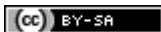


The Fragile Self: Unraveling the Complex Web of Factors Driving Adolescent Identity Insecurity

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to investigate the contributing factors to identity insecurity among adolescents in the context of rapid digital development and intense social interaction. **Method:** A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach was employed by analyzing nine peer-reviewed articles published between 2019 and 2025, focusing on psychological theories, social dynamics, and the influence of social media. **Results:** The findings reveal that excessive use of social media, a strong tendency toward social comparison, low self-esteem, feelings of loneliness, and external social pressures significantly contribute to identity insecurity in adolescents. These factors disrupt the formation of a stable self-concept, especially in environments shaped by digital idealization and societal expectations. **Novelty:** This study offers a comprehensive synthesis of interdisciplinary perspectives, integrating psychological and sociocultural insights to enhance understanding of adolescent identity development in the digital era. The research emphasizes the urgency of targeted digital literacy programs and personalized counseling interventions to mitigate identity insecurity risks.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a phase that is considered very important in an individual's life. It can be characterized by major changes in physical, socio-emotional, and cognitive terms. In adolescence, individuals have the task of forming their identity; if this is not successful, it will cause feelings of insecurity and confusion. Based on the theory put forward by Ericson, the concept of identity is based on various psychological theories, such as Eric Ericson's psychological growth theory, which states that a person has difficulty developing a coherent sense of self during the "identity vs. role confusion" phase. According to Ericson, failure to navigate this stage can reflect society's perception of the individual's role and reveal feelings of inadequacy [1]. Ultimately, this can lead to identity insecurity which has an impact on various aspects of an individual's life. In addition, according to the social identity theory put forward by Tajfel and Turner, an individual's view of himself can be influenced by his involvement in various social groups. Adolescents often seek recognition from their peers while trying to form a distinctive and unique identity [2]. The pressure that occurs in these two directions can reinforce feelings of insecurity, especially when they feel unable to meet the expectations of their social environment or peers. Identity insecurity is a complex and multifactorial psychological phenomenon that is not only influenced by internal factors such as self-esteem and self-confidence, but also by social dynamics and exposure to the digital environment various ideal images related to appearance, achievement, and popularity through social media. As well as how to choose a major, career, values, social relationships, etc. They are also often challenged to determine who they are in the midst

of various new experiences and relatively rapid environmental changes, given increasingly advanced times and increasingly diverse cultures. This can cause or even deepen feelings of insecurity if they feel unable to meet the standards displayed in the content. Various ideal images of appearance, success, and popularity through social media [3].

In the current rapidly developing digital era, social media has become an integral part of teenagers' lives. APJII data shows that the number of Indonesians connected to the internet in 2024 has so far reached 79.5% [4]. Internet users in the 19-34 age group amounted to 98.64% [5]. When compared to other groups, higher social media users are occupied by the age group between 18-25 years [6]. This data shows that teenagers are the majority of social media users. The term adolescence comes from the Latin word "adolescere" which means to grow into adulthood or in adult development. Adolescence is a transition period from childhood to early adulthood. Adolescence itself includes mental, biological, cognitive, social-emotional, and physical maturity in an individual [7].

Bruner argues that the motivation behind adolescents' exploration of various possible identities simultaneously reflects the search for identity. Adolescence is seen as a transitional phase that allows individuals to evaluate and try out various life alternatives before entering adulthood and establishing a commitment to a more stable self-identity [8]. The interrelated selection process—including personal preferences, sexual orientation, interests, life calling, and belief systems—functions as an enlightenment mechanism that supports the gradual formation of a unique identity [9].

Social media provides an opportunity for everyone who uses it to upload content in the form of images, videos, or text [10]. With the ease of accessing social media on various platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok, it is easy for users to connect with friends, family, and communities. Apart from that, it is also for educational purposes, getting the latest news, or for others [11]. In addition, expressing oneself, showing skills, and achieving achievements are means of social media [12]. However, with the various benefits provided, there are negative impacts given when excessive use of social media or can be called addiction.

Research shows that the increase in depression experienced increases as the intensity of social media use increases. Relationship-related issues on social media and the tendency to compare oneself with other users, which can lead to a negative self-image or feelings of insecurity and self-hatred, are causes of depression [13]. Other studies have also revealed that, in the context of social media, excessive use of platforms can lead to insecurity, especially in adolescent girls. Social media content, such as pictures and videos and achievements uploaded by users, can make people feel insecure [14].

Excessive viewing of content leads to feelings of insecurity that cause overthinking, decreased self-confidence, depression, anxiety, and compulsive behavior. Insecurity needs to be addressed because individuals who do not feel fully accepted can hinder their own progress [15]. This will put the person in an increasingly difficult situation and make them feel more helpless, incapable, and unmotivated [16]. Another

study also presented data, 7 early adolescents or adolescents aged between 10 and 14 years, using social media at MTS Madinatussalam Sei Rotan Percut Sei Tuan. According to the preliminary study findings, almost half of the participants use social media for more than four hours a day, and when they see their friends' posts or social media, they feel sad, inferior, and insecure about their own bodies. The biggest factor affecting insecurity levels is social media [17].

This research is different from previous research in that it will describe the complex factors that encourage identity insecurity in adolescents. The topic was raised and selected by the researcher because the researcher was interested in finding out the complex factors that encourage identity insecurity in adolescents. This literature review aims to explore several key factors that contribute to adolescent identity insecurity

RESEARCH METHOD

This section explains the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology used by the researcher. The researcher has gone through several stages to identify the existing concepts of social media and insecurity. The purpose of this SLR is to identify gaps in previous research and provide a comprehensive review of research results from 2019 to 2025. Many studies related to the definition, methods, population, theoretical perspectives, and conceptual models of identity insecurity are interesting. This work facilitates the study of identity insecurity which can be used to understand the development of this research in the future.

The initial stage for the researcher is to determine the criteria for articles from previous studies. The articles collected come from scientific article publishers and several scientific conferences from 2019-2025. The following are the initial selection criteria for the articles:

1. Articles that explain the concepts of identity insecurity, insecure and social media in psychology.
2. Peer review articles that discuss the psychology and identity of adolescents.

The search methods used are automatic and manual searches. Both methods are used to find articles that are related to the main study, namely identity insecurity. Several keywords were used in the search, such as identity insecurity, teenagers, insecure, insecurity, peer influence, family dynamics, social media and cultural expectations. Furthermore, the researcher searched for articles automatically through the Publish & Perish application which provides access to leading journals such as those indexed by Google Scholar. The researcher continued the search process manually by filtering existing articles for a literature review. The results of these two methods are a collection of articles recorded in the table listed in the results and discussion section. This method also helps researchers identify and reduce duplicate data findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of the study found that of the 9 articles analyzed, the factors that influence identity insecurity in adolescents and strategies that can help them overcome identity insecurity were found. The 9 articles used are relevant and address the research objectives. The following table reviews the results of the analysis in the following articles.

Table 1. Article reviews

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
2022	Family functioning and adolescent depression: A moderated mediation model of self-esteem and peer relationships	Google Scholar	Quantitative Research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family functioning directly predicts depression reduction 2. Self esteem mediates the relationship between family functioning and adolescent depression 3. Peer relationships moderate the path between self-esteem and depression 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self esteem is a key mechanism that mediates the influence of family functioning on depression and healthy family functioning builds strong self esteem and high self esteem protects adolescents from depression 2. Positive peer relationships can reduce the negative impact of low self-esteem on depression, whereas poor peer relationships can amplify the risk of depression if adolescents have low self-esteem.
2023	From Doubt to Digital	Google Scholar	Quantitative Research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insecurity and self confidence simultaneously have a 	Insecurity and self-confidence have a significant influence on

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
	Presence: Insecurity and Self-Confidence on Intentions to Use Social Media in Students			<p>significant effect on the intention to use social media</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Students with self-confidence tend to be more active and positive in using social media 3. Students who feel insecure 	<p>students' intention to use social media. These two psychological factors play an important role because they can influence how individuals interact and behave on social media platforms. Insecurity encourages individuals to seek validation and social support through social media and self-confidence also increases the intention to use social media, because confident individuals are more comfortable expressing themselves and sharing positive experiences online.</p>
2023	Feeling Description Insecurity Among Students who Experiencing Addiction on Tiktok Social Media	Google Scholar	Qualitative research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three participants who have feelings of insecurity among students who experience Tiktok social media 2. Informant W watches Tiktok shows in a day can be 8 hours to 10 hours in a day 3. Informant D 	<p>Each student experiences different insecurities based on their personal lives. Both informants expressed feelings of anxiety when comparing themselves to others who they perceive as more successful or attractive. They also lacked</p>

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
				watches TikTok shows for 5 hours to 8 hours day.	confidence in their ability to create income-generating content, often
			4. Informant M	plays TikTok for 8 to 9 hours a day.	feeling uncomfortable and discouraged when their efforts were
			5. Two informants, W and D,	felt anxious because they always compared themselves with others.	not comparable to content creators who achieved financial success quickly. Individuals with low self-
			6. Two informants, namely W and D,	were less confident that a TikTok account that often makes videos would get a certain amount of money if their videos went viral or if their video went viral.	confidence often exhibit behaviors such as inactivity, frequent hesitation when completing tasks, avoidance of speaking up without external support, social withdrawal, and minimized participation in group activities. They may also
			7. For Your Page		become defensive, exhibit aggressive behavior, or seek revenge when they feel unfairly treated. The main factors
			a. (FYP)		
			b. Informants are always uncomfortable if TikTok creators can earn money.		
			c. The three informants felt afraid because when they saw the content on TikTok, they always compared themselves with their peers.		contributing to this insecurity include comparing their work and physical appearance to others - especially TikTok creators.

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. creators who are on TikTok and are afraid of physical things. 8. This second informant always compares his physique if he sees a woman who is more attractive. a. cooler than them 	
2023	The Influence of Social Media on Insecurity Existence: An Analysis	Google Scholar	Qualitative Approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social media is very influential in contributing to insecurity, especially in adolescent girls. 2. The negative impact of insecurity caused by content on social media is also accompanied by the sense of motivation they feel. For example, when seeing content about someone's achievements or accomplishments, people who see it can be motivated and become enthusiastic to change for the better. 	<p>In the context of social media, excessive use can contribute to insecurity, especially among adolescent girls. Content such as photos, videos and achievements shared by other users can trigger self-doubt and insecurity. However, social media also has positive aspects, including its ability to spread information and inspire others. The use of social media is in line with the uses and gratifications theory, which states that individuals use media platforms to satisfy certain needs or wants. In addition,</p>

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
					technology acceptance theory supports that social media is widely adopted because users find it easy to use and useful. To reduce insecurities that may arise from social media, individuals are encouraged to engage in positive behaviors-such as setting limits on use, avoiding constant comparison with others, and focusing on personal growth and self-acceptance. Overcoming insecurity is very important, as it can lead to more serious psychological problems, including depression. Therefore, it is important for users to manage their social media use responsibly and approach online content with wisdom and self-awareness.
2023	Relationship between	Google Scholar	Quantitative method with	[1] This means that the higher the intensity of social media	Excessive social media use negatively impacts high school

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
	Intensity of Social Media Use and Student Self-Confidence		cross-sectional approach	use, the lower the self-confidence possessed by students at Harapan Christian High School Denpasar. Vice versa, if the lower the level of intensity of social media use, the higher the self-confidence possessed by students at Harapan Christian High School Denpasar.	students' self-confidence by lowering users' self-confidence and causing shyness and lack of self-love. Body shaming can occur when someone uses derogatory language to comment on any part of their body. Teenagers' use of social media is one of the things that contributes to their lack of self-confidence . Information on social media is sometimes not suitable to help adolescents develop self-confidence as it often does not match reality. This is due to the fact that social media often highlights a person's ideal face and body type. This has a significant impact on adolescents as they search for their identity
2024	Intensity of Media Use Social, Loneliness and Insecurity	Google Scholar	Quantitative approach that is correlational	1. Intensity of Social Media Use and Loneliness together are able to predict Insecure 2. Intensity of	Excessive use of social media has detrimental effects because it makes students feel insecure, which leads to shyness, low self-esteem,

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
	ty In adolescents			Social Media Use has a significant relationship with insecurity, because the p value is $0.003 < 10$	and lack of self-love. Adolescents' use of social media is one of the things that contributes to their lack of self-confidence and uncertainty. Based on the findings of the analysis, it was found that adolescents' feelings of loneliness and insecurity were significantly correlated with their level of excessive social media use. This shows how the intensity of social media use and loneliness can lead to feelings of insecurity.
2024	Insecure Behavior of Students using Social Media and its Implications in Counseling Services	Google Scholar	Qualitative Methods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insecure students tend to compare themselves with others who look happier, prettier, or more successful on social media and make themselves less or less valuable. 2. Social media is proven to influence the attitudes and behaviors of its users, making 	Based on the researcher's findings and the results of data analysis on insecure behavior in students who use social media and its application to counseling services, it can be concluded that the forms of insecure behavior that arise include feelings of discomfort when using social media, the tendency to

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
				them more emotionally affected by what they see online.	continuously compare themselves with others, low self-confidence, and feelings of discomfort when interacting on social media. The causes of these insecure behaviors include the influence of negative emotions, concerns about physical appearance, daily routines and activities, disruption of social relationships, and disruption of focus and concentration. Understanding these factors is important to help overcome feelings of insecurity and shape healthier and more positive patterns of social media use. The impact of insecure behavior can be negative, such as constant feelings of envy, self-shame, and a tendency to resent what others have. However, there are also positive impacts, such as the urge to work harder, the desire

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
					to learn new things, motivation to take better care of oneself, and increased gratitude. The implication for counseling services is the need for diverse approaches in helping students manage mental health related to social media use. Some students rely on social support, professional help, and concrete strategies, while others prefer to rely on themselves for rational solutions.
2024	Rise of Populism: Identity Threats as an Explanation in Relation With Deprivation and Cultural Fear	Google Scholar	Quantitative Research	1. Social Identity Threat (SIT) indicators, namely, social class recognition, East/West German identity recognition, political recognition of occupational groups, and anomia are significant predictors of populist attitudes.	The threat to social identity through lack of social recognition and feelings of anomia is a powerful and independent explanation for populist attitudes, surpassing both the more established economic (LOM) and cultural (CBT) explanations.
2024	Four eyes, two truths: Explain	Google Scholar	Two-wave panel survey	1. Identity insecurity has no significant effect on the perceived severity of digital	Identity insecurity did not significantly influence perceived severity

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
	ing heterogeneity in perceived severity of digital hate against immigrants			hate against immigrants.	of digital hate and did not significantly interact with anti-immigrant attitudes or dominance orientation and empathic suffering and egalitarianism contributed significantly to perceived severity of digital hate towards immigrants and individuals who are emotionally empathic and have social equality views are more likely to rate hateful content as more serious. In contrast, anti-immigrant attitudes decreased perceived severity.
2024	Four eyes, two truths: Explaining heterogeneity in perceived severity of digital hate against	Google Scholar	Two-wave panel survey	1. Identity insecurity has no significant effect on the perceived severity of digital hate against immigrants.	Identity insecurity did not significantly influence perceived severity of digital hate and did not significantly interact with anti-immigrant attitudes or dominance orientation and empathic suffering and egalitarianism contributed significantly to

Research (Years)	Article Title	Database Source	Method	Result	Conclusion
	immigrants				perceived severity of digital hate towards immigrants and individuals who are emotionally empathic and have social equality views are more likely to rate hateful content as more serious. In contrast, anti-immigrant attitudes decreased perceived severity.

Kim argues that identity insecurity is a form of vulnerability caused by a lack of balance in the individual's inner self, which is expressed through status anxiety, fear of outsiders, and the individual's inability to deal with stressful situations [18].

Insecurity is a mental condition that causes individuals to feel “insecure” and this can relate to many other things. This condition causes feelings of tension and fear in a person, so that they lack confidence when doing something because they feel inferior to other people, tense, anxious, and there are other reasons as well, such as the impact of dissatisfaction and feelings of tension and anxiety towards their capacity and abilities. Insecure people have characteristics such as avoiding social interaction, feeling lack of confidence, blaming themselves, and asking for validation from others [19].

Insecurity can occur due to several factors, one of which is the influence of social media. Individuals tend to compare their lives more often with the lives of others, which can make them unaware of their own identity or believe that their weaknesses are the result of something they see on social media [20]. Comparing what they do with what others do outside their immediate environment through social media makes it easier for them to see how many unique individuals have the potential to create a significant impact in their daily lives. The comparisons they make here are not intended to make them feel better about themselves, but rather as a source of motivation. However, if individuals do this with a high intensity of time, it will make them doubt their own self-worth. This will lead to feelings of insecurity.

According to Greenberg in Psychology Today, there are three forms of insecurity. First, insecurity based on recent failure or rejection arises from situations where a difficult event has a significant negative impact on a person's mood and self-esteem. Second, lack of confidence because of social anxiety, many people feel unsure of their own behavior

and themselves in social situations or on social media. Having a keen sense of judgment from others and an erratic attitude can cause them to experience anxiety. Therefore, many individuals isolate themselves to make themselves feel more comfortable and less anxious. Third, insecurity driven by perfectionism leads to high, even very high standards when doing something [21].

The effects of feeling insecure, which often occur and sometimes even persist, can be very dangerous for them, such as excessive suspicion, physical or mental health problems, difficulties at work, perfectionism, and others. Insecure people make someone feel unsure of themselves, constantly comparing themselves with the achievements and reputation of others, and always feeling lousy or bad, sometimes even worthless. In addition to these effects, it is the insecure individual who ultimately creates a “mask” for himself so that others cannot see the person he wants to hide [22]. In other words, he keeps trying to improve himself by doing something that he thinks can make himself look more attractive in the eyes of others. This realizes the enormous impact of having an excessive sense of insecurity [23].

Social media serves as a place where individuals can socialize while creating things, especially sharing and exchanging information that includes various types of content such as opinions, ideas, entertainment, and other things in virtual communities or groups [24]. The use of social media for learning is also widespread on various platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and others that allow someone to give others the opportunity to communicate with them in the right way and engage in social interactions that can also increase social capital and reduce loneliness [25]. These are the various positive impacts provided. In addition to the positive impacts, there are negative impacts such as cyberbullying, cyber hate, insecurity, FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), addiction, pornography, and mental health issues, especially depression [26]. Social media indirectly places higher social demands, and the feeling of these demands puts adolescents at risk of mental health disorders. Adolescents are also required to have high social media presence [27]. Excessive use of social media over a long period of time will have a negative impact on its users.

This theory was presented by Leon Festinger in 1954, social comparison. The concept of social comparison in this case is a person's thought process of comparing themselves to others based on socially formed aspects and the thought process is influenced by the existence of others. When someone compares themselves to others, various individual views will emerge from within them. This theory also assesses the role of others compared to oneself and then makes someone feel useless or inferior to others as a result of comparisons of social aspects that have been constructed by society.

This theory, put forward by Leon Festinger in 1954, highlights the innate urge of individuals to evaluate themselves by comparing them to others. The intensity of this social comparison often leads to feelings of inferiority if someone feels unable to meet the standards set by their social environment. For example, comparisons with others can make someone feel inadequate in sharing or achieving certain achievements.

In relation to the use of social media, the activity of comparing oneself with others on this platform often reinforces insecurity and self-doubt. Adolescents, in the process of development where they are still in the process of searching for identity, are exposed to various ideal images related to appearance, achievement, and popularity through social media. As well as how to choose specializations, careers, grades, social relationships, etc. They are also often challenged to determine who they are in the midst of new experiences and environmental changes. This can deepen their sense of insecurity if they feel unable to meet the standards displayed in the content.

Research shows that the increase in depression experienced increases along with the increasing intensity of social media use. Problems related to relationships on social media and the tendency to compare oneself with other users, which can lead to a negative self-image or the emergence of feelings of insecurity and self-hatred, are causes of depression [28]. Other research also reveals that, in the context of social media, excessive use of the platform can cause insecurity, especially in adolescent girls. Social media content, such as images and videos as well as user-uploaded achievements, can make people feel insecure [29].

Excessive viewing of content that causes feelings of insecurity leads to overthinking, decreased self-confidence, depression, anxiety, and compulsive behavior. Insecurity needs to be addressed because individuals who do not feel fully accepted can hinder their own progress [30]. This will put the person in an increasingly difficult situation and make them feel more powerless, incapable, and unmotivated [31]. Another study also presented data, 7 early adolescents or adolescents between the ages of 10 and 14 years, use social media at MTS Madinatussalam Sei Rotan Percut Sei Tuan. According to the findings of a preliminary study, almost half of the participants use social media for more than four hours a day, and when seeing their friends' posts or social media, they feel sad, inferior, and insecure about their own bodies. The biggest factor influencing insecure levels is social media [32].

Discussion

Identity insecurity is a complex and multifactorial psychological condition. Huang explains that healthy family functions form strong self esteem strong self esteem, which in turn can reduce the risk of depression in adolescents. In this case, self-esteem acts as a mediator between family and mental state, while peer relationships are moderators that can strengthen or reduce these effects [33]. This means that when adolescents do not get emotional support from family and friends, they are more vulnerable to experiencing self-identity disorders, including identity insecurity.

Furthermore, Saidah shown that insecurity and self-confidence have a significant influence on the intention to use social media. Students who feel insecure about themselves tend to use social media as a means of seeking external validation and support, which reinforces patterns of social interaction based on self-comparison. The use of social media becomes an escape room, but also deepens the identity crisis when the expected validation is not met [34].

This was also found in Harnata revealed that every student experiences different insecurities based on their personal lives. Both informants expressed feelings of anxiety when comparing themselves to others who they considered more successful or attractive. They also lack confidence in their ability to create income-generating content, often feeling uncomfortable and discouraged when their efforts are not comparable to content creators who achieve financial success quickly [35]. Individuals with low self-confidence often exhibit behaviors such as inactivity, frequent hesitation when completing tasks, avoidance of speaking up without external support, social withdrawal, and minimized participation in group activities. They may also become defensive, exhibit aggressive behavior, or seek revenge when they feel unfairly treated. The main factors contributing to this insecurity include comparing their work and physical appearance to others - especially TikTok creators.

Research Syauqii explains how in the context of social media, excessive use can contribute to insecurity, especially among adolescent girls. Content such as photos, videos and achievements shared by other users can trigger self-doubt and insecurity. However, social media also has positive aspects, including its ability to spread information and inspire others [36]. Social media use is in line with the uses and gratifications theory, which states that individuals use media platforms to satisfy specific needs or wants. In addition, technology acceptance theory supports that social media is widely adopted because users find it easy to use and useful. To reduce insecurities that may arise from social media, individuals are encouraged to engage in positive behaviors - such as setting limits on use, avoiding constant comparison with others, and focusing on personal growth and self-acceptance. Overcoming insecurity is crucial, as it can lead to more serious psychological problems, including depression. Therefore, it is important for users to manage their social media use responsibly and approach online content with wisdom and self-awareness.

Then Suryadi found that the higher the intensity of social media use, the lower the level of self-confidence in students. This suggests that excessive exposure to social media not only disrupts self-perception, but also undermines confidence in personal identity, especially when individuals feel unable to meet the standards projected online [37].

Research Abidah & Maryam explains that excessive use of social media has a detrimental effect because it makes students feel insecure, which leads to shyness, low self-esteem, and lack of self-love. The use of social media by adolescents is one of the things that contributes to the lack of self-confidence and uncertainty. Based on the findings of the analysis, it was found that adolescents' feelings of loneliness and insecurity were significantly correlated with their level of excessive social media use. This shows how the intensity of social media use and loneliness can lead to feelings of insecurity [38].

In Rahmi explains that the forms of insecure behavior that arise include feelings of discomfort when using social media, the tendency to constantly compare themselves with others, low self-confidence, and feelings of discomfort when interacting on social media. The causes of these insecure behaviors include the influence of negative emotions,

concerns about physical appearance, daily routines and activities, disruption of social relationships, and disruption of focus and concentration [39]. Understanding these factors is important to help overcome feelings of insecurity and shape healthier and more positive patterns of social media use. The impact of insecure behavior can be negative, such as constant feelings of envy, self-shame, and a tendency to hate what others have. However, there are also positive impacts, such as a drive to work harder, a desire to learn new things, motivation to take better care of oneself, and increased gratitude.

Meanwhile, in a larger social context Babst shows that identity insecurity can also be triggered by a lack of social recognition, feelings of anomia, as well as threats to group identity, which ultimately give rise to social responses such as populism. This suggests that identity insecurity can develop from collective dynamics, not just individual experiences [40].

Interestingly, in Kirchmair it was found that identity insecurity did not significantly affect perceptions of the severity of digital hate speech [41]. However, factors such as empathy and egalitarianism played a greater role. This suggests that identity insecurity impacts more on personal and internal dynamics, rather than on responses to broader social issues.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : Identity insecurity is a complex and multifactorial psychological phenomenon that is not only influenced by internal factors such as self-esteem and self-confidence, but also by social dynamics and exposure to digital environments, especially social media. Findings from the various studies that have been discussed show that the role of family, friendship relationships, and habits of using social media determine the formation or fracturing of an individual's identity. When emotional support from family and friends is reduced, and social media use is compulsive and full of social comparisons, adolescents and students become more vulnerable to feelings of insecurity about their identity. This not only impacts emotional aspects such as low self-esteem, anxiety, and withdrawal, but also triggers doubts about self-worth and social existence, which can ultimately affect mental health more broadly. **Implication :** The implications of these findings are significant in the context of education, developmental psychology, and counseling services. Preventive and curative interventions are needed to build a supportive environment for healthy identity formation. Counseling services need to be equipped with approaches that strengthen self-awareness, digital literacy, and emotion regulation, especially in addressing the impact of social media. Schools and universities need to be a safe space for adolescents and students to develop their identity authentically, without the pressure of excessive comparison. It is also important to involve families and communities in building an inclusive and supportive social ecosystem. **Limitation :** While this discussion includes many sources and perspectives, there are some limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, most of the findings come from quantitative and qualitative studies that are still geographically (mostly in Indonesia) and population (adolescents and university students) limited. Second, there are still few longitudinal studies that can explain the long-term dynamics of identity

insecurity. Thirdly, cultural aspects and local values that may influence identity formation have not been fully explored in this study. **Future Research** : Future research could expand coverage with cross-cultural approaches and longitudinal methods to see how identity insecurity develops from adolescence to young adulthood. In addition, further exploration of how different types of media (e.g. TikTok, Instagram, Twitter) have different influences on self-identity is also important. Technology-based interventions such as digital mental health tools, as well as community-based approaches can also be the focus of new research to develop strategies to strengthen self-identity in the midst of an increasingly complex digital era.

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