

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

“A Pilot Study Exploring How Social Media Users Reconcile Risks with Continued Platform Use”

1. Invitation

You are being invited to take part in a research project conducted as part of a taught doctoral module at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD). Please read the following information carefully before deciding whether to participate.

2. Ethical Approval

This project has been ethically approved by the Programme Director and is conducted under the ethical framework of UWTSD.

3. What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this study is to explore how individuals understand and manage the tension between their awareness of potential risks associated with social media use—particularly in relation to privacy and mental well-being—and their continued use of these platforms. This research aims to better understand how people interpret and rationalise their everyday social media behaviours.

4. Why have I been chosen?

You have been invited because you are an adult (18 years or older) who actively uses social media. Approximately 6 participants will be recruited for this study. Participants are selected based on their regular engagement with social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, or X.

5. Do I have to take part?

Participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. If you have any existing relationship with UWTSD or the research team, your decision will not affect that relationship in any way.

6. What will taking part involve?

You will be asked to take part in a semi-structured interview, which is expected to last approximately 30-40 minutes. The interview will explore topics related to social media use, privacy concerns, risk awareness, and how users manage or justify continued engagement.

7. Will the interview be recorded?

Yes. The interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis purposes only. No one outside the research project will have access to the original recordings, and recordings will be securely deleted after transcription.

8. What if I change my mind?

You may withdraw from the study up to 14 days after the interview without providing a reason.

Once your data has been fully anonymised, it may no longer be possible to remove your individual contribution, as it can no longer be identified.

9. Are there any risks or benefits?

Some questions may prompt mild reflection or slight discomfort when discussing your experiences of social media use. However, you are free to skip any question or stop the interview at any time without giving a reason. Whilst there may be no direct personal benefit, your participation will contribute to a better understanding of how individuals make decisions about social media use despite awareness of potential risks.

10. How will my information be managed?

UWTSD is the Data Controller for this study. All data will be managed in accordance with current UK data protection legislation and UWTSD's ethical requirements.

- Your responses will be anonymised so that you cannot be identified in any research outputs.
- Data will be stored securely on a UWTSD password-protected network.
- Only the researcher and their supervisor will have access to identifiable data.
- Anonymised data will be retained securely for research integrity and audit purposes only.

11. Contact Information

For questions about this research, please contact:

Researcher Contact Details

Researcher Name: Marvin Malthus Gomes
Mobile: +447951586163
E-Mail: 2507129@student.uwtsd.ac.uk

Supervisor Contact Details

Researcher Name: Dr. Caroline Jawad, PhD, MBA, MA, BA (Hons), PGCE, Senior Fellow of the HEA, DBA Programme Manage,
Institution: University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Mobile: +447917704722
E-Mail: caroline.jawad@uwtsd.ac.uk

For complaints or concerns about data protection, please contact:

Mr Paul Osborne, Data Protection Officer
University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Swansea Business Campus, High Street, Swansea, SA1 1NE
Email: foi@uwtsd.ac.uk

Thank you for considering taking part in this research.