

Research Article

Nigerian Youths' Perception of Privacy and their Self Disclosure on Social Media

Oluwakemi E. Akerele-Popoola¹, Adesina Lukuman Azeez², Abiodun Adeniyi³

1. Department of Mass Communication, Landmark University, Nigeria; 2. Department of Mass Communication, University of Ilorin, Nigeria; 3. Baze University, Abuja, Nigeria

We investigated Nigerian youths' perception of privacy and its influence on the nature and extent of their self-disclosure on social media. Drawing on Social Penetration and Privacy Calculus theory, quantitative and qualitative content analysis of respondents' Facebook posts was conducted for two weeks, while a survey was used to investigate privacy concerns and perceptions among 389 undergraduate students from two tertiary institutions in Kwara State. Findings revealed the manifestation of the privacy paradox among Nigerian youths and that, although the Nigerian youths had a negative perception of privacy, they engaged in habitual self-disclosure, using the relational self-disclosure mechanism.

Introduction

The privacy paradox reflects the disconnection between people's concern for privacy and their actual online behaviours when using social media platforms (Stutzman, Vitak, Ellison, Gray, & Lampe, 2012). Research generally has indicated a rapid increase in the extent of youths' self-disclosure on social media, particularly Facebook (Christofides, Muise, & Desmaris 2010). Boyd (2011) asserted that before social media, it was easier not to share one's personal information, but with the universal acceptability and gross use of social media sites, disclosing sensitive personal information has become a voluntary and involuntary communication (Taddicken, 2012; Yu, 2016).

Accordingly, Christofides et al. (2010, p.48) noted that "the increased role of the online world in our social environment implies that it is no longer possible to advise people to simply keep their information private and avoid sharing any information online as a way to reduce the potential

violation of privacy". This explains that social media users disclose information on significant aspects of their lives in a way that infringes on their private life.

Scholars have investigated the manifestation of the privacy paradox and youths' actual online behaviours, presenting differing views on factors responsible for this behavior. Findings show that individuals' perception and value of their private information vary based on their personalities, and this partly explains the different levels of self-disclosure. Besides, some situational factors such as who dominates their social networks and conditions that demand the disclosure of their personal information (Acquisti, John & Loweinstein, 2013) also account for the privacy paradox.

In relation to the uses and gratifications approach, research also reveals that youths' motivation to use and self-disclose on social media platforms is influenced by the benefits of social capital accrued to posting online and getting social gratifications (Taddicken & Jers, 2011; Ellison, Vitak, Steinfeild, Gray & Lampe, 2011; Stutzman, Vitak et al. 2012; Liu & Brown, 2014). With no regard for their privacy concerns, Nosko, Wood, and Molema (2010) in Greene, Derlega, and Mathew (2006) confirmed that people seeking serious relationships deliberately self-disclose core parts of their selves on social media platforms using various self-disclosing strategies. Besides, lack of awareness of the consequences of revealing personal information is also discovered as the cause of youths' paradoxical online privacy behaviors (Boyd & Hargittai, 2010), while Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn & Hughes (2009) submitted that social media illiteracy or lack of knowledge about self-protection possibilities like privacy settings influences youths' online self-disclosure.

On the other hand, Liu and Brown (2014) noted that youth's self-disclosure on social media for social communication benefits is enhanced by their social skills. Even with knowledge and awareness of the use of privacy settings on social media, youths strategically self-disclose online through social interactions and sharing inner information about themselves on their homepages. In this regard, Stutzman, Vitak, Gray, and Lampe (2011) postulated that self-disclosure is the core factor accrued to social communication for online users; users will therefore continue to self-disclose.

The above review shows that there is a variation in what researchers have found to be the difference between users' awareness of privacy, concerns for privacy online, and their actual behaviors, pointing towards the need to further investigate youths' privacy paradoxical acts.

Indeed, many of the studies on factors responsible for the privacy paradox are limited in scope and inexhaustible as to why people willingly self-disclose on social media despite their concerns for

privacy. Also, many of the studies were more focused on consumers' privacy and self-protection on an e-commerce basis, with little on information and psychological information privacy.

Therefore, this study investigated Nigerian youths' privacy concerns and perception of privacy, as well as whether there is a disconnection between their concern for privacy and self-disclosure activities on social media platforms. It also examined the depth and breadth of their self-disclosure online.

To this end, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is Nigeria youths' perception of privacy?
2. What is Nigeria youths' concern for online privacy?
3. What is the breadth and depth of Nigeria youths' self-disclosure on social media?
4. Is there a disconnection between Nigerian youths' concern for privacy and actual self-disclosure online?

Literature

Since privacy connotes control of access or inaccessibility and information management through individual decision not to reveal information about the self, self-disclosure, therefore, assumes a significant characteristic of privacy, especially disclosure on social media platforms. Trepte and Reinecke (2011) submitted that self-disclosure is a correlate of privacy and a form of cognitive and emotional outputs directly linked to psychological privacy.

Findings have shown that self-disclosure on social media and the social web generally is relatively higher when compared to face-to-face social interactions among relational partners, given various independent and situational factors, part of which is the feelings of anonymity or intimacy. Ma, Hancock, and Naaman (2016), in a study, found the correlation between anonymity or intimacy and self-disclosure in social media after surveying the opinions of 269 adults in the United States. Their report showed that anonymity increases users' willingness to self-disclose more on social media as users equate the perceived benefits and risks of self-disclosure.

Joinson (2017) also associated computer-mediated communication and online self-disclosure with a higher level of spontaneous self-disclosure than face-to-face communication through visual anonymity. Likewise, Tidwell and Walther (2018) posited that relational partners engage in more intimate questions and self-disclosure online than in face-to-face interactions.

These findings suggest that an individual's online user enjoys some sense of privacy while using internet technologies to communicate directly in rooms or personal space and also feels protected during online interactions (Trepte & Reinecke, 2011). The findings also imply that users think more of the benefits and need for their intended actions than the risks, thus engaging in a higher level of disclosure.

Evidently, self-disclosure is, therefore, a significant social media act of online users and youths' privacy paradoxical behaviors. Active engagement and participation on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are achieved through the regular revelation of information about the self and the socio-economic environments of online users. Thus, self-disclosure has often been treated as a significant characteristic of online privacy concerns.

Accordingly, self-disclosure is simply the process of revealing information about oneself to another person. It is a systematic process and an act of talking about one's feelings, opinions, values, experiences, and attitudes to the partner (Altman & Taylor, 1975; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2014), and it is a manifest variable inherently invented on many social media platforms by the founders.

Self-disclosure is a dynamic characteristic of the long-lasting relationship process and has a dialectical nature of openness/closeness in relationships (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Sprecher et al., 2014).

Since it is widely accepted among youths, social media platforms have become social public spaces where youths reveal a large amount of information about the self. They self-disclose in various dimensions despite their concern for privacy.

Young people get motivated for several reasons to disclose information about themselves based on benefits ranging from building intimacy with their online networks, building identity, or satisfying their self-expressive needs and still want to control the amount of information they reveal on social media (Livingstone, 2018). This reveals the paradoxical attitudes of youths, indicating their level of concern for privacy.

Likewise, it reflects again the disparities in youths' perception of privacy. Literature presents that there are cross-cultural values attached to the worth of privacy, and this thus influences how people behave, manage information about the self, self-disclose during online and offline communications, as well as the extent of their disclosure and concerns for privacy and security. This also influences the level of knowledge about the consequences of self-disclosure in communication.

Consequently, Kumaraguru et al. (2014), in their study on Indians' and Americans' perception of privacy, came up with a different understanding of how subjects from the two countries perceive privacy. The investigation shows that Americans perceive privacy in terms of information privacy, which reflects control of access to one's personal information, while Indians, on the other hand, perceive it in relation to property, personal space, or territory. The variations in the meaning of privacy reflect each country's values and ways of life. America is a country that values individualism, while Indians believe in collectivity or communism. Hence, the former has more concerns for privacy and worries over the protection of their information such as social security numbers, contact addresses, and personal history than the latter (Kumaraguru et al., 2014) in (Hargittai & Marwick, 2016).

Also, Americans are reported to have concerns about online privacy with the rapid growth of technological devices and social media. So, they have more knowledge of the consequences of online self-disclosure and are aware of identity theft and related self-protecting measures than the Indian subjects.

Furthermore, the research revealed that individuals with high concerns for privacy also worry about being monitored by other people through their browsing habits or their use of social media platforms. This points towards another related concept of privacy, which is surveillance.

Findings from the investigation indicated further that privacy norms, worth, and concerns differ across cultures and social environments. Also worthy of note, Acquisti, Brandimarte, and Lowenstein (2015) submitted that individuals' privacy attitude and perception are also context-dependent.

Privacy, being context-dependent, means that "individuals can, depending on the situation, exhibit anything ranging from extreme concern to apathy about privacy. Adopting Westin's terminologies, we are all privacy pragmatists, privacy fundamentalists, or privacy unconcerned, depending on time and place" (Acquisti et al., 2015, p.510).

This also suggests that individuals adopt different privacy management and information control strategies depending on certain situations or occurrences. For instance, an individual may be aware of the privacy settings on Facebook but may not use them due to a feeling of it being unnecessary. Then, the individual suddenly decides to use the privacy setting to control his or her information access to block a particular person from accessing his or her profile due to a situation or the need to feel not being monitored.

Similarly, investigations have shown that individuals' privacy concern is context-dependent and can be affected by perceived beneficial cues (Spiekermann, Grossklags & Berendt, 2001; AcquistiJohn & Loewenstein, 2013). Specifically, Spiekermann et al. (2001, p. 8) submitted that "people appreciate highly communicative EC [E-commerce] environments and forget private concerns once they are 'inside the web'."

Acquisti, et al. (2013), also examined the value people (shoppers/consumers) attached to the privacy of their personal information through experimental research and concluded that the question of the worth of privacy and the importance individuals attach to the privacy of their personal information depend on whom (the person's personality) and how you ask (the context). They added that "individuals make frequent privacy-relevant decisions" (p.226) inconsistently.

Besides, it is believed that individuals' perception of privacy and self-disclosure on social media is influenced not only by culture and the social environment, but also by the behaviours of other people, either through imitation or reciprocity (Acquisti et al. 2015). That is, people tend to reveal information about themselves on social media when others or their social partners do the same.

Similarly, individuals' concern for privacy is influenced by other people's privacy behaviours, self-disclosing acts, and individual past experiences. As such, people determine whom they share and reveal information with because sharing with another makes the person a "co-owner" of the information and makes them concerned about the security and protection of that information (Acquisti et al., 2015).

Thus, online users carefully select whom they disclose and share information with in an online environment. Generally, individuals' online privacy concerns center on the type of information a particular social media site requires from them, how much control they have over the required information, and users' awareness of privacy practices (Mekovec&Vrcerk, 2011).

Nevertheless, people still have concerns over who can view and access their information, like personal history, the posts they share online, as well as who can interact or engage them in unsolicited social interactions online.

From social penetration theory, self-disclosure is a gradual process of revealing information about oneself to another person, and the nature and extent of this phenomenon are influenced by reciprocity, costs, and rewards. This suggests that self-disclosure is accompanied by risks.

As a result, self-disclosure is a systematic and deliberate process. Thus, it involves what Altman and Taylor referred to as dialectics in self-disclosure, which means the engagement “whereby relational partners struggle to balance oppositional needs such as being both open and close in contact with one another in order to regulate privacy” (Greene, Derlega & Mathews, 2006, p.410).

Though Altman and Taylor conceptualized self-disclosure in terms of interpersonal relationships and before the popularity of Facebook and other internet sites, its postulations are applicable to social media interactions and social relationships due to the nature and level of online users’ disclosure on social media. McCarthy (2009) also submitted that the assumptions of the theory on self-disclosure and relationships could be applied to online self-disclosure and social interactions among users.

Furthermore, social penetration explains the ideology behind the act of self-disclosing personal and private information about oneself to the other person, either through one-on-one communication or one-to-many interactions on social media.

Therefore, the theory relates to this study because it explains humans’ personalities with the “onion analogy” and how it influences our self-disclosure behaviours in social interactions. Meanwhile, self-disclosure is an inter-related concept with privacy, which together formulates the purpose of this research. Also, the theory espouses that individuals’ decision to self-disclose is influenced by the cost and rewards analysis. Individuals penetrate and are penetrated easily based on rewards and costs required in relationships. Thus, individuals weigh the cost required in a relationship with the expected benefits before self-disclosing. To this end, people tend to disclose based on the expectation of rewards, which must supersede the cost.

Altman and Taylor also noted that self-disclosure can be in depth and breadth. Allensworth (1996) noted that breadth is the array of topical issues that an individual self-discloses about himself to another person. Each of the topical issues is referred to as a category. Depth, on the other hand, refers to the degree of intimacy that guides the topic of discussion; i.e., how open individuals can be when disclosing information about themselves on social media, regardless of their anxiety over self-disclosure. In other words, depth means the amount of information individuals reveal to the other person on each topical issue (category) they disclose to others (Allensworth, 1996). The breadth and depth of self-disclosure signify the extent of intimacy and the level of relationship through reciprocal openness or closeness between relational partners (Sprecher & Hendrick, 2014).

In relation to the cost-reward analysis, privacy calculus theory conceptualized this concept as a risk-benefit mental analysis that individuals engage in before making the decision of whether or not to

share their private information with other people. In a more similar manner, privacy calculus theory explained the concepts of privacy behaviours and self-disclosure on social media, describing individuals as “rational decision makers.” The theory explains self-disclosure further from social penetration theory, noting that individuals’ decision to self-disclose goes beyond reciprocity; rather, it depends more on perceived benefits and costs.

This aspect of disclosure in online social interaction has not only reflected individuals’ online relationships with significant other users; rather, it also stipulates the types of information individuals share, the nature of their disclosure, and the extent to which he or she discloses on social media. Notably, this also suggests the motives behind individuals’ privacy and information control management on social media.

In this sense, the use of social media platforms fosters privacy concerns which revolve around the distribution and sharing of personal information and content about the self in online public spaces. This concern is amplified by the general negative consequences of disclosure such as identity theft, surveillance, and the manner in which commercial organizations extract individuals’ personal information for economic and commercial gains (Haynes, McDonald, Nicolescu, Sinanan, Spyer, Venkatraman & Wang, 2016).

Nevertheless, studies have shown that despite the concern for privacy, online users exhibit pragmatic and contradictory privacy behaviours when using the internet (Pew Internet Research, 2013). They engage in different forms of disclosure on social media through profile information, during social interactions with others, and through public displays of content and pictures in public or semi-public online spaces (Elison, Vitak, Steinfield, Gray & Lampe, 2011). This act is what scholars refer to as the “privacy paradox” (Barnes, 2006; Stenger & Coutant, 2010; Stutsman & Difffield, 2010; Zarfeirpoulou, 2014).

The privacy paradox is a recent phenomenon that posits that people behave in contradiction to their privacy concerns. It shows that individuals still engage in self-disclosure of personal information regardless of their privacy concerns. Research also revealed that the collapsed context nature of social media has no significant effect on or correlation with the extent of users’ disclosure and privacy behaviors on social media.

Marwick and Boyd (2011) in their research of *I tweet honestly, I tweet passionately: Twitter users, context collapse, and the imagined audience* found that social media users (tweeters) engage in a higher level of disclosure with no concern about the large size of their online community and the people who view

their information or posts online. They investigated how Tweeters manage their audience online, including the strategies of disclosure, using the participant observation method. With this method, the researchers interacted with and observed the online activities of 181 Tweeter users. The study also revealed that many Tweeters use the medium to interact with friends, relatives, co-workers, and neighbours, whom they generally refer to as “fans” or their online community members. Based on their desires to have “fans” and manage a “personal brand” in order to be micro-celebrities, users use the media to engage their audience, communicate directly with them, and create popularity through several forms of self-presentation, with no concern for the “who” may view their message (the non-target audience) or what the message may be used for.

Thus, the study revealed that users disregard the negative consequences and perceived risks of self-disclosure on social media, since they have specific purposes for which they use the media. Also, the study revealed the collapsed context of social media, whereby users communicate with a large diverse group of people in the same way and send the same message to both the intended and unintended audience.

Individual privacy concern means that a person’s ability to control the disclosure of personal information and who has access to what information about his or her self is a result of his or her pre-existing attitudes and worries over information privacy (Blank, Bolsover & Dubious, 2014).

The privacy paradox has been conceptualized several times in contemporary research on digital technologies and social media, which navigate the disclosure of personal information to a networked audience (Spiekermann, Grossklags & Berendt, 2001; Mekovec & Vrceck, 2016; Acquisti et al., 2013). Prior to this, privacy scholars identified the discordance between individuals’ self-reported privacy attitudes and their actual privacy behaviors. In this regard, Alan Westin measured Americans’ privacy attitudes and behaviors by conducting over 30 surveys between 1978 and 2004 and found that 57% were “privacy Pragmatists,” weighing the risks and benefits of self-disclosure, 25% were “Privacy Fundamentalists,” i.e., highly concerned about privacy and willing to adopt self-protective behaviours, while 18% were “Unconcerned” and were elated to share personal information in exchange for minor benefits like discounts or gifts (Kumaraguru et al., 2005) in (Hargittai & Marwick, 2016).

However, the privacy paradox became more significant in the early 2000s, given the invention and popular use of social media sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc. (Boyd, 2011).

Blank, Bolsover, and Dubious (2014) argue over the meaning and manifestation of the privacy paradox today, noting that there is a new privacy paradox. They noted that Barnes's (2006) original outline of the privacy paradox posits that adults have privacy concerns, not youths. Meanwhile, empirical studies (Taddicken, 2013) have proved that the privacy paradox also exists among youths generally. This study focused on the youths' aspect of the privacy paradox and their actual behaviours on social media.

Based on all this literature, we sought to test the following hypotheses:

- **H₁:** There is no significant relationship between Nigerian youths' perception of privacy and their self-disclosure on social media platforms.
- **H₂:** There is no significant correlation between youths' level of concern for privacy and the extent of their self-disclosure on social media.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive design that was built on both a qualitative and a quantitative approach. The study adopted a mixed approach. A survey as a quantitative strategy and content analysis as a qualitative strategy were therefore the main research methods adopted to carry out this study.

The population of this study was limited to undergraduate students from a Federal and state University in Ilorin, Kwara State. Youths in these universities represented Nigerian youths, and the total population size was 42,264. To systematically select a sample size from the larger population that was involved in this study, the researchers used Krejcie and Morgan's published table to accurately determine the sample size for the study. As drawn from the table, the estimated sample size for this study was 382 respondents. The primary sampling technique the researchers employed to draw the specific respondents for the study was the multistage stratified sampling of the probability sampling technique.

Out of the total sample size selected, the researchers purposefully selected 10 respondents for content analysis through the use of a consent form. Respondents were asked to fill out a consent form which indicated their interest or willingness to participate in the research. The essence of this was to conveniently select respondents who not only used social media but were willing to share honest and accurate information about their online activities and online privacy behaviors on social media.

The selection of the 10 participants was done purposefully after screening respondents' responses to the survey as well as identifying their willingness to participate in the research as specified in the consent form. The content analysis necessitated the essence of the consent forms because it helped the researcher seek the permission of the respondents to enable the researchers to assess their Facebook pages for a period of 2 weeks. This permission was ascertained since respondents willingly provided information about their Facebook accounts. The data collection instruments included a questionnaire and a coding sheet.

Findings

Nigerian youths 'perception of privacy Level of Agreement	SA	A	U	SD	D	M	SD
Privacy on SM can be controlled	15.7	24.7	18.3	18.8	22.6	2.95	1.36
Privacy on SM is open, so whatever online is not hidden.	25.2	21.3	14.9	16.2	22.4	3.1	1.43
Privacy on SM is susceptible to danger	13.6	28.5	25.4	14.1	18.6	3.09	1.25
Privacy on SM is closed so whatever you disclose online is hidden.	13.6	18.3	19.5	23.1	25.4	2.78	1.41

Table 1. Nigerian Youths' Perception of Privacy

Note: 3 is the cut-off point between levels of agreement in this table

The results, as seen in table 1 above, depicted that respondents were ambivalent (i.e., respondents neither agreed nor disagreed) that privacy on social media can be controlled ($M=2.95$, $SD= 1.36$) and that privacy on social media is closed ($M=2.78$, $SD = 1.25$). Consequently, respondents agreed that privacy on social media is open ($M= 3.1$, $SD= 1.43$) and that information shared on the platform is not hidden, thus concluding that privacy on social media is susceptible to danger.

Nigerian youths' concern for privacy Level of Agreement	SA	A	U	SD	D	M	SD
I am concerned about who has access to my information on SM	30.6	26.5	16.2	12.6	14.1	3.48	1.38
I am concerned about the type of information people get about me on SM	22.1	23.7	17.5	18.8	18.0	3.12	1.42
I am concerned about how people use the information they get about me on SM	18.3	16.7	20.8	23.9	20.3	2.85	1.42
I am concerned about being monitored by an unknown person or entity	16.2	19.5	20.3	19.8	24.2	2.88	1.36
I am concerned about unknown data storage storing my information without my consent	17.7	16.2	24.2	22.9	20.1	2.84	1.39
I am concerned about the damage my shared may cause to my personality	19.5	14.7	21.1	21.6	23.1	2.87	1.41
I am concerned about how much people know about me through my SM account	23.7	17.7	18.8	22.1	17.7	3.03	1.47

Table 2. Nigerian Youths' Concern for Privacy

Note: 3 is the cut-off point between the levels of agreement in this table

Examining the dimensions of youths' actual concern for privacy on social media as seen in table 2 above, respondents significantly agreed that they were concerned about who accessed their information ($M=3.48$, $SD=1.38$). They also agreed that they were more concerned about the type of information people get about them through their accounts ($M=3.2$, $SD=1.42$) and how much people know about them through their social media accounts ($M=3.03$, $SD=1.47$).

On the other hand, findings also depicted that respondents slightly disagreed that they have any worries about how people process their information ($M= 2.85$, $SD=1.42$), about being monitored through their account by an unknown entity or person ($M=2.88$, $SD= 1.36$), and also about the damage their posts might have caused to their personality ($M=2.87$, $SD = 1.41$). This explains why one of the respondents shared her mother's mobile number on the platform with less regard for "who" viewed

it, what the information may be used for, and what negative consequences she might face due to this unconcerned privacy behaviour. However, this category of people was in the minority; a majority of the respondents had some concerns about their privacy on social media.

In addition, respondents disagreed with the proposition that they were not concerned about unknown data storage saving their information without consent ($M=2.8$, $SD=1.41$). This analysis again corroborates the findings of the content analysis, where it is revealed that respondents shared an increased amount of private information about themselves with less regard for who views the posts and how such information is being processed.

In summary, the results of the content analysis revealed that many of the respondents had large social networks and belonged to countless Facebook groups; for example, some of the participants had 4,777, 2,205, and 2,620 friends on their lists. This included people they knew by face and those they had never seen. Respondents with the smallest social circles had 1,310, excluding those who “follow” their online activities.

In addition, the content analysis revealed that respondents who reported being privacy unconcerned and pragmatic had the largest network sizes by 42%, while the fundamentalists had 16%. This explains that individuals who are privacy aware are conscious of their privacy behaviours (online activities) while using the platform.

Besides, almost all the respondents for the content analysis (90%) had friends online, 60% had people who “follow” them, and whom they follow online. Also, the remaining 10% of the respondents used privacy settings, thus restricting the researcher from examining the size of their network base.

Additionally, the content analysis revealed that the privacy pragmatics and privacy unconcerned have more online friends than the fundamentalists.

Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Privacy pragmatic	189	48.5
Privacy fundamentalist	134	34.5
Privacy unconcerned	66	17.0
Total	389	100.0

Table 3. Description of Respondent's concern for Privacy

Source: Researcher's field work (2020)

As shown in Table 3, many of the respondents, 48.5% (n=189), described themselves as privacy pragmatic. This means that respondents were less concerned about privacy on social media based on their pressing needs and benefits gratifications. On the other hand, 34.5% (n=134) of the respondents described themselves as privacy fundamentalists; i.e., they had strong feelings for privacy, while the remaining 17% (n=66) noted that they were unconcerned about privacy.

Category	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Consistency in disclosure		
Always	95	24.4
Everyday	131	33.7
Once in a while	90	23.1
Not at all	73	18.8
Total	389	100.0
Message Formats		
Images	75	19.3
Self-expressed text	103	27.0
Videos	2	0.5
General quotes	29	8.0
Texts & Image	83	21.4
Text & video	15	4.0
Nil	73	18.8
Total	389	100.0
Type of Private Information		
Information about others	96	24.8
Information on National issues	100	25.7
Information on general issues	112	29.0
Information about self	81	20.5
Total	389	100
Depth of Private Information		
Self-expressed posts	105	27.0
Self-images	16	4.1
Self-recorded videos	-	-

Category	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Basic information	195	50.1
None	73	18.8
Total	389	100.0

Table 4. Breadth and Depth of Self-Disclosure on social media

Source: Researcher's field work (2020)

Findings in table 4 revealed that respondents often share information on social media, as 33.7% (n=131) submitted that they shared posts every day, 24.4% (n=95) said they shared always, 23.1% seldom posted, while 18.8% noted that they did not share anything on their platform. This report slightly contradicts the results of the content analysis because the analysis revealed that 80% of the respondents posted on their timeline every day. Also, the analysis revealed that respondents shared posts about their relationships with significant others like parents, siblings, relatives, friends, colleagues at work, and romantic partners. They also shared about their life aspirations, thoughts, achievements, and opinions on general life issues.

Probing further on the message format respondents shared most, the analysis depicted that those respondents shared more self-expressed text (27%, n=103), 19.3% (n=75) reported that they did more with images, 0.5% (n=2) shared video, 8% (n=29) opined that they shared general information, 21.4% (n=83) shared messages using texts and images, 4% (n=15) used texts and video, while the remaining 18.8% (n=73) said they did not share at all.

Similarly, the result of the content analysis presents inherent meanings and details of respondents' shared posts through the use of images, texts, and symbols. The analysis depicts that 70% of shared posts contained images or pictures that speak more about the poster, 60% of the posts were written texts, expressive texts that are significant to the poster, 20% of the posts are videos, while 50% of shared posts contained symbols or signs that intensified the message being communicated by the poster.

Furthermore, 24.8% (n=96) of respondents shared information about others, 25.7% (n=100) claimed they shared posts on national issues, 29% (n=112) claimed they shared general or random posts, while only 20.5% (n=81) said they shared private information about themselves on social media. In relation to this, the result of the content analysis revealed a significant increase in the amount of private information (90%) respondents shared online as against public information (60%).

Besides the increased disclosure about self, the content analysis also espoused that many of the respondents (90%) had and maintained a public profile that revealed their real and complete name, relationship status, current location, education history, religion, and political views, as well as giving a description of their personality. Notably, only 20% of the respondents revealed their mobile contacts, while none of the respondents shared their email addresses.

Respondents were asked to specify their level of privacy concern in the survey, and this was compared with the extent of their disclosure in the content analysis. Generally, in the survey, 48.5% established they were privacy pragmatic, 34.5% were fundamentalists, while 17% were privacy unconcerned.

For the content analysis, out of the 10 respondents who participated in the analysis, 4 affirmed in their responses to the survey that they were privacy pragmatic, 4 agreed they were privacy unconcerned, while the other 2 respondents were privacy fundamentalists. From the foregoing, it was evident that Nigerian youths generally expressed their concern about privacy, having perceived that self-disclosure on social media can be open and susceptible to danger.

Surprisingly, results of the content analysis revealed that, though the privacy unconcerned and pragmatic engaged more in the revelation of information about the self, Nigerian youths generally shared an increased amount of information on social media based on individual needs, motivations, and self-gratifications, as found in the analysis of their social media profiles.

Examining the extent of youths' disclosure online, the analysis revealed that 80% of the participants had and maintained a public profile, which constitutes basic information like their names, phone number, email address, location, and education history. Also, respondents shared information like life events, daily activities, life experiences, and encounters. The extent of this information provides an easy understanding of respondents' personalities and residual histories. Also, some of the respondents went as far as giving a detailed description of themselves, while supporting this with an archive of the photo gallery of self and other relational partners. Significantly, respondents seldom discussed directly their sensitive and controversial topics like their sexual orientations, political views, and deep personal problems and misdeeds on social media. Topics like this were expressed

using random quotes and opinions. Preferably, respondents revealed more of their success stories and achievements, of which authenticity cannot be verified by the audience.

Still on the extents of youths' disclosure, the analysis showed that respondents frequently shared posts about themselves and their relational partners on occasions or events like birthdays, weddings, wedding anniversaries, graduations, including other events that are remarkable and significant to individuals.

The post below shows how social media users indirectly reveal explorative and affective information about the self online. This is one of the participants' posts on her friend's birthday on May 18:

Happy birthday to my wonderful mates...you've been wonderful to me...Always there when you're needed, right from the 100L days till now. When I was lamenting that it doesn't interest me.

Though the intent of the poster was to celebrate her friend on the special occasion of her birthday, one can easily deduce some information about the poster. First, the poster studied a course that is not her choice and that she has no passion for. Secondly, she faced difficulties studying in school due to a lack of interest in the course being studied. Inferentially, since Law is not one of the courses students get admitted to study easily in Nigeria without influence or choosing it as a first choice, it can also be assumed that the lady must have been forced to study the course either by her parents, guardian, or sponsor.

Confirming this assumption, three days later, the same poster shared an expressive post on her wall to celebrate her dad's birthday.

Happy birthday to my first love, the best dad ever!... You've been a great dad to [me] and my siblings, always putting our well-being and education/career first. I am who I am today with God and you [because] you insisted I study law or nothing else...

Beyond the intention of the respondent, this post revealed more about the respondent and her first post, showing that the respondent has an authoritarian father who decides on behalf of his children. On the other hand, it also explains that the poster has no independent mind and the free will to do things or decide for herself without the approval of the father.

Another participant with the intention of celebrating her friend on the occasion of her birthday also shared this;

May 22 is all about Moi queen...Moi childhood friend. Moi powerful prefect of all Glory Kings College...set 2011/2012...in andy to u baby...senior girl [referring to the poster] luv u so much. Beauty and brains run in us...Much luv, darling...

In the same vein, another participant, in the course of celebrating her mum's birthday, went as far as sharing the contact digits publicly for people to celebrate with.

Happy birthday to the most caring and lovely woman, please, pals, wish her well for me; this is her number [08055XXXXXX].

Apparently, it is evident that social media users, whether directly or indirectly, shared expressive and sensitive information about their private selves on social media. This revealed that self-disclosure activity is a deliberate revelation of information about the self that is done for a purpose or benefits.

Importantly, this analysis therefore revealed that perceived benefits or expected benefits mediate the relationship between individuals' concern for, and perception of privacy, and their self-disclosure activities on social media. Confirming the extent of the mediation should be the focus of another study.

Analysis of Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis I

- **H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between Nigerian youths' perception of privacy and their self-disclosure on social media platforms.

		Specify your perception of privacy on SM	To what extent do you share your private information on SM
Specify your perception of privacy on SM	Pearson Correlation	1	0.002
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.338
	N	389	389
To what extent do you share your private information on SM	Pearson Correlation	0.002	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.338	
	N	389	389

Table 5. No Correlation between Nigerian Youths' Perception and their Self-Disclosure on Social media

Source: Researcher's field work (2020)

The result in the table above shows that the association between Nigerian youths' perception of privacy and the level of disclosure on social media is a weak correlation (0.02). Also, the intensity of the relationship is low and weak at 0.02. In other words, the fact that an individual perceives privacy on social media to be open and susceptible to danger does not necessarily mean that it will reflect in the level and nature of their disclosure on social media.

From the analysis, it is evident that the calculated value of 0.338 is higher than the alpha value for correlation analysis, which is 0.05. Hence, we rejected the alternative hypothesis and accepted the null hypothesis that there is no statistical association between youths' perception and the extent of their disclosure on social media.

From another perspective, the analysis posited that Nigerian youths' perception of privacy is not a significant or core determinant of how much they self-disclose on social media. That is, there are other factors that motivate youths to self-disclose online.

Hypothesis II

- **H₀₂**: There is no significant correlation between youths' level of concern for privacy and the extent of their self-disclosure on social media.

		Specify the nature of your concern for privacy	To what extent do you share your private information on SM
Specify the nature of your concern for privacy	Pearson Correlation	1	0.436
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.521
	N	389	389
To what extent do you share your private information on SM	Pearson Correlation	0.436	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.521	
	N	389	389

Table 6. No Correlation between Youths 'level of concern for privacy and their Self-Disclosure on Social media

Source: Researcher's field work (2020)

The analysis showed that the relationship between Nigerian youths' concern for privacy and their extent of disclosure on social media is low and weak. Therefore, as much as individuals have a concern for privacy, it has no reduction effect on the extent of their self-disclosure activities on social media.

The analysis indicated that 0.531 is higher than 0.0, which is the alpha value for the correlation test. Therefore, we rejected the alternative hypothesis and accepted the null hypothesis that there is no correlation between an individual's level of privacy concern and the extent of their self-disclosure on social media.

This finding correlates with the result above, showing that individuals' perception of privacy is not a core determinant of their online disclosure. Also, it re-emphasizes the earlier submission that 81% of the respondents reported that they shared private information on social media. This conforms to Yu's (2016) findings on the privacy paradox.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study therefore concluded that there is no relationship among individual privacy perception, privacy awareness, privacy concern, as well as their communication activity with others. As such, Nigerian youths' privacy behaviours are a manifestation of their values, motives, beliefs, interests, and personal needs.

Hence, individuals have the tendency to divulge sensitive and highly consequential information at their disposal on social media when their pressing needs and motivation compete with their concern for privacy. Essentially, there is a disconnection between Nigerian youths' privacy concern and their self-disclosure activities on social media.

From the foregoing, this study recommends that individuals need to engage in self-censorship and proper evaluation of cost-benefit analysis of their privacy before sharing posts online. This will help them to avoid revealing communication links that are unintended as well as manage their privacy behaviours consciously while posting and commenting on posts on social media.

Also, future studies can investigate the level of use of privacy settings, users' knowledge of social media, and how it influences individual privacy behaviours in controlling the flow of their private information on social media.

References

- Acquisti, A., Brandimarte, and Lowenstein. (2015). Privacy and rationality in decision making. *IEEE Security and Privacy*, 3(1), 26–33.
- Acquisti, A. John, L. & Lowenstein, J. (2013). What is privacy worth? *Journal of legal studies*, (42)2, 249–274.
- Altman, I., & Taylor, D. A. (1973). *Social penetration: The development of interpersonal relationships*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

- Allensworth, N. J. (1996). Social penetration theory: A description, research and evaluation. University of Memphis publisher: Horn Lake. Retrieved from <https://prezi.com/m/5ssly73oi1pi/social-penetration-theory-on-10/10/2020>.
- Altman, I., & Taylor, D. A. (1975). Social penetration: The development of interpersonal relationships. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.
- Barnes, S. (2006). A privacy paradox: Social networking in the United States. Retrieved from: firstmonday.org/article/view/.../1312_2 on 10/10/2020.
- Blank, G., Bolsover, G. & Dubois, E. (2014). *A new privacy paradox: Young people and privacy on social network sites*. Published by University of Oxford: California.
- Boyd, A. (2011). A longitudinal study of social media privacy behavior. Retrieved from: <https://arxiv.org/pdf/1103.3174> on 29/11/2020.
- Boyd, D. & Hargatti, E. (2010). Facebook privacy settings: Who cares? Retrieved from: <https://www.firstmonday.org/article/view/3086/2589> on 14/09/2021.
- Christofides, E., Muise, A. & Desmaris, S. (2010). Privacy and disclosure on Facebook: Youth and adults' information disclosure and perceptions of privacy risk. Delivered to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, University of Guelph. Retrieved from: <https://www.ontariosciencecentre.ca/.../O...> on 12/09/2021.
- Debatin, B., Lovejoy, J., Horn, A., & Hughes, B. (2009). Facebook and online privacy: attitudes, behaviors, and unintended consequences. *Journal of Computer Mediated- Communication* 15:83–108.
- Green, K., Derlega, V., & Mathews, A. (2006). Self-disclosure in personal relationships. Retrieved from: <https://www.researchgate.net/.../2834094> on 26/10/2021.
- Haynes, N. McDonald, T., Nicolescu, R., Sinanan, J., Spyer, J., Venkatraman, S., & Wang, X. (2016). *How the world changed social media*. University College Press: London.
- Joinson, A. (2017). Self-disclosure in computer-mediated communication: The role of self-awareness and visual anonymity. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 31, 177–192.
- Liu, D. & Brown, D. (2014). Self-disclosure on social networking sites, positive feedback, and social capital among Chinese college students. *Computers in Human Behavior* 38 (2014) 213–219.
- Livingstone, S. (2018). Taking risky opportunities in youthful content creation: teenagers' use of social networking sites for intimacy, privacy and self-expression. *New media & society*, 10 (3), 393–411

- Ma, X., Hancock, J.T., & Naaman, M. (2016). Anonymity, Intimacy and Self Disclosure in Social Media. *Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2016)*, pp. 3857–3869. [10.1145/2858036.2858414](https://doi.org/10.1145/2858036.2858414).
- Marwick, A. & Boyd, D. (2010). I tweet honestly, I tweet passionately: Tweeter users, context collapse, and the imagined audience. *New Media & Society*, 7, 1–20.
- McCarthy, A. (2009). Social penetration theory and Facebook. Retrieved from: <http://www.anniemdance.com> on 18/10/2020.
- Mekovec, R. & Vrcerk, N. (2011). *Factors that influence internet users' privacy perception*. Proceedings of the ITI conference on Information Technology Interfaces, Cavtat, Croatia. Retrieved from <http://www.scientificjournals.org/journals2011/articles/1514.pdf> on 12/3/2018.
- Stenger, T. & Coutant, A. (2010). How teenagers deal with their privacy on social network sites? results from a national survey in France. *Annual Conference of the International Network for Social Network Analysis (INSNA)*, San Diego, California, USA, 169–174.
- Stutzman, F., & Krammer-Duffield, J. (2010). *Friends only: Examining a privacy enhancing behavior in Facebook*. Atlanta: USA.
- Stutzman, F., Vitak, J., Ellison, B., Gray, R., & Lampe, C. (2012). Privacy in interaction: Exploring disclosure and social capital in Facebook. Retrieved via <http://www.aaai.org> 25/9/2021.
- Sprecher, S. & Hendrick, S. (2014). Self-disclosure in intimate relationships: Associations with individual and relationship characteristics over time. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 23, (6), 2004, 857–877.
- Spiekermann, S., Grossklags, J. & Berendt, B. (2016). *Privacy in 2nd generation commerce: Privacy preferences versus actual behavior*. Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Electronic Commerce. Retrieved from: <http://www.w3.org/TR/P3P/>
- Taddicken, M. (2013). The 'Privacy Paradox' in the social web: The impact of privacy concerns, individual characteristics, and the perceived social relevance on different forms of self-disclosure. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 19, 248–273.
- Taddicken, M. & Jers, C. (2011). *The uses of privacy online: Trading a loss of privacy for social web gratifications*. Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg, United State of America.
- Trepte, S. & Reinecke, L. (2011). *Privacy online, perspectives on privacy and self-disclosure in the social web*. Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg, United State of America.

- Yu, Y. (2016). The 'Privacy Paradox' investigation among the African American college students: Privacy concerns and self-disclosure on the social network sites. *International Journal of Management & Social Sciences*; 4, (3), 619–627.
- Zafeiropolou, A. (2014). *A paradox of privacy: Unravelling the reasoning behind online location sharing*. Retrieved from: http://www.eprints.soton.ac.uk/.../_userfiles.soton.ac... on 21/10/2018.

Declarations

Funding: No specific funding was received for this work.

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.