Exploring the Therapeutic Role of Social Media for Young Adults Living with Suicidal Ideation: An overview of a developing PhD project

Research Questions
What is the role for social media (SM) use in suicidal young adults?
What are the health outcomes associated with social media use for young adults with suicidal ideation?
What therapeutic affordances (TA) may be attributable to these?
Are there any TAs specific to young adults with suicidal ideation?

Scoping Review
Highlights the limited range of research exploring the impact of SM use on suicidal ideation outcomes.

SM appear to be effective in reducing levels of suicidal ideation among their users.
Adverse findings involved research broadly defining suicide related internet use including SM.

Therapeutic affordances
Affordances refer to the action possibilities an actor perceives in their environment.
Therapeutic affordances are those perceived by the actor to be directly linked to health related outcomes.

Connection – ability to connect with peers or professionals.
Exploration – opportunity to explore and gather information for oneself or others, irrespective if it were motivated by help-seeking or pro-suicide intentions.
Narration – ability to tell one’s story.
Collaboration – possibility of SM Users to collaborate with others.
Introspection – to engage in an internally reflective process to observe one’s own thoughts and feelings closely.

Affiliations
1Social Work Department, Melbourne School of Health Sciences, University of Melbourne;
2Department of Health and Medical Sciences, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne;
3Health and Biomedical Informatics Centre, University of Melbourne

References

Correspondence: Paul Dodemaide
Email: pdodemaide@student.unimelb.edu.au
Twitter: @PRDod