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The Association Between Ego Identity Status and Social Media Use

Michael E. Alejandro

THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN EGO IDENTITY STATUS AND SOCIAL MEDIA USE

A Thesis

by

MICHAEL EDDIE ALEJANDRO

Submitted to Texas A&M International University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

December 2016

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Approved as to style and content by:

Chair of Committee,   Monica Munoz
Committee Members,   Anna Cieslicka
                                   Ediza Garcia
                                   Hoonandara R Goonatilake
Head of Department,   Jose Carlos Lozano

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DEDICATION

I dedicate the completion of this thesis to those who I served with in the US Navy on board the USS Key West. I also dedicate this to my father who, while he never got to see all that I have done in my life, I know is proud of my accomplishments and hope to continue to do so for my future endeavors.

ABSTRACT

The Association Between Ego Identity Status and Social Media Use (December 2016)

Michael Eddie Alejandro, B.A., Texas A&M International University;

Chair of Committee: Dr. Monica Munoz

With the current rise in the use of social media across different societies and groups, the question arises as to how social media use relates to psychosocial development, or more specifically, ego identity status. Social media platforms may serve as tools for self-expression and it is through its use that would allow for an individual's identity exploration characteristic of various ego identity statuses. The purpose of the current study was to examine how current ego identity status may predict integration of social media in individuals' daily lives, providing a better understanding of how each of the four statuses differ based on their use of social media. Based on anonymous online survey data, 293 participants were classified according to their ego identity status (i.e., *Achievement, Diffusion, Moratorium* and *Foreclosure*) and they reported on their daily use of social media. It was predicted that differences in integration of social media use would be significantly predicted by ego identity status, where the highest integration of daily social media use would be reported by those with an Achievement ego identity status and the lowest integration would be reported by those with a Diffusion ego identity status. One-way ANOVA revealed no significant differences in social media use based on ego identity status.

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INTRODUCTION

Recent changes in technology have had a dramatic impact on society, prompting some to argue that technology is developing too rapidly and that this will lead to the eventual downfall of human society through the lack of trust of one another (Foltz & Foltz, 2005). There is growing concern that technological development may cause humanity to grow stagnant and fall behind in developing important aspects of the self, such as ego identity. However, the influence of ego identity may be especially reflected in one particular product of technological expansion: the use of social media. For some, the use of social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, is a tool for the eventual globalization of all societies. To others, it is a forum to discuss ideas and concepts that are out of the social conscience or that may come from voices that would not have been heard otherwise due to lack of status or media exposure. In decades past, scientists could only collaborate outside of their workspace at conferences and publishing papers in journals for others to see. Today, social media and communication not allows for instant communication and celebration between scientists across the globe while allowing research that may not have been seen by other to be sent out to the world through the web. Social media has increased opportunity for self-expression that may influence self-development and growth, but it also may indicate current ego identity status. Previous studies demonstrate how the different ego identity status differ from one other from self-esteem and self-expression. The following study aims at exploring the relationship between ego identity development and the integration of social media in peopleøs daily lives.

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This thesis follows the style of *Psychology of Popular Media Culture.*

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ego Identity

  Marcia's work. Marcia (1966) refined the concepts of ego identity and identity Diffusion described by Erikson's 5th stage of psychosocial development (Domino & Affonso, 1990) to develop a system of classification based on an individual's experience with identity conflict during late adolescence. Erikson theorized that the concept of an individual's identity is developed and supported from an individual's social environment as the individual ages and undergoes life tribulations. Usually as the individual enters their adolescence, the individual will undergo a period in which he or she will question who he or she is as a person within their society and family. In other words, he or she will go through an identity crisis. It is through interactions within the individual's social circles and his or her experiences that his or her identity will be shaped and molded into a clearly defined ego identity (Cote & Levine, 1987). The classifications that Marcia (1966) proposed include four ego identity statuses: *Achievement, Diffusion, Moratorium and Foreclosure*. The four statuses differ in the way an individual developed their identity, whether they had undergone an identity crisis and whether they had resolved it reasonably. Diffusion and Achievement are considered polar opposites.

  Achievement. The individual has experienced an identity crisis but has made a commitment to a specific ideology and occupation. This commitment is based on an individual's own experiences and the decision for his or her own path in life was made on his or her own volition. These individuals are usually those who can adapt to change and maintain a content outlook on their lives (Orlofsky, Marcia, & Lesser, 1973).

Diffusion. The individual may or may not have undergone an identity crisis and may have explored several different ideologies and occupations, but the individual has made no long term commitment to a specific ideology or occupation. Individuals in Diffusion have been found to engage heavily in noncommittal activities, avoiding any sense of settling down for a particular cause (Orlofsky et al., 1973)

Moratorium. The individual is currently undergoing an identity crisis and is currently seeking who they are as an individual in terms of their ideology and occupation. The individual will take the influence and experience of the people in their lives as they continue to find their place in the world. Those in Moratorium status have been found to be either fairly active and outgoing in on one end of the spectrum or inward and unresponsive to the world around them on the other end (Orlofsky et al., 1973).

Foreclosure. The individual has not undergone an identity crisis, for they have committed themselves to another individual's ideology and occupation, usually a parental figure. The individual has been molded by the choices of an authority figure and makes no attempt to grow further than what has been established for them. While studies have demonstrated that they are well-functioning and positive in their outlook, most will not respond well to change in their lives (Orlofsky et al., 1973).

Correlates of ego identity. Research by Marcia and colleagues has established that a complex interaction of factors is involved in ego identity development, and ego identity status is linked to various defining behaviors. In a study that accounted for the moderating role of gender, Bilsker, Schidel, and Marcia (1988) determined that in 75 women and 76 men, individual ideology best predicted ego identity status for men and interpersonal relations best predicted ego identity status for women. The researchers suggested that it is

important to account for gender when examining factors that impact ego identity development.

Individuals at different ego identity statuses can display a range of socially adaptive behaviors. For instance, in a sample of 53 undergraduates, Orlofsky et al. (1973) found that those with Achievement status had greater capacity to form stronger and more intimate relationships once they entered the next stage of their life, as proposed by Erikson. Slugoski, Marcia, and Koopman (1984) interviewed 99 male college students and found that those in Moratorium and Achievement demonstrated greater leanings towards facilitation and cooperation when working with others, those in Foreclosure had present either antagonistic or acquiescent tendencies when placed in a cooperative situation, while Diffusion had no strong characteristics demonstrated in social interactions. When examining changes in self-esteem and their response to authority, those who were in the Achievement and the Moratorium status were less responsive to self-esteem changes, in comparison to the other statuses, and those in the ego identity status Foreclosure were more likely to respond to authority as compared to the other statuses (Marcia, 1967). Toder and Marcia (1973) correlated the ego identity status of 64 female college students to their response to conformity pressure, and it was determined that those individuals with a more stable ego identity status (Foreclosure or Achievement) felt significantly less pressure to conform when placed in an uncomfortable situation, in comparison to those in an unstable status (Moratorium or Diffusion).

This early work inspired other researchers to explore the processes behind other adaptive behaviors, such as decision making. In two studies, Bluestein and Phillips (1990) examined ego identity status and decision making skills and found that those in the ego

identity status of Achievement were more likely to make decisions based on logic, those in Diffusion status were more likely to make decisions quickly and without much consideration, and those in Foreclosure status displayed poor decision making skills. Each of the preceding research accounts demonstrate how the different ego identity statuses reflect in how individuals respond to what life hands to them.

      Recent ego identity studies. Decades later, the research has continued into various correlates of ego identity status that may improve the understanding of identity development. Kroger (2000) focused on the need to explore ego identity beyond the late adolescent period and the need to address the possibility of developmental arrest. She makes a point of discussing the course, contents, and context of how ego identity develops. Course refers to how identity is shaped and developed as the individual ages through time, shifting from one ego identity status to another status. Contents refer to the various domains that drive a person's ego identity status, from their friendships, their schooling, their parents and their religion. Context refers to the various ways a certain domain may have an influence over individuals, such as how a certain school may lead people into a specific ego identity status due to its course curriculum. Kroger concluded that while the areas of course and contents have received adequate study, there needs to be more examination of the influence that the context has on ego identity status. Social media use, for instance, presents a context issue worthy of further exploration as current ego identity status may encourage individual differences in the use of social media sites.

      Recent research with correlates of ego identity status has been strongly focused on various issues related to the self. Bang (2015), for instance, explored the influence of self-esteem, in addition to, gender, age and resilience on ego identity status and wisdom

development in 198 African-American college students between the ages of 18-25 years from a predominately African-American college utilizing multivariate analysis of variance. The results showed that while the students developed Achievement status of ego identity similarly to their Anglo counterparts, there were higher instances of Foreclosure and Diffusion in comparison. In terms of gender, males were found to be more prone towards Foreclosure status while females were more likely to successfully attain Achievement status. In the cases of self-esteem and resilience, it was found that among those individuals with higher self-esteem and resilience, there were more cases of Achievement status.

The self-monitoring behavior of adolescents was examined by Kumru and Thompson (2003) in relation to ego identity status. Self-monitoring behavior refers to the individual's capacity to control their public behavior to maintain a positive public persona (i.e., politeness and tact). Examining 476 individuals between the ages of 15-22 in the country of Turkey, age, gender, and self-monitoring were correlated with ego identity status. The results showed that gender did not significantly relate to ego identity status, while participants of older ages were more likely to be in either Moratorium or Achievement ego identity status. Low self-monitoring was more strongly associated with Achievement while higher self-monitoring was associated with Diffusion status while in the cases of the other statuses, Moratorium was found to be significantly higher than Diffusion but still considered low self-monitoring behavior while Foreclosure had provided no significant difference as it relates to self-monitoring behavior.

Additionally, Dunkel and Lavoie (2005) explored how individuals in the different ego identity statuses would process and recall self-relevant information. A series of adjectives were presented to 195 college students, and they indicated if each word would apply to them

and how confident they felt about the answer. The participants were given a rehearsal prevention task and then were asked to recall as many of the words presented in the previous trial. The participants were scored on their correct and incorrect responses and completed a self-report measure of ego identity status. The results were that those in the Achievement status were better able to recall correct responses and displayed greater confidence in their responses, as compared to the other statuses, leading the authors to conclude that this status had a stronger understanding of who they were in the world.

Concepts related to the self, such as self-esteem and self-monitoring, have been useful in expanding the current knowledge of ego identity status, and they hold promise in the study of behavior as it relates to ego identity status. The growing use of technology has encouraged various novel behaviors, such as use of social media sites, which may additionally be influenced by ego identity status. With this in mind and with Kroger's (2000) suggestion to consider contextual correlates of ego identity development, it is important to explore the relationship between ego identity status and social media use.

Social Media Use

With the rise of the internet in the 1990's into the new millennium, communication and research has changed and our knowledge encompasses more of the world than ever before. The rise of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Myspace, for instance, provide new methods of communication and self-expression. One's presence can be felt online through self-disclosure and self-presentation (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Self-disclosure refers to the conscious or unconscious effort to reveal what would be considered personal information and feelings. Self-presentation refers to the desire to control the image that an individual will show to others, their online self. Individual differences in self-

disclosure and self-presentation may determine how much individuals wish to reveal to the world and how they wish to be seen in the world. This may result in various online images of the self and differences in how much some will use social media.

The expression of personality traits during social media use involves both self-disclosure and self-presentation. Individuals may gravitate toward various social media sites depending on the particular personality traits that define them best, so that the use social media may be strategic and conducive to successful self-presentation. Indeed, distinctions have been found in the personality traits associated with use of various social media sites. For instance, Hughes, Rowe, Batey, and Lee (2012) examined Big Five personality traits and sociability of 300 Facebook and Twitter users and found that participants who used Facebook as their primary social media outlet tended to be highly sociable but also highly Neurotic, while Twitter users were found to be more Open and sociable but displayed lower Conscientiousness. The various social media platforms may provide specific outlets for the expression of personality traits.

Of common concern to researchers has been the accuracy with which personality traits are presented online. Bargh, McKenna, and Fitzsimons (2002) designed a series of experiments in order to see what traits participants display to another individual during either a face-to-face conversation or in an internet chat room. Results from two early experiments indicated that participants who communicated using a chat room were found to display more traits that matched characteristics of participantsøtrue selves, as opposed to those who communicated face-to-face. In the final experiment, those who used the internet had a better liking of their partner in communication and presented a better sense of their true self. Golbeck, Robies, and Turner (2011) analyzed the style and content of Facebook postings, as

well as number of friends and daily activity, to predict individualsøBig Five Traits: Openness, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Neuroticism, and Extraversion.   In a sample of 167 subjects, researchersøpredictions of the individualsøtraits were within 11% of their actual scores on a Big Five inventory. It appears that the internet may encourage accuracy in self-presentation of personality traits.

Personality, however, also influences accuracy in online self-presentation. In 2012, Seidman explored Facebook use to assess the relationships between Big Five traits, belongingness, and willingness to provide an accurate self-presentation of who one is in the real world. In 184 undergraduates, Big Five traits were determined and Facebook activities were monitored to assess accuracy of online self-presentation and belongingness behavior. Agreeableness and Neuroticism were found to be the best predictors of belongingness behavior online. While only Extraversion positively correlated with their use of Facebook, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism determined the accuracy of their self-presentation online.

Strategic self-expression, including accurate self-presentation, may be key in maintaining social relationships online. Social media sites can provide an individual with a support system and a social network. Users of Facebook were provided with not only the ability to self-present, but also the use of the social media site contributed to meeting their need-to-belong (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012). Self-presentation and the need for social support were investigated in 202 Facebook users in Hong Kong in order to see if these factors affected their use of this particular social media platform. Based on Facebook postings, the desired image presented to the online world and their use of social media for support, the researchers determined that the users were more interested in communicating

with friends, as opposed to just providing updates on themselves. These individuals were also likely to alter their behavior and postings in order to fit with their desired image and would lean on Facebook for support, expecting the greatest amount of support when they were considered being weak.

As stated above, social media requires a usage of both self-disclosure and self-presentation. In the case where self-disclosure is considered low and self-presentation is unique, massive multiplayer online role-playing game provided a different form of social media that provided a similar experience if utilized as such. In an investigation of online gamers, O'Connor, Longman, White and Obst (2015) explored the various communities that have formed with the massive multiplayer online role-playing game, World of Warcraft. Through interviews with both current and former players, it was noted that while taking part in the online Role Playing Game, the communities and guilds that the players took part in had shown to be a strong social community for the individuals involved, often allowing them to form strong relationships with the other players, whether they knew the other players from their personal lives or from the online community. They would lean on their community for support in both the online game as well as real life incidents in order to overcome their problems. It appears that as long as social media relationships are reciprocated online, they can yield benefits (e.g., less loneliness and greater trust) comparable to those from relationships that occur offline (Baek, Bae & Jung, 2013).

The benefits of relationships on social media sites may be recognizably positive enough to encourage behaviors to maintain those relationships. Kaya and Bicen (2016) asked 362 high school students in Turkey about their social media use and their adherence to social norms and proper manners. The results showed that the participants displayed stronger

positive behavior tendencies such as using Facebook to communicate and interact with others and understanding that using foul language was inappropriate, while demonstrating an understanding that certain negative behavior patterns such as deceiving others through misinformation, hacking another individual's account, and purchasing likes and retweets were considered morally wrong. The participants had demonstrated the understanding that presenting online an inaccurate image of the self is improper. Benefits of presenting an accurate image of the self were reported by Yang and Brown (2016). They examined the way 218 freshman students presented themselves online, their level of self-esteem and how they changed as the semester continued. Results showed that those who had presented themselves accurately received a stronger support system online and reported higher self-esteem, at least temporarily.

Current Research

If social media can serve as a tool to present the self and explore the self in relation to others (Sauter, 2014), higher frequency of social media use may allow for more strategic self-presentation, such as self-monitoring. Since ego identity status has been found to predict individual differences in self-monitoring (Kumru & Thompson, 2003), it is possible that social media use may be a reflection of differences in ego identity status. Additionally, the more integrated that social media is in one's daily life, the more opportunity for self-expression and strategic display of self-aspects. It was hypothesized that significant differences based on ego identity status would occur in integration of social media in everyday life. Specifically, based on Kumru and Thompson (2003), it was predicted that highest integration of social media use would be reported by those with the Achievement ego identity status, as they have previously reported higher self-presentation, and the lowest

social media use would be reported by those with a Diffusion ego identity status. Given that Achievement and Foreclosure are considered positive ego identity statuses, Foreclosure was expected to relate similarly to integration of social media use, but the relationship was predicted to be weaker than that between Achievement status and social media use. Moratorium and Diffusion are generally considered negative identity statuses and Moratorium was predicted to be a stronger predictor of social media use than Diffusion.

METHODS

Participants

The participants were recruited from the student body at Texas A&M International University (TAMIU). Course instructors for a number of diverse courses were given information on accessing the online survey so that they could announce the study to their students. Informed consent was secured from all participants before they had access to the questionnaires and any compensation (i.e., extra course credit) for completing the survey was left to the discretion of the instructors. A total of 348 individuals participated in this study (285 females, 63 males). Participants classified themselves into 5 age categories: 301 were 18-25, 28 were 26-30, 7 were 31-35, 5 were 36-40, and 7 were over 40 years of age. The ethnic composition of the sample included 334 Latino or Hispanic, 6 European American (Non-Hispanic), 3 Native American, 1 Asian/Pacific Islander, 2 Biracial/Multi-Ethnic, and 2 Other. Upon examination of the data, it was determined that the data of 55 participants either showed suspect patterns of responding or were impossible to classify along one of the ego identity statuses, and these cases were excluded from statistical analyses. The latter difficulty occurred because an item on the Moratorium subscale was omitted during survey design. The final sample was therefore made up of 293 participants.

Design

This correlational study was designed to examine the relationship between ego identity status, as described by Marcia (1966), and the integration of social media in individualsøeveryday lives. Since ego identity status presents a number of categories (Achievement, Diffusion, Moratorium and Foreclosure), differences between categories were examined in social media use scores. Therefore, ego identity status was treated as an

independent variable and the dependent variable was integration of social media in participants' daily lives. Both ego identity status and social media integration were determined through self-report measures.

Measures

Questionnaires were included in an anonymous online survey set up on Google Forms to allow for recruitment of the maximum number of participants.

Demographics. Demographic data was collected from the participants via a 4-item questionnaire (See Appendix C). Information was collected on the participants' gender, age bracket, race/ethnicity, and the number of social media providers that the participants use on a daily basis**.**

Ego identity status. The measure of the four ego identity statuses was Bennion and Adams' (1986) the *Extended Objective Measure of Ego identity Status* (EOM-EIS; see Appendix B), a 64 item, 5-point Likert-type scale with a previously reported Cronbach's alpha of .62-.75 across the four statuses (Bennion & Adams, 1986). The 64 items are divided into four subscales, 16 items each that correspond to each of the four ego identity statuses. Each subscale is scored by summation of responses to their respective questions. Scores for all ego identity categories are calculated for each participant, but each is classified according to his or her highest score. In the current study, Cronbach's alphas were as follows: Achievement: $\alpha = .67$; Diffusion: $\alpha = .65$; Foreclosure: $\alpha = .86$; & Moratorium: $\alpha = .75$.

Social media use. As a measure of the integration of social media, the *Social Media Use Integration Scale* (Jenkins-Guarneri, Wright, & Johnson, 2013) was used (see Appendix A). This measure consists of 10 questions to which participants can respond using a 5-point Likert-type scale. The previously reported Cronbach's alpha was 0.914 (Jenkins-Guarneri,

Wright, & Johnson, 2013). The participantsø scores are determined by averaging the responses to the questionnaire, with a low score determining a low level of integration of social media in the participantø life and a higher score determining a higher level of social media integration. In this study, Cronbachøs $\alpha = .89$.

Procedure

The participants were directed by their instructors to access the online survey containing the ego identity measure and the measure of social media use. They visited a website set up in order to accommodate the volume of expected participants. An anonymous Google website was established to allow participants to take parts in the study and to ensure that no identifying information was collected from them (see Appendices A, B, and C).

Once the participants accessed the link provided, they were presented with the consent form which did not allow participants to continue with the survey unless they acknowledged that they had read and understood the form and purpose of the study and accepted to participate. Once the consent form had been acknowledged, the survey commenced by displaying first the EOM-EIS. Each page displayed 8 items per section so as to not overload the participantsø screen but also not overburden the participants with many sections. Each section was set up to allow the participants to continue with the survey only if all questions within the section were completed. After the first portion is complete, the *Social Media Integration Scale* was presented with all 10 questions in one section due to the relative low number of questions. Once this section was complete, the demographic data was collected for each participant. The final section presented to the participants a final opportunity to opt out of the study. Participants were informed that the data was only collected if they pressed the submit button on the page and that no data was collected if they choose to close the

window and leave the page without pressing submit. When participants clicked on the

submit button, the data was collected in Microsoft Excel in preparation for analysis.

RESULTS

Upon examination of the data, it was determined that the data of 55 participants showed suspect patterns of responding (i.e., yay saying and nay saying), were difficult to classify because of similar scores across different ego identity status subscales, or had Moratorium scores that were difficult to classify, given an incomplete subscale. These data were excluded from further analysis, resulting in an abbreviated sample of 293 participants. Total social media use scores were calculated for each participant, as well as total scores on each of the four ego identity status subscales. Participants were classified according to their highest score on the status subscales, and those who were not classified because of equal scores were omitted. Ego identity status classifications were as follows: 249 participants (85.0%; 49 males, 200 females) were classified as Achievement status, 5 participants (1.7%; 2 males, 3 females) were classified as Foreclosure, 20 participants (6.8%; 0 males, 20 females) were classified as Moratorium, and 19 participants (6.5%; 3 males, 16 females) were classified as Diffusion (See Table 1).

Table 1: *Ego Identity Status and Gender*

	Achievement	Foreclosure	Moratorium	Diffusion
Male	49	2	0	3
Female	200	3	20	16
Total	249	5	20	19

Of the 281 Latino or Hispanic participants surveyed, 239 were in the Achievement status, 4 were classified as Foreclosure status, 19 were classified in the Moratorium status,

and 19 were placed in the Diffusion status. Of the 6 who reported European American (Non-Hispanic) descent, 5 were classified in Achievement status and 1 was placed in the Foreclosure status. In the case of the 2 of Native American descent, 1 each was classified in the Achievement and Moratorium status. The 5 participants that identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, Biracial/Multiracial, or Other, were classified as Achievement status (see Table 2). It was noted that all participants who reported ages higher than 30 years of age (N = 17) reported no status other than Achievement.

Table 2: *Ego Identity Status and Ethnicity*

	Achievement	Foreclosure	Moratorium	Diffusion
Hispanic	239	4	19	19
European (Non-Hispanic)	5	1	0	0
Native American	1	0	1	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	0	0	0
Biracial/Multiracial	1	0	0	0
Other	2	0	0	0

Mean social media use scores were calculated for each ego identity status. For Achievement, $M = 29.13$, $SD = 7.84$, for Foreclosure, $M = 27.60$, $SD = 2.51$, for Moratorium, $M = 30.10$, $SD = 7.75$, and for Diffusion, $M = 27.63$, $SD = 8.35$ (See Table 3). It was hypothesized that significant differences based on ego identity status would occur in integration of social media scores. Specifically, it was predicted that the highest social media

use would be reported by those with the Achievement ego identity status and the lowest

social media use would be reported by those with Diffusion ego identity status. The second

highest social media use was expected for those in Foreclosure, followed by scores for those

in Moratorium.

Table 3: *Ego Identity Status and Social Media Integration*

	Social Media Integration Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Achievement	29.13	7.84
Foreclosure	27.60	2.51
Moratorium	30.10	7.75
Diffusion	27.63	8.35

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine differences in mean social

media use scores, according to ego identity status. Ego identity status was entered as the

independent variable and social media use scores were entered as the dependent variable.

The reason ANOVA was conducted as opposed to Pearson's R was due to the categorical

nature of ego identity status. While the results provided a numerical value for the different

ego identity statuses, one cannot simply state that an individual is more in Moratorium as

compared to another who was also classified Moratorium but achieved a lower score.

Results indicated no significant difference in social media use scores based on ego identity

status, $(F = .39, p = .76)$. Therefore, the results did not support the hypothesis.

Additional analyses examined gender differences and age differences in social media use. While no significant gender differences emerged ($F = 1.08$, $p = .30$), there were significant age differences, where older individuals reported less use of social media, ($F = 5.40$, $p = .00$) (See Table 4).

Table 4: *ANOVA Analysis*

	F-Ratio	P-Value
Status Difference	0.39	0.76
Gender Difference	1.08	0.30
Age Difference	5.40	0.00

DISCUSSION

While previous studies have demonstrated differences in certain traits and characteristics with regard to ego identity status, in the current study, scores for integration of social media in an individual's daily lives did not differ by ego identity status. Therefore, ego identity status was not a significant predictor of social media use in the current sample. While previous studies demonstrated the each of the ego identity statuses had a difference in their ability to be more forthcoming and difference of understanding of themselves, it was not evident in the integration of social media in their daily lives. As for society itself,

One limitation of this study may have played a significant role in the end results of this study, which was the unequal number of participants per ego identity status. A majority of the participants were classified as being in the Achievement status with few being classified in the Moratorium or Diffusion status and even fewer were classified as Foreclosure. Another point was due to the large percentage of theose who participated in this study were of Hispanic descent, not reflective of the population at large, which may have played a factor in their ego identity status at this time of their lives. For a clearer picture of the differences between the four ego identity statuses, a larger sample or a more diverse sample might provide a more balanced number of participants classified under each of the four ego identity statuses.

Another limitation of this study was due to the use of a self-report measure for ego identity status. Self-report measures are vulnerable to social desirability bias, inaccurate responding and, as noted in this research, response biases. In the interest of efficiency, however, the researcher opted to use a questionnaire instead of conducting interviews with

participants, as previous studies have reported. In case of a future study, interview data may yield more effective ways of classifying participants according to their ego identity status.

Suspected response bias forced the researcher to omit cases from analysis, but the sample size was reduced also when ego identity status classification was compromised due to a missing item in the Moratorium subscale. Regrettably, the inability to classify, with certainty, some cases as Moratorium, resulted in a loss of data.

While the data do not support the hypothesis for this study, the question of how differences in ego identity status translate to differences in behavior remains an important one. Social media use is a particularly interesting behavior since it is a rather new phenomenon and few studies have examined its relationship with ego identity. It will continue to be important to examine how each of the statuses differ from one another and how individuals may not only move through different statuses as they age, but also how they will vary the integration of social media in their daily lives. As technology grows and social media continues to evolve and become party of social norms of communication, we must continue to keep a close eye on it.

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APPENDIX A

SOCIAL MEDIA INTERGRATION SCALE

Answer to the extent to which you agree with each of the items on this questionnaire.

1) I feel disconnected from friends when I have not logged into Social Media.

   1. Strongly Disagree
   2. Disagree
   3. Neutral
   4. Agree
   5. Strongly Agree

2) I would like it if everyone used Social Media to communicate.

   1. Strongly Disagree
   2. Disagree
   3. Neutral
   4. Agree
   5. Strongly Agree

3) I would be disappointed if I could not use Social Media at all

   1. Strongly Disagree
   2. Disagree
   3. Neutral
   4. Agree
   5. Strongly Agree

4) I get upset if I can't log on to Social Media.

   1. Strongly Disagree
   2. Disagree
   3. Neutral
   4. Agree
   5. Strongly Agree

5) I prefer to communicate with others mainly through Social Media.

   1. Strongly Disagree
   2. Disagree
   3. Neutral
   4. Agree
   5. Strongly Agree

6) Social Media plays an important role in my social relationships.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

7) I enjoy checking my Social Media account

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

8) I don't' like to use Social Media

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

9) Using Social Media is part of my everyday routine

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

10) I respond to content that others share using Social Media.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

APPENDIX B

EXTENDED OBJECTIVE MEASURE OF EGO IDENTITY STATUS

Answer to the extent to which you agree with each of the items on this questionnaire.

1) Politics is something that I can never be too sure about because things change so fast. But I think it's important to know what I can politically stand for and believe in.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

2) There are many reasons for friendships, but I choose my close friends on the basis of certain values and similarities that I've personally decided on.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

3) Based on past experiences, I've chosen the type of dating relationship I want now.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

4) A person's faith is unique to each individual. I've considered and reconsidered it myself and know what I can believe.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

5) After considerable thought I've developed my own individual viewpoint of what is for me an ideal "life-style" and don't believe anyone will be likely to change my perspective.

    1. Strongly Disagree

    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

6) I've chosen one or more recreational activities to engage in regularly from lots of things and I'm satisfied with those choices.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

7) It took me a while to figure it out, but now I really know what I want for a career.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

8) I've spent some time thinking about men's and women's roles in marriage and I've decided what will work best for me.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

9) I've thought my political beliefs through and realize I can agree with some and not other aspects of what my parents believe.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

10) I've gone through a period of serious questions about faith and can now say I understand what I believe in as an individual.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral

    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

11) I've tried many different friendships and now I have a clear idea of what I look for in a friend.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

12) After trying a lot of different recreational activities, I've found one or more I really enjoy doing by myself or with friends.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

13) It took me a long time to decide but now I know for sure what direction to move in for a career.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

14) There are many ways that married couples can divide up family responsibilities. I've thought about lots of ways and now I know exactly how I want it to happen for me.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

15) I've dated different types of people and now know exactly what my own "unwritten rules" for dating are and who I will date.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree

5. Strongly Agree

16) After a lot of self-examination I have established a very definite view on what my own life-style will be.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

17) There are a lot of different kinds of people. I'm still exploring the many possibilities to find the right kind of friends for me.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

18) I'm still trying to decide how capable I am as a person and what jobs will be right for me.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

19) There's so many ways to divide responsibilities in marriage. I'm trying to decide what will work for me.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

20) I'm looking for an acceptable perspective for my own "life-style" view, but I haven't really found it yet.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

21) While I don't have one recreational activity I'm really committed to, I'm experiencing numerous leisure outlets to identify one I can really get involved in.

       1. Strongly Disagree
       2. Disagree
       3. Neutral
       4. Agree
       5. Strongly Agree

22) I'm not sure what religion means to me. I'd like to make up my mind but I'm not done looking yet.

       1. Strongly Disagree
       2. Disagree
       3. Neutral
       4. Agree
       5. Strongly Agree

23) I'm trying out different types of dating relationships, I just haven't decided what is best for me.

       1. Strongly Disagree
       2. Disagree
       3. Neutral
       4. Agree
       5. Strongly Agree

24) There are so many different political parties and ideals, I can't decide which to follow until I figure it all out.

       1. Strongly Disagree
       2. Disagree
       3. Neutral
       4. Agree
       5. Strongly Agree

25) Religion is confusing to me right now. I keep changing my views on what is right and wrong for me.

       1. Strongly Disagree
       2. Disagree
       3. Neutral
       4. Agree
       5. Strongly Agree

26) In finding an acceptable viewpoint to life itself, I find myself engaging in a lot of discussions with others and some self-exploration.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

27) I've been thinking about the roles that husbands and wives play a lot these days, and I'm trying to make a final decision.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

28) My preferences about dating are still in the process of developing, I haven't fully decided yet.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

29) I'm not sure about my political beliefs, but I'm trying to figure out what I can truly believe in.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

30) I've been experiencing a variety of recreational activities in hopes of finding one or more I can enjoy for some time to come.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

31) I just can't decide what to do for an occupation. There are so many that have possibilities.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

32) I really don't know what kind of friend is best for me. I'm trying to figure out exactly what friendship means to me.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

33) My ideas about men's and women's roles are identical to my parents'. What has worked for them will obviously work for me.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

34) I might have thought about a lot of different jobs, but there's never really any question since my parents said what they wanted.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

35) My parents know what's best for me in terms of how to choose my friends.

    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Neutral
    4. Agree
    5. Strongly Agree

36) I guess I'm pretty much like my folks when it comes to politics. I follow what they do in terms of voting and such.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

37) My ideas about men's and women's roles come right from my parents and family. I haven't seen any need to look further.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

38) My own views on a desirable life style were taught to me by my parents and I don't see any need to question what they taught me.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

39) I only pick friends my parents would approve of.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

40) I've always liked doing the same recreational activities my parents do and haven't ever seriously considered anything else.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

41) I only go out with the type of people my parents expect me to date.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral

4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

42) My parents decided a long time ago what I should go into for employment and I'm following through on their plans.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

43) My parents' views on life are good enough for me, I don't need anything else.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

44) I attend the same church my family has always attended. I've never really questioned why.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

45) I've never really questioned my religion. If it's right for my parents it must be right for me.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

46) All of my recreational preferences I got from my parents and I haven't really tried anything else.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

47) I date only people my parents would approve of.

      1. Strongly Disagree
      2. Disagree
      3. Neutral
      4. Agree
      5. Strongly Agree

48) My folks have always had their own political and moral beliefs about issues like abortion and mercy killing and I've always gone along accepting what they have.

      1. Strongly Disagree
      2. Disagree
      3. Neutral
      4. Agree
      5. Strongly Agree

49) I haven't chosen the occupation I really want to get into, and I'm just working at whatever is available until something better comes along.

      1. Strongly Disagree
      2. Disagree
      3. Neutral
      4. Agree
      5. Strongly Agree

50) When it comes to religion, I just haven't found anything that appeals and I don't really feel the need to look.

      1. Strongly Disagree
      2. Disagree
      3. Neutral
      4. Agree
      5. Strongly Agree

51) There's no single "life-style" which appeals to me more than another.

      1. Strongly Disagree
      2. Disagree
      3. Neutral
      4. Agree
      5. Strongly Agree

52) I sometimes join in recreational activities when asked, but I rarely try anything on my own.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

53) I haven't really thought about a "dating style." I'm not too concerned whether I date or not.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

54) I don't give religion much thought and it doesn't bother me one way or the other.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

55) I haven't really considered politics. It just doesn't excite me much.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

56) I've never really seriously considered men's and women's roles in marriage. It just doesn't seem to concern me.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

57) I don't think about dating much. I just kind of take it as it comes.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree

5. Strongly Agree

58) I'm really not interested in finding the right job; any job will do. I just seem to flow with what is available.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

59) I don't have any real close friends, and I don't think I'm looking for one right now.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

60) Sometimes I join in leisure activities, but I really don't see a need to look for a particular activity to do regularly.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

61) I guess I just take life as it comes, and I don't see myself living by any particular viewpoint to life.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

62) I don't have any close friends. I just like to hang around with the crowd.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

63) I really have never been involved in politics enough to have made a firm stand one way or the other.

      1. Strongly Disagree
      2. Disagree
      3. Neutral
      4. Agree
      5. Strongly Agree

64) Opinions on men's and women's roles seem so varied that I don't think much about it.

      1. Strongly Disagree
      2. Disagree
      3. Neutral
      4. Agree
      5. Strongly Agree

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHICS

Please answer the following questions about you by choosing the answer that BEST describes you.

Gender
- o Male
- o Female

Age
- o 18-25
- o 26-30
- o 31-35
- o 36-40
- o 40+

Race/Ethnicity
- o African-American (Non-Hispanic)
- o Asian/Pacific Islander
- o European American
- o Latino or Hispanic
- o Native American
- o Bi-ethnic/Multi-ethnic
- o Other

Social Media Platforms in Regular Use
- o None
- o Facebook
- o Instagram
- o Twitter
- o Tumblr
- o Pinterest

VITA

Name: Michael Eddie Alejandro

Address: 1510 Pintail St Laredo, TX 78045

Email Address: michaelalejandro@dusty.tamiu.edu

Education: B.A., Psychology, Texas A&M International University, 2014