the impression from your different audiences?

15- Do you feel comfortable in expressing your identity on social media than in real world?

16- Have you ever created a concealment or false online identity?

17- If yes, do you use that concealment/ false identity, and would you please tell me why?

18- Do you know everyone on your friends' list offline as well as online?

19- How important is social media for maintain your relationships?

20- Adults especially parents are often worried about social network sites, do you think they should be? And what are your suggestions for your parents and other adult people to know your identity expression on social media sites?

21- What does it being social media sites feel?

How social media has developed or changed Somali youth's personal identity?

22- Do you think your use of social media sites has developed or changed your personal identity? If yes, please give an example.

Demographic questions:

1- What is your gender?

2- What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?

3- How old are you?

Transcribed participant interviews example

Duration: 19:10

Researcher: What does your personal identity mean to you? (Who are you, what kind of person are you, what are your characteristics?)

Participant 12 : I am Somali, I am a student. These are part of my identity.

R: Which social network sites do you use?

P: I use Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram.

R: Which of these sites attracts you most?

P: Snapchat.

R: What are the reasons behind your preference?

P: Snapchat is very strong on privacy issues. If someone takes a screenshot of what I have posted on my story feature, Snapchat will notify me of that action. Furthermore, your snaps will automatically disappear once your post is viewed. That is why I like Snapchat more.

R: How much the time do you spend on social network sites per day?

P: First, I use them daily and I spend about ten hours on social media.

R: What do you mostly use social media for?

P: Over the years, I have been using social media in different ways. I used to use it for entertainment. Another time, I used it for entertainment and educational purposes as well - to the point that, if I didn't use social media, I might have failed some exams. On top of those two, I now also use it for work; to obtain and give information. Social media has become a strong source of information for me and I depend on it for my work to the extent that I cannot be away from it for three consecutive hours.

R: Do you reveal your own picture on your social media profiles?

P: Yes, because I believe it is part of my identity, I want my picture to be seen. I like to post them constantly. (laugh).

R: How do you select your profile picture on social media?

P: I seek feedback from my parents, family members and some of my close friends to select a profile picture.

R: Why do you seek others' feedback on your Facebook' profile Pictures?

P: Because I want to receive positive feedback. I also send it to male friends to know their view. I also seek for my parents' feedback. So, feedback from people does affect me. Also, you know, the world is shifting more towards social media, employees' accounts are checked on it and it becomes their second passport. It is my Facebook page that describes my personality the most, not my Instagram, not my Snapchat; that is why I take it very seriously and I don't over use it.

R: Have you ever created a concealment or false online identity?

P: Yes

R: Do you use it?

P: I no longer use it.

R: Why did you use it before?

P: The reason I had a fake identity on Facebook was to share my thoughts without fear, sometimes I also used it to blackmail some of my friends, I felt more satisfied with this action but I no longer use it because it's just very time-consuming.

R: Do you know everyone on your friends' list offline as well as online?

P: No, no. One of the funny things about online identity is that you can talk to unknown people who are similar to you. You tell them about your life. Between my real life and social media friends, I like the ones on social media. Do you know why? That person doesn't know me in the world where I am. I can tell them everything, every crazy thing that I do. They would not judge me. Online friends never judge us. It's real life friends who judge us while online ones are more flexible. Also, if an online friend wrongs you, you can get rid of them easily, and that's that. You block them and all the information you shared

will disappear. Facebook, for instance, if you block a person, it says "Facebook user" instead of a name, and nobody knows who you are exactly. So, once I block you, you no longer know anything about me. You cannot blackmail me with the information you have about me, while real friends can. One more thing about real friends is that you cannot tell them everything about you and they shouldn't know every tiny detail about you, because you need privacy. And once a real-life friend is no longer there, it's an online friend that you head to.

R: Do you convince your audiences on social media that you are likeable?

P: Yes, I do that because I want to satisfy my audience.

R: Do you self-promote by telling/sharing your qualities with them?

P: Yes, I share my academic achievements. I also do my best to take selfies and snaps at work to show people the incredible things I have accomplished at a young age. The more I promote myself, the more followers I gain on social media.

R: When you share your personal information on social media sites, are you mostly aware or unaware of your situation?

P: No, when I started using Facebook, I posted some pictures of myself which I never thought would have a negative effect on me. My pictures were taken and used negatively by some websites. My parents were angry with me and stopped me from using social media. … Also, when I was creating my Snapchat, I created it with a name that I still regret and I cannot change it. So, now I know the importance of being aware of one's identity on social media. Year after year, I feel that my awareness of social media usage is increasing.

R: What kind of content do you mostly share on your timeline of social media sites?

P: I share my feelings, pictures, and accomplishments. After the completion of the first three chapters of my thesis, for instance, I shared that a lot on social media. In addition to these qualities, I also reveal my other skills like cooking or sharing my videos while multitasking and I receive a lot of compliments for that from my audiences on social media.

R: In a sharing moment, do you hesitate to share some things on social media because of your social contexts?

P: Pretty much. Our society is conservative. Sharing some stuff might affect your life in Mogadishu; I was sent many life-threatening and offensive messages when I posted a picture of me with a dog on Instagram. Moreover, if you post a picture of you without covering your hair, you will face enormous attacks. The society is conservative. The culture, for example, does not allow girls to appear in public arenas like panel discussions or to represent organizations. People do not feel comfortable with it, although lately they are improving slightly. But then again, you face the same challenge, even if people living outside the country encourage you to step ahead, locals will not like it and they will depict you as a rebel.

R: How do you express your identity on your various social media platforms?

P: On Facebook, I present myself as a professional, more stable and charismatic person. Sometimes I don't even leave a comment on some posts on Facebook because I am connected with my family, workmates and my university professors, so I am extremely cautious how I express myself on Facebook … but Snapchat has more freedom for me because I can post my thoughts and feelings, I love my Snapchat's self-presentation because I am more real. I do what I want because all my Snapchat friends are young people who understand me - they don't judge me because we have lots of common interests.

R: Comparing social media with real life, do you think society would have embraced your social media outfit equally?

P: No, no, no. If I come out dressed the way I am on some pictures on social media, especially Snapchat, I might get assaulted. So, it is different, it could be because in social media people endorse you, while in real life they judge you. So, social media is more of a virtual life. I even change my personality when going live and acquire a temporary personality, like smiling a lot, I depict myself to be a lovely girl. I don't get angry when I receive suggestive comments. Instagram has added the Live feature, and when I go live, I tell people that they can ask me anything, and when I am asked an inappropriate question, I simply say I am sorry I cannot answer that. But deep inside me, I want to stab that person in

the face, but then I try to act decent to create a good image of myself. I also pretend on Facebook to be someone that I am not.

R: Like what?

P: Our culture has affected the way we use social media; it has set boundaries on us. If our culture did not have that power on us, I would have used social media differently. I would have done so many things that I love to do, and abstained from doing so many things that I don't like doing. For example, taking pictures with traditional dresses or wearing a huge Hijab, depicting it as Islamic and googling Hadiths that I don't even know for captions. I do all that for my cultural expectations.

R: You do that in order to attract many people?

P: Yes, and not to give a wrong picture of me in society.

R: Adults especially parents are often worried about social networking sites and how young people use it, do you think they should be?

P: Yes, they should be worried about us. When it comes to the way young people use social media, you have to worry as it could be used wrongly. Boys might see or watch things they are not supposed to. For girls of the age of 16, 18 or even 19, they might see guys in there and initiate relationships that might lead to the destruction of their lives, losing their virginity or getting assaulted.

R: What are your suggestions for your parents and other adult people to know your identity expression on social media sites?

P: I would suggest parents should create an environment where teenagers and young people can have meaningful friendships with their parents. No pressure, …don't tell your children that you want to control their online self-presentation, just be our friend that we can share everything. My mother did this with me and I was absolutely comfortable with it.

R: How important is social media for maintaining your relationships?

P: Like, I can say 90% of my relationships with my friends rely on social media. Messages from social media are the first thing I see in the morning and the last thing that I check before

bed. My classmates and I used group call on Facebook messenger to discuss and talk about our assignments. I believe this group call with my friends helped me to understand my courses in college better.

R: Do you feel more comfortable expressing your identity on social media than in real world?

P: Yeah, I like my online identity more than my real identity. I feel comfortable on social media because I have many fans who support my online identity because I pretend that my life is perfect. I am always a good, nice and lovely girl. But in my real identity I am depressed which is the opposite to my online identity

R: What does being on social media sites feel like?

P: Sometimes I feel happy, some other times it scares me because I feel mentally ill.

R: Please give me an example of that?

P: Like, some of the photos that I post on social media can hurt my reputation in society. That happened once when some of my pictures were taken and used badly by some websites. Whenever I remember this it makes me feel sad, guilty and anxious. On the other hand, social media is where my best and lovely friends belong to, its where I've had the best moments of my life.

R: Do you think your use of social media sites has developed or changed your personal identity?

P: Yes.

R: Please give an example

P: I have experienced life with double-standards between my online and offline identities. I put pressure on myself to appear perfect on social media, while in my offline identity I feel more depressed. On the other hand, I pretend to hate things that I love. Sometimes I push myself a lot - like going out when I am not in the mood just to post on my story. I usually look for photo opportunities with celebrities, though they mistreat me, yet I endure it for that photo. I do all that to boost my social media traffic.

Other positive impacts that social media has on me are, for instance, that Twitter feeds me with information and YouTube educates me.

R: What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?

P: Bachelor degree

R: How old are you?

P: 20 years old.

BIOGRAPHY

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