



Managing Risk, Reputation and Identity of Young Adults in a Social Media Environment

Marla Koonin, Independent Institute of Education, South Africa

Abstract

By means of an exploratory study, possible consequences for young adults' (individuals below the age of 30 years old) reputation and identity if their interaction on social media platforms is not managed accordingly is postulated within this article. The purpose is to highlight these consequences of social media engagement on young adults' reputation and identity and the risk surrounding this. This article uses the theoretical framework of social identity theory to understand personal and social identity. Possible practical suggestions for creating awareness of how to manage risk, reputation and the identity in a socially networked society and the importance thereof are then offered. The review of the literature study indicates that social media has made reputation and identity extremely transparent but has also meant that any interaction in this space can go viral and have risk and subsequent consequences for a young adults' future identities and reputations.

Keywords: Social identity theory, social media risks, reputation and identity in a social media environment.



Introduction

Visual or verbal Communication that is circulated rapidly on the internet is termed “going viral” and when this term is used within this context it will imbue this meaning. Going viral happens on a social media platform. Social media is collaborative media creation of content and then the sharing of this through public platforms or semi-private platforms that have a group of subscribed users (Collins, Rahilly, Richardson and Third, 2011). Visual and verbal content going viral on social media platforms is causing relatively unknown people to be “named and shamed” for their views, thoughts, attitudes and actions that they are engaging with on their own social media sites. Of late, the media has been awash with headlines that are highlighting and challenging individuals’ personal social media networks because of socially unacceptable human behaviour in these socially active media spaces on the parts of these individuals and this information then goes viral.

Twenty year old South African model Leandra dos Santos, for example, received international exposure in May 2012 for her racist, hate speech that she embarked on on her twitter profile, after engaging with a black gentleman in a local supermarket. This Cape Town based model has lost contracts based on her derogatory tweets. Moreover, the law firm Webber Wentzel states that individuals engaging in hate speech on social media sites could be charged and jailed for posting hate speech (Manning, 2012). South African model Tshidi Thamana then retorted to Dos Santos responses by tweeting a hateful comment about white people, as quoted by *Die Burger* (2012) as: “Dear Mr Peter Mokaba... I wish All White People were killed when you sang ‘Kill The Boer (farmer)’, we wouldn’t be experiencing @JessicaLeandra’s racism right now” (IOL, 2012). This racist banter between these two models illustrates that the exposure of socially unacceptable behaviour is happening in a transparent public platform and in turn these individual’s reputations and identities are being adversely affected in a very public manner. Thus the exposure that may have been limited to a small group previously is now far more expansive.

This is not an isolated incident. In the same month, Cape Town student Ken Sinclair went on a *Facebook* rampage about his opinions of black people in South Africa, in a racist and derogatory manner. This caused a massive public uproar and his *Facebook* page went “viral”, in a turn of events that would see people turn on him and take a stance against such blatant hate speech (Manning, 2012). Moreover, there are cases of child nudity and pornography that



are put up by young adults (young adults from this point on will be individuals below the age of 30 years old) on social networking sites of friends, boyfriends, girlfriends and the like and in even more severe circumstances rapes that are recorded, such as the alleged gang rape of a mentally disabled Soweto teenager that made front page headlines in April 2012, which is not an isolated incident on social networking sites the world over.

As shown in the case studies above, on a daily basis both in South Africa and internationally, there are cases where young adults' reputations and by extension their personal and social identities are challenged by exposure on social networking sites. Unbeknownst to them, the messages that they are disseminating through these sites are irrevocably destroying their reputations and could have a negative impact on their future.

Yet, the consequences of social media interaction are not only negative. Individuals have also used these networks to make friends, start forums, find love, debate issues, raise awareness of critical socio-economic issues and prevent and shed light on the mistreatment of others. Whether positive or negative, the consequences for an individual's reputation and identity on social networking sites is a reality in the 21st Century and with the statistics as given below it becomes critical that the importance of reputation and identity management in online platforms is recognised. Madden and Zickuhr (2011) conduct surveys for the Pew Research Center on social networking, with their latest statistics putting the usage of social networks by young adults on a daily basis at 61%. This same centre was quoted by an organisation called *Journalist Resource* (2012) stating that 70% of young adults use social networking sites. This shows the large proportion both on a daily and general usage basis of young adults in this space and highlights the necessity of recognising the importance of reputation and identity management amongst this group of individuals.

The pivotal matter examined in this article therefore relates to identifying possible consequences that engaging with social media has on identity and reputation management of young adults and then offering some suggestions of how to prevent these negative consequences on reputation and identity from happening and the associated risks of the open engagement on social media sites.



The issue at hand is that people do not always understand the possible consequences that engaging in social media could have on the identities and reputations of young adults. In this article the intention is to offer some insights in this regard. Furthermore, the article focuses on the analysis of identity and reputation management from a social identity theory perspective and is based on a literature study conducted. The key concepts of identity, social identity theory and reputation management are touched on, as well as the link between these concepts and theories and the consumption of social networks.

Type of Study

The intention is exploratory, in that exploratory studies offer some insight and deepened understanding of the new foundations of risk, identity and reputation management and protection, in the context of a socially networked society. This aligns with Pitout and Du Plooy's (2001:302) explanation of exploratory research as a means of understanding a communication problem better, particularly one in which little research has been conducted or little is known on the topic. The paper does not use a set methodological orientation as it is more of an academic opinion based piece on the area of identity and reputation management. It thus uses the literature review as a means of grounding opinion based observations.

Problem Statement

How can young adults manage risk, reputation and identity in a social media environment?

Aim of the study

To demonstrate how young adults can manage risk, reputation and identity in a social media environment.

Review and analysis

In order to look at the possible risks and consequences that engaging with social media and becoming part of socially networked communities has on identity and reputation, it is essential to unpack the key concepts of identity, social identity theory, reputation and reputation management.



Constructing Identity and reputation

Fearon (1999) believes that the dictionary definitions of identity are too simplistic and out-dated and should be expanded to encompass two intertwined meanings, the first being social identity and the second personal identity. The author classifies social identity as the social categorisation of people into a group; so for example, a person is South African, Zulu, Muslim, and Homosexual. In terms of personal identity, Fearon (1999) describes it as being “aspects or attributes of a person that form the basis for his or her dignity or self-respect.” It is the properties essential to that person. If these properties were to change, that person would no longer be the same person.

Related to the views of Fearson (1999), McLeod (2008) explains social identity as a person’s self-concept, a sense of who they are. This sense is based on membership to specific groups within society, resonating closely with the social identity theory of Henri Tajfel and John Turner. Tajfel developed the foundation of the theory in his earlier work and then together with his student John Turner created the social identity theory, which believes that “a person has not one, “personal self”, but rather several selves that correspond to widening circles of group membership. Different social contexts may trigger an individual to think, feel and act on basis of his personal, family or national “level of self”. The individual also has more than one social identity, which is the individual’s self-concept that comes from membership that they have to specific social groups such as friendships, religious institutions etc. (University of Twente). Tajfel postulates that our self-pride and self-esteem are directly linked to groups that people belong to because these groups give us a sense of social identity (McLeod, 2008). These groups could be any group that an individual belongs to such as social class, family, a team, etc. The University of Cape Town’s Psychology Department (2012) explains this by stating that as individuals, we have an innate desire to have a positive self-esteem. Individual identity is directly linked to self-esteem and thus an explanation of personal and social identities are two aspects that need to be taken into account when reviewing self-esteem. According to the social identity theory, the individual’s identity will comprise of a personal identity associated with an individual’s unique qualities as well as a person’s social identity linked to that person’s perception of social groups and their place within it (Rivenburgh, 2000).



The key facets of the social identity theory are individual's tendencies to continually categorise things and people to the extent that individuals thus associate themselves with a group(s). This associated group(s) to which individuals think they belong gives them their social identities and they are thus defining themselves via these groups (University of Cape Town's Psychology department, 2012).

In order to maintain a strong self-concept and self-esteem, it is important for people to have a continual positive disposition to the groups to which they belong. This is termed *in-groups* (Rivenburgh, 2000). Within people's social identity, the concept of in-groups and out groups is continually coming to the fore. Tajfel (1970) defines an in-group as "a group to which a person belongs or thinks he/she belongs" and an out-group as "a group to which a person does not belong or thinks he/she does not belong." The social identity theory is based on the belief that people will continually attempt to heighten the status of their in-group and even disparage their out-group in order to increase their own self-image (Mc Leod, 2008). For example, the more individuals associate with groups that are associated with prestige and status, the more their self-esteem will increase. People, therefore, tend to gravitate towards groups that provide this for them (University of Cape Town Psychology Department, 2012). Turner and Tajfel (as quoted by the University of Twente, 2012) identified three variables, which they believe will make an in-group favoured by an individual:

- The extent to which an individual will identify with a group because this will lead to an individual internalising the group membership with their self-concept;
- The extent to which the prevailing context provides ground for comparison between groups;
- When an in-group is central to an individual's definition of themselves and thus a given comparison would be meaningful then an individual is likely to display favouritism.

Thus, individual's personal and social identities play a role in the construction of their identity and the protection of this identity is an important aspect of remaining part of the in-group individual's favour. In order to remain part of a group and be seen by the group in a positive light, individuals have to manage their reputation, thus a definition of reputation is required.



The Macmillan Dictionary (2012) defines reputation in a number of different ways, with the essence being that it is an opinion that people hold of a certain person; place or object. Reputation management is thus the management of people's opinions related to a particular quality of a person, place or object.

With the advent of social media, the concept of reputation management has moved into a new realm, where people's digital footprints and online identities have become the place where reputations need to be managed. Online reputation management is evident from a study conducted by Madden and Smith (2010), where they postulate that 57% of adults (adults are classified as people over 30 years of age in these authors research) surveyed had used Google to verify their online identity. Whilst adults in the survey showed an innate curiosity to determine their online footprint, the study found that young adults (young adults are classified as people below the age of 30 years in these authors research), are far more focused on online reputation management. In comparison to adults, young adults are much stricter on their privacy settings and realise that online reputation management is critical and young users do place a high value on managing their online identities but this still does not give them the tools to manage this or the dangers associated with not managing their reputation online because their management is more of a social acceptance rather than a vigilance to the consequences of information going viral that could do damage to their reputation and thus impact on their personal and social identity (Madden and Smith, 2010) .

With the introduction and expansion of the Web 2.0 social media applications, a digital platform has opened up various opportunities for exposure of young adults in a community that is borderless. However, it has also brought about a transparency to people's lives that can have negative consequences. One of the areas in which young adults have been able to expand their digital footprints and create exposure for their personal identities is through youth authorship.

Youth Authorship

Youth Authorship is defined by Stern (2008) as youth content creation. It is the creation of original online content such as poetry, artwork, music, etc. This is then all placed into the public eye on the internet. There seems to be an age disparity in this regard, where adults see this open online expression of feelings and thoughts as a more awkward information sharing



mechanism where in juxtaposition the youth are more comfortable to expose themselves to public scrutiny and put their work into an environment that has the potential to go viral at any point and is transparent. (Stern, 2008). Related to the definition, Stern (2008) states that research on youth authorship indicates that young adults are using digital/online media to share their emotion and also show their emotional vulnerability.

Davies (2009) extrapolates that digital media opens up various opportunities for young adults to engage with and be engaged. Young adults can, for example, create blogs and within minutes have their own free publishing platform. Other social network sites like *MySpace* and *Facebook* also serve as networked publics (Boyd, 2008). Boyd (2008) defines networked publics as “the types of publics that gather on social network sites...a linked set of social, cultural and technological developments that have accompanied the growing engagement with digitally networked media.” The examples that Boyd (2008) gives are publics that are bound together by technology such as through the internet and mobile networks and by extension the social networking sites that are run off these.

Moreover, youth authorship, broadly speaks to the youth having become authors because of the opportunities afforded to them by online spaces. The youth can now create publishable work because of online platforms. Young adults create their own identity as online authors by, for example, creating a self-written online biography or diary. Through their interaction with other people on social media spaces and commenting in this space they can become co-authors of online spaces. Homepages and blogs can act as a means for facilitating the youth in identity formation and identity reflection. The question raised in this sphere is then whether or not social networking sites provide youth with what Stern (2008) terms a “canvas of self-reflection”. A possible answer is that it creates an environment where social networking sites are used as spaces for identity construction. Young people use these spaces to continuously construct, re-construct and display their self-image based on self-reflection and reflection on the identities of others. These online platforms are not only virtual spaces of self-reflection but have participants in chatrooms, feedback, people re tweeting information to name but a few ways that people are able to act as online citizens and participate in these networked publics.



As with unmediated public spaces like parks and malls, youth use networked publics to gather, socialise with their peers, make sense of and help build the culture around them through these online platforms and it is in this virtual space that they form their in-groups, out-groups and social identity, which links directly to Tajfel's previously mentioned social identity theory specifically related to individuals social identity and their need to be part of an in group , these networked publics have become the new groups of which young adults form a part. They build their personal and social identity based on the dynamics of these groups. Thus, their self-esteem and self-pride are directly linked to these groups.

As part of the social identity theory, identity perspective relates to the way in which social identity is reconceptualised as the process that transforms interpersonal behaviour into intergroup behaviour because an individuals interpersonal behaviour relates to interpersonal relationships and individual characteristics of two or more individuals for example a husband and wife, best friends etc. whereas intergroup interactions are fully determined by a person's membership to a group and this membership becomes important in social identity construction (Turner, n.d.; Tajfel and Turner, n.d.) Larsen (as cited by Davies, 2011) states that the creation of an identity perspective by young adults in online spaces is equally important to building identity perspectives offline

In line with the above argument of identity perspective and linked to the social identity theory of Tajfel, it can therefore be deduced that young adults form their self-image and base their self-esteem on the social groups to which they belong. As proposed by the social identity theory, people will continually attempt to heighten the status of their in-group and even disparage their out-group in order to improve their own self-image (McLeod, 2008). Given this context, groups that young adults belong to play a pivotal role in the creation of their self-image and self-esteem. If these in-groups are digital groups, such groups have a far wider reach in an online environment. Equally, disparaging of out-groups in an online environment can be done on a far more expansive scale. Furthering on this argument it also means that it is in this very public platform that the youth are constructing, deconstructing and reconstructing their self-image, and by extension, their social and personal identity.

This phenomenon produces interesting ethical debates related to youth online authorship and the consequences of these authorships. With such public exposure of one's self and social



identity it is critical to understand the consequences of controlling one's online reputation as it can have dire consequences on a far wider scale.

Reputation Management in a Viral Environment

With the creation of identity and the way in which the youth construct their identities, the issue around reputation control, management and dealing with “viral” gossip becomes important. Reputation management, according to Solove (2007), is changing with the advent of digital/online social spaces. Solove's (2007) book titled *The Future of Reputation* starts with a narrative indicating the power that an online platform can have on a person's reputation:

“It all began in real space, on a subway train in South Korea. A young woman's small dog pooped in the train. Other passengers asked her to clean it up, but she told them to mind their own business. That's when it moved over to cyberspace and became even uglier.

Someone took photos of her and posted them on a popular Korean blog. A blog, short for “Web log,” is a running online commentary about one's life or about the issues of the day. Another blogger, Don Park, explains what happened next:

Within hours, she was labelled gae-ttong-nyue (dog sh%\$#t girl) and her pictures and parodies were everywhere. Within days, her identity and her past were revealed. Requests for information about her parents and relatives started popping up and people started to recognise her by the dog and the bag she was carrying as well as her watch, clearly visible in the original picture.

All mentions of privacy invasion were shouted down. . . The common excuse for their behaviour was that the girl doesn't deserve privacy.”

(Solove, 2007)

This story illustrates the power of these social networking spaces on changing a person's reputation and social identity by putting them into an out-group on open access spaces, thus affecting their social identity and by extension, self-image and self-esteem. The changing reputation of the girl in the above example has direct consequences on her social identity;



where in-groups and out-groups as spoken of in the social identity theory now have a far wider reach. By commenting online on the behaviour of the girl in the example, the online community ostracised her from the in-group; leading to the diminishing of her self-image and reputation. The question that consequently arises is how and why it is important to manage an online reputation.

The following two questions proposed by Solove (2007) are directly linked to this concept of managing ones reputation and identity in a viral space:

1. What will life be like for the generation that is coming of age now, with their high school and college/university gossip preserved in my space and Facebook profiles?
2. Gossip, rumour and shaming are nothing new. So why does the fact that these things are occurring online make a difference?

Related to these questions, it is difficult to imagine the implications of one's entire young adulthood having been blogged about. It is challenging to comprehend one's feelings if, for example, an unsuccessful love affair is tweeted about by everyone with a twitter profile. This raises identity construction issues because many young adults may find it difficult to create and build their identity through these spaces (with all associated risks taken into account). Additional risks that may impact negatively on identity creation include the risks associated with cyber child pornography occurring online as well as the age old gossip and rumour mill which is receiving a significant viral window through social media. Through social networking sites such as *YouTube* people are made into celebrities with only very basic equipment needed and very little effort and a small amount of interest, which can then create a viral spread of the clip with large volumes of people involved. However, similarly individuals' reputations can be ruined in the same manner.

Findings - Suggestions for Managing Risk, Reputation and Identity on Social Networks

Based on the power of social media and mostly because of its transparency, it has the ability to influence the reputations and identity of individuals' both on a personal and social identity level. Collin *et al.*, (2011) suggest that operation in a socially networked environment presents numerous risks and challenges to young adults some of which include management of



personal information and privacy, the risk of cyber bullies and cyber predators who may prey on young adults and copyright law in relation to content development and distribution. This concern of risk comes from a concern that young adults may be able to operate within these online communities but that they lack the awareness of the public nature of these environments and thus the associated risk. This associated risk can subsequently cause harm to a young adult by damaging their reputation and affecting their personal and social identity. Below are some suggestions on possible ways in which young adults reputations could be managed in the online space:

- Education – Media literacy has always played a role in educating the youth linked specifically to mass media and advertising. However, in today's digital environment media literacy needs to be educating young adults about digital literacy and cyber safety. This is often not taught in schools and is needed because young adults need to both participate and stay safe in a digital environment (Collin *et al.*, 2011). To this end it is critical that young adults understand the implications and far reaching consequences of what a few words at a young age can have on their future careers and existence into adulthood. If an individual is, for example, at university and dubbed a bigot and racist based on messages s/he have disseminated via his/her personal social media network, s/he will not only struggle socially but may also struggle to find employment or ever regain his/her reputation. This education should be done through programmes at schools and universities on how young adults should present themselves online. This needs to already be initialised at school level so that by the time they become young adults they are keen online reputation managers. Collins *et al.*, (2011) supports this approach by postulating that programmes should be developed that explore technologies as settings and look at cyber safety in a supportive manner with the intention of strengthening the resilience and wellbeing of young adults.
- Online ethics and legal awareness – education of reputation management is the first part, the second is about knowing online boundaries and adopting ethical practices in online spaces. Young adults need to know the consequences of involving others in their online practices. If they post pictures of others, items about others, engage in illegal activities such as the distribution of pornography (if any of the participants are under aged this would amount to the distribution of child pornography even if it is



with consent), the consequences will not only be unethical online practices but could also have legal ramifications depending on the country of origin and young adults need to know and understand this because it can irreparably harm their lives and they may be criminally charged.

- People need to see and manage themselves as a brand – young adults need to view themselves as a brand made up of a brand identity and a brand image. They need to disseminate all the aspects of their personal characteristics and attributes to the world every time they speak or write both online and off line and they need to view themselves as an autonomous brand at all times any interaction they have will have an impact on their brand image i.e. the perception others have of them. In doing this and treating themselves as a brand they will continually be managing their reputation.
- Peer Review – young adults need to understand that all that they write and say will be evaluated both directly and indirectly by their peers. If the content of what they say on a social media platform goes against what the young adults in-group would classify as favourable then they may be ostracised from their in-group causing distress. Moreover, they need to be taught that if their peers or social group are engaging in acts that are disparaging and have ramifications then individuals may need to go against their social group identity, which they may find challenging. This should be considered as the new form of peer pressure.
- Reflection - young adults need to be taught about self-reflection and reflective practices both at school and home. To this end they need to continually be reflecting and questioning what they have written.
- Morals and values – Technology as established has changed the way that young people interact and connect with one another and also the world that they find themselves in. Technology has transformed the relationship that young adults have with each other but also that they have with their families and community. If young people's online behaviour is not understood then there will be a digital disconnect between young people's use of technology and the relationship they share with their families and community (Collin *et al.*, 2011). Thus it is essential that parents and community leaders do not create this digital disconnect and ensure that young adults get raised with a core set of morals and values that includes technological safety and support so that they are able to discern between right and wrong, good and bad and



know their moral boundaries. If a young adult is educated in morals and values they will be able to use this as a compass to guide them.

- **Opinion Leaders** - it is essential that those in society tasked with being community leaders i.e. celebrities, sports stars, religious leaders, teachers, politicians, etc. act as opinion leaders and help with the education of online reputation and identity formation and management as well as being a moral compass for young adults.

Conclusion

The intention with this article was to offer some insights into the possible consequences and risks associated with engaging in social media and forming part of socially networked communities have on identity and reputation of young adults. The article included suggestions for managing risk, reputation and identity on social networks. The article provided evidence of the far-reaching risks and consequences when young adults are required to manage their identity and reputation in a virtual space. Within the viral space, communication between and about individuals can build a social status that is elite in nature because it includes people into in groups and out groups just as offline social interaction does. However, being placed in an out group happens instantaneously in this very transparent space and is also can become viral and not contained in a small social group at school for example but a larger community. The risks and consequences are further exacerbated by the fact that this does not happen within confined social structures but rather in a borderless environment where the social identity categories referred to by Tajfel are no longer a class at school, a team, a family, etc. but a far broader online in-group. To this end, young adults construct their social and personal identity online; implying that these platforms and communities have a direct consequential effect on the youth's self-image and self-esteem. These consequences can be viewed in both a positive and negative way.

As explained previously by authors such as the University of Cape Town's Psychology Department (2012) and Rivenburgh (2000), the social identity theory focuses on individuals' desire for a positive self-esteem, implying that they will strive to maintain a positive self-esteem and a social identity within the social network in-groups. This happens through online social platforms such as but not limited to; online forums, Facebook groups, group chats on smart phones, Twitter etc. These online social platforms are the place where in-groups and out-groups are created. Through these groups, young adults have created expanded in-groups,



encompassing a virtual community. Within these groups they are willing to share their identities. It is critical that an awareness is created on how to socially adapt to these online social platforms and this article gave ways in which this identity and reputation protection can be achieved, namely through educating young adults to the risks, knowing about online ethics and legal awareness, being given social grounding in the morals, value and discipline that will be needed to protect identity and reputation, learning how to be a brand, take cognisance of peer review, self-reflection and the use of opinion leaders in this process of identity and reputation protection.

The online communities are the new social engagement platform. These communities are not going to be going anywhere and people are now more comfortable sharing information. This means that the tools for management of reputation and identity in a virtual social space become even more critical. *Facebook* founder Mark Zuckerberg (2010) highlights this by stating that “people have really gotten comfortable not only sharing more information and different kinds but more openly and with more people – and that social norm is just something that has evolved over time.” Within the social identity construct, the challenge remains the coordination and management of individual identities. Remember this – “Social media has the ability to make good things even better and bad things even worse. It has the power to supersize information and shares them to the world. It puts things in a microscope and stretches the specimen to the size that the microscope sees. And if your brand is under its supersizing mercy because of ‘something gone wrong’ – your reputation will be greatly affected.” (SEO hacker, 2012). Individuals are a brand selling themselves and their reputation every day; it is what shapes a social and personal identity and so must be managed in order for individuals to have a prosperous future.



References

- Boyd, D. (2008). Why Youth Love Social Network Sites: The Role of Networked Publics in Teenage Social Life . [Online]. Available at:
<http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/dmal.9780262524834.119>.
[Accessed 27 March 2011].
- Boyd, D. (2007). Why youth love social network sites: The role of networked publics in teenage social life. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning, 119–142.
- Boyd, D.M. and Ellison, N.B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of computer mediated communication – electronic edition*, 13(1), 210.
- Byron, T. (2008). Safer children in a digital world: The report of the Byron review, Dept. for Children, Schools and Families and the Dept. for Culture, Media and Sport.
- Collin, P. and Rahilly, K and Richardson, I and Third A. (2011). The benefits of social networking services. [Online] Available at: <http://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/The-Benefits-of-Social-Networking-Services.pdf> [Accessed 21 June 2012]
- Cranston, P. and Davies, T. (2009). Future Connect - A Review of Social Networking Today, Tomorrow and Beyond - An Analysis of the Challenges for AIDS Communicators, Communication for Social Change Consortium. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/publications/future-con...> [Accessed 27 March 2011].
- Davies, T. and Cranston, P. (2008). Youth Work and Social Networking, the National Youth Agency. [Online] Available at: <http://blog.practicalparticipation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2009/08....> [Accessed 27 March 2011].
- Davies, T., (2009). Youth work in a digital age. *Children & Young People Now*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.cypnow.co.uk/Archive/945230/Youth-work-digital-age/> [Accessed 27 March 2011].
- Fearon, JD. (1999). What is identity as we now use the word? [Online] Available at:
<http://www.stanford.edu/~jfearon/papers/iden1v2.pdf> [Accessed 12 April 2012].



- Hulsebosch, J. (2011). Social Media means nothing without social capital. [Online]. Available at: <http://joitskehulsebosch.blogspot.com/2009/08/social-media-mean-nothing-with-social.html>. [Accessed 27 March 2011].
- IOL. (2012). Another model, another racist tweet. [Online] Available at: <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/another-model-another-racist-tweet-1.1290326>. [Accessed 9 May 2012]
- Journalist Resource Centre. (2012). Patterns and Effects of social networking site use among young adults. [Online]. Available at: <http://journalistsresource.org/studies/society/education/social-networking-young-adults/>. [Accessed 9 May 2012].
- Macmillan Dictionary. (2012). Reputation. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/reputation>. [Accessed 12 April 2012].
- Madden, M and Smith, A. (2010). Reputation Management and Social Media. [Online]. Available at: <http://ictlogy.net/bibliography/reports/projects.php?idp=1650>. [Accessed 12 April 2012].
- Madden, M and Zickuhr, K. (2011). 65% of online adults use social networking sites. [Online]. Available at: <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2011/Social-Networking-Sites.aspx> [Accessed 9 May 2012]
- Manning, L. (2012). A nation of racists behind computers. [Online] Available at: <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/a-nation-of-racists-behind-computers-1.1290329> [Accessed 9 May 2012]
- Mc Leod, S. (2008). Social Identity Theory. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.simplypsychology.org/social-identity-theory.html> [Accessed 12 April 2012].
- OECD. (2010). Social Capital, Human Capital and health: What is the evidence? [Online]. Available at: https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:plwK-LHHi3EJ:www.oecd.org/dataoecd/40/24/45760738.pdf+%22social+capital+as+a+sociological+concept%22&hl=en&gl=za&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEEShkNqR7qyoKrhEeBdmDh5AfyRdi2ALZAgX-3RnPDx6gHJeucIVYHOYvNSgEohz2wjM7V6TO2RZ4eb5fUMpq3rkuVM1ejTKVDlXgxQjMxJS7lU1C4Ci8WzD_wJvTR9pKaHFqiKd8&sig=AHIEtbT6JzxAjuQAgMVjVy7lGWh_KJGNtw. [Accessed 12 April 2012].



- Pitout, M. and du Plooy, G.M. (2001). *Audience Research*. In Fourie, P., ed. 2001. *Media studies: Volume 11 content, audiences and production*. Lansdowne : Juta. p301-320.
- Rivenburgh, N.K. (2000). Social Identity Theory and News Portrayal of Citizens involved in international affairs. *Media Psychology*, 2, pp.303-329, New York: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates. [Online]. Available at:
<http://www.freewebs.com/fredrikd/Social%20Identity%20Theory.pdf> . [Accessed 12 April 2012].
- SEO Hacker. (2012). Social Media Reputation Management. [Online]. Available at:
<http://seo-hacker.com/online-reputation-management-guide-social-media/> [Accessed 9 May 2012]
- Social Marketing forum. (2011). Thoughts on social capital and currency. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.socialmarketingforum.net/2011/03/thoughts-on-social-capital-and-currency/>. [Accessed 27 March 2011].
- Solove, D.J. (2007). The future of reputation. [Online]. Available at:
<http://docs.law.gwu.edu/facweb/dsolove/Future-of-Reputation/text.htm>. [Accessed 27 March 2011].
- Stern, S. (2008). Producing Sites, Exploring Identities: Youth Online Authorship . [Online]. Available at:
<http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/dmal.9780262524834.095>. [Accessed 27 March 2011].
- Tajfel, H. (1970). Experiments in intergroup discrimination. [Online]. Available at:
<http://www.holah.karoo.net/tajfestudy.htm>. [Accessed 12 April 2012].
- Tajfel, H. (1982). Social psychology in intergroup relations. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 22, 1-39.
- Tajfel, H and Turner, J.C. [n.d]. Social Identity Theory and Intergroup behaviour. [Online]. Available at: <http://faculty.kent.edu/updegraffj/gradsocial/readings/tajfel.pdf> [Accessed 20 June 2012]
- Turner, J.C. [n.d.]. Some Current Issues in Research on Social Identity and Self-categorisation Theories. In Ellemenrs, N., Spears, R. & Doojse, B. (Eds.). *Social Identity: Context, Commitment, Content*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- University of Cape Town. (2012). Social Identity Theory. [Online]. Available at:
<http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/psychology/webie/courses/psy100fo/social/lec4.pdf> [Accessed 12 April 2012].



University of Twente. (2012). Social Identity Theory. [Online]. Available at:

http://www.utwente.nl/cw/theorieenoverzicht/Theory%20clusters/Interpersonal%20Communication%20and%20Relations/Social_Identity_Theory.doc/ . [Accessed 20 June 2012]

Valentine, G. and Holloway, S.L., (2002). Cyberkids? Exploring Children's Identities and Social Networks in On-Line and Off-Line Worlds . *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 92(2), 203-319. Available at:

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1515412> [Accessed November 1, 2009].

Wolak, J. et al., (2008). Online“Predators”and Their Victims: Myths, Realities, and Implications for Prevention and Treatment. *American Psychologist*, 63(2), 111.

Ybarra, M.L. et al., (2007). Internet prevention messages: targeting the right online behaviors. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, 161(2), 138.

Zuckerburg, M. (2010). 14 Mark Zuckerberg Quotes. [Online]. Available at:

<http://ryankett.hubpages.com/hub/Mark-Zuckerberg-Quotes>. [Accessed 13 April 2012].