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Privacy Perception and Influence of Gender on Youths' Privacy Behaviour on Social Media

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Abstract

This study investigates youths' perceptions of privacy, privacy concerns, and privacy behaviour among active Facebook and Instagram users in Nigeria. It also examines the association between privacy concerns and self-disclosure, the influence of gender on self-disclosure, and the manifestation of the privacy paradox on social media. Drawing on Altman and Taylor's Social Penetration Theory, the study adopted a survey research design and surveyed 389 undergraduates systematically selected from two government-owned institutions in Kwara State using a multistage stratified sampling technique. The findings reveal the manifestation of the privacy paradox among Nigerian youths, as respondents reported disclosing in-depth personal information online despite expressing concerns about their privacy. The study also found that youths had moderate privacy concerns and perceived social media as an open and potentially dangerous environment for privacy. A significant positive and moderate association was found between privacy concerns and self-disclosure ($r = 0.436$, $p < .001$), indicating that greater privacy concerns were associated with higher levels of self-disclosure. Gender also significantly influenced self-disclosure, with male respondents reporting higher levels of self-disclosure than female respondents ($t(387) = 8.73$, $p < .001$). The researchers recommend that social media platforms intensify user education on privacy policies and provide timely awareness of the potential consequences of disclosing sensitive personal information online.



Keywords: Privacy Paradox, Privacy Concern, Self-disclosure, Perception of Privacy, Youth, Facebook

Introduction

Privacy paradox reflects the disconnection between people's concern for privacy and their actual behaviours on social media (Tahsili, 2022). Studies have indicated a rapid increase in the extent of young people's online behaviour and self-disclosure activities on the internet, particularly on social media (Robertson, 2022) like Facebook. Empirical research has shown that youths especially do not care about privacy when using social media (Hargittai & Marwick, 2016). Before the widespread use of social media and the internet, it was easier not to share one's personal information. However, with the increasing acceptability and widespread use of these platforms, disclosing sensitive personal information has become a voluntary and involuntary activity (Solove, 2020; Umoren, 2020; Yul, 2016).

The uses and gratifications theory posits that users' motivation to share personal information about their lives online is driven by perceived benefits or gratifications sought. While people have privacy concerns, they voluntarily share their private information online with the expectation that it will help optimise their experience on the platforms. Likewise, youth's self-disclosure on social media for social communication benefits is enhanced by their social skills (Baker-Eveleth et al., 2022). 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 (Muggah, 2021). In this regard, sharing personal information online is paramount for online users, especially active social media users.

Solove (2020) submitted that studies on privacy paradox are now "legion" and keep on increasing, yet there is still no comprehensive explanation of the factors responsible for social media users' contradictory behaviour (Kokolakis, 2017 as cited in Chhabra, 2022), particularly in Nigeria. Also, researchers have established the manifest of privacy paradox among youths in Nigeria (Akerele-Popoola et al., 2023) and users' awareness of the importance of safeguarding their privacy and data on social media, with little on how individual factors influence the personal data behaviour of users. Also, research has established that active users of Facebook and Instagram tend to have lower concerns for privacy than non-users and passive users (Steijn et al, 2016) and privacy concerns differ based on perception and conception. Therefore, this study investigates the influence of gender on youths' privacy behaviour on Facebook and Instagram. The study focused on Nigerian youth and is guided by the research questions below.

1. What is the level of youths' concern for online privacy?
2. To what extent do the youths share private information on Facebook and Instagram?

Theoretical Framework

Social Penetration Theory (SPT)

Based on this theory, self-disclosure refers to how much information people willingly share about themselves with other people. It connotes the depth (how deep) and breadth (diverse aspects or topics about oneself) at which people reveal certain information about their thoughts, feelings, experiences and expectations (Tang & Wang, 2012). This behaviour is driven by reciprocity, costs and rewards. Also, self-disclosure is a behaviour associated with risks as the sharer tends to become vulnerable in the relational context. Specifically, Altman and Taylor describe self-disclosures as a deliberate and systematic process "whereby relational partners struggle to balance oppositional needs such as being both open and close to contact with one another to regulate privacy" (Greene et.al., 2016, p.410).



Though Altman and Taylor conceptualised self-disclosure in terms of interpersonal relationships before the popularity of online platforms like Facebook, the assumptions of the theory on self-disclosure and relationships could be applied to online self-disclosure and social interactions among users (McCarthy, 2009) due to the interactive and relationship nature of social media.

Also, the theory relates human personalities to the onion metaphor. With the onion analogy, Altman and Taylor submit that humans are like the onion layers that peel off gradually, beginning from the peripheral to the core or more intimate. Also, the outer layer is the public personality which people can see, like the user's personal status on social media, while the inner layers are the core, which are deep and intimate information about oneself.

As it relates to this research, this theory posits that individuals' self-disclosure behaviour is driven by perceived cost and rewards. People weigh the cost required in a relationship with the expected benefits before self-disclosing (Okoyo, 2019). Consequently, people tend to disclose based on the expectation of rewards which must supersede the cost.

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, while depth is the depth and details entailed in the topical issues discussed. The breadth and depth of self-disclosure signify the extent of intimacy and level of relationship through reciprocal openness or closeness between relational partners (Sprecher et.al., 2014; Allensworth, 1996).

Self-disclosure is a significant aspect of privacy data management on social media. Active engagement and participation on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram are achieved through regular revelation of information about oneself (Walrave et al, 2016) and the socio-economic environments of online users. Therefore, self-disclosure is a distinctive feature of social media privacy concerns, awareness and behaviour. It is a systematic process and act of talking about one's feelings, opinions, values, experiences, expectations and attitudes to another person (Altman & Taylor, 1975; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2014), and it is inherently invented in many social media platforms by design.

Before Altman and Taylor developed the concept in Social penetration theory, Sidney Jourard, a clinical psychologist, had earlier proposed self-disclosure in 1963/1971 when he wrote the books *The Transparent Self & Self Disclosure: An Experimental Analysis of the Transparent Self*. (Greene, et al., 2016). It refers to "willful disclosures" which "aim is to let another person know with no shadow of a doubt what you have done, what you feel, etc." (Jourard, 1971, p.16).

Self-disclosure is a dynamic characteristic of a long-lasting relationship process and has a dialectical nature of openness/closeness in relationships (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Sprecher et.al., 2014). As a common phenomenon among youths, social media is a public space where youths share so much information about themselves for diverse reasons.

Young people are 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 indicates contradictory attitudes of youths when it comes to privacy, indicating their level of privacy concerns. Some empirical studies have found that privacy paradox also exists among social media users (Tahsili, 2022), while some (Coca et al, 2024) found contradictory results. Upon this background, this study tested the hypotheses below.

H₁: There is no significant association between users' concerns for privacy and their self-disclosure on Facebook and Instagram.



H₂: There is no significant difference in the self-disclosure activities of male and female users of Facebook and Instagram.

Method

To investigate the privacy behaviours of social media users and verify the hypotheses raised, the study adopted survey method of quantitative research approach. The research targeted young adults in Kwara state, Nigeria, ages 16 to 35 years, who are active users of Facebook and Instagram. This age classification fits the specifications of undergraduate students in government-owned universities in Nigeria; hence, they were used appropriately for the research. The population of the study, therefore, included undergraduates from two universities: a federal institution, the University of Ilorin and a state institution, Kwara State University (KWASU). The population size of undergraduates from both universities was 56, 713 (National University Commission, 2019). Based on the population, Krejcie and Morgan's table was employed to determine the 381 minimum sample size for the study.

Using a three-stage multistage stratified sampling technique, a random selection of five faculties was selected from the two universities, making ten faculties. In stage two, two departments were selected from each faculty, which makes 20 departments in total, while the third stage involved the selection of the actual respondents. To align with the advised minimum sample size of 381 respondents, 20 respondents were selected from each department, which makes a total of 400 respondents. Selecting less than 20 respondents from the 20 departments will result in a sample size less than the recommended sample by Krejcie and Morgan. However, having above the minimum recommended sample size aligns with acceptable international research practices of sampling as it reduces sampling error, ensures accurate representation of the population and accounts for non-response and unreturned copies of the questionnaire. Hence, a total of 400 questionnaires were administered to the respondents physically. The selection of the actual respondents was done purposefully to ensure respondents fit into the selection criteria. Before the administration, a consent form was distributed to the respondents to ascertain their willingness to participate in the study and their active use of Facebook and Instagram. The research instrument has two sections. Section A examines the demographic variables of the respondents, while Section B examines the questions regarding the research questions and hypotheses. Section A consists of four items. Questions on privacy concerns contain 7 items using a 5-item Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A Cronbach alpha reliability test was done, with the result yielding an $\alpha = .74$. The questions on data privacy behaviour on Facebook and Instagram consist of 7 items and a five-point Likert scale. A Cronbach alpha reliability test was done, with the result yielding an $\alpha = .71$.

Measures on privacy concerns and privacy paradox were adopted from existing research (Draper, 2016; Hargittai et al, 2016; Mekovec & Vrcerk, 2011; Taddicken, 2013; Yu, 2016). Measures of data protection behaviour were adapted from Peter et al (2024) and Kokolakis (2017). Measures on self-disclosure on social media were also adapted from existing studies (Ma et al, 2016; McCarthy, 2009), while a few were self-constructed, picking ideas from literature on self-disclosure and social penetration theory. Out of the 400 copies of the questionnaire administered physically to the respondents, only 389 were returned and found useful for the analysis. Data collected were analysed with SPSS version 24 and presented in simple frequency and statistics. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson correlation and the Independent Sample T-test.



Findings

Analysis of Demographic Variables

Variable	Sub-Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	16-22 years	129	36
	23-27 years	186	48
	28-32 years	58	14
	33-35 years	6	2
	Total	389	100
Gender	Female	197	51
	Male	192	49
	Total	389	100
Institution	University of Ilorin	197	52
	KWASU	192	48
	Total	389	100
Level of Study	100level	93	24
	200level	66	17
	300level	82	21
	400level	78	20
	500level	70	18
	Total	389	100

Findings in Table 1 show that 36% (n=129) of the respondents were aged between 16 and 22 years, 51% were female, while 49% were male. Also, 48% of the respondents were students of KWASU, while 52% were from UNLORIN. Also, the respondents were spread across all levels of undergraduate study, as 24% were in 100l, 21% reported they were in 300l, 17% were in 200l, 20% were in 400l, while 18% were in 500l.



Presentation of Findings Based on Research Questions

Facebook Users' Concern for Online Privacy

Table 2: Privacy Concerns of users on Facebook and Instagram

Statements	SA	A	U	SD	D	M	SD
I am concerned about who Accessmy data on Facebook/Instagram	30.6	26.5	16.2	12.6	14.1	3.48	1.38
I am concerned about what information people get about me on Facebook/Instagram.	22.1	23.7	17.5	18.8	18.0	3.12	1.42
I am concerned about how people use information they get about me through 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 saving my information without my permission.	17.7	16.2	24.2	22.9	20.1	2.84	1.39
I am concerned about the damage my shared may cause my personality.	19.5	14.7	21.1	21.6	23.1	2.87	1.41
I am concerned about how many people know about me through Facebook /Instagram	23.7	17.7	18.8	22.1	17.7	3.03	1.47
Grand mean					3.01	1.41	

The Grand mean score and standard deviation (M=3.01) mean that respondents had moderate concerns for privacy, with responses spread out across the diverse dimensions of privacy concerns. Respondents were mostly concerned about who can access their information on Facebook(M=3.48, SD=1.38), what 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 page (M=3.03, SD=1.47).

Also, respondents were moderately low about how people process their information (M= 2.85, SD=1.42), about being monitored through their account by an unidentified 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). Also, they were moderately low about unknown data storage and saving their information without consent (M=2.84, SD=1.39).

Furthermore, the standard deviation of 1.41 suggests that responses were spread out across the responses, which means that respondents have diverse degrees of concern for privacy on Facebook. This also suggests that respondents' level of privacy awareness and concerns varies based on their level of knowledge, exposure, frequency of Facebook usage, perceived benefits and experiences. These findings suggest the need for further analysis to determine the exact individual factors that influence people's privacy concerns and behaviour.



Table 3: Data Privacy Behaviour of Users on Facebook and Instagram

Statements	SA	A	U	SD	D	M	SD
I believe it is important to protect my personal data online.	45.2	31.3	6.2	10.2	7.1	3.97	1.25
I regularly check the privacy policies of social media platforms before using them.	35.2	27.1	7.2	20.3	10.2	3.57	1.40
I have customized who can see my posts on Facebook and Instagram.	40.4	23.5	11.3	12.6	12.2	3.67	1.42
I have set my profile to private or limited visibility on Facebook/Instagram.	28.2	30.3	10.3	14.4	16.8	3.39	1.25
I use pseudonyms or avoid using my full real name on social media.	19.1	20.2	16.2	30.3	14.2	2.99	1.35
I think carefully before posting personal photos or information online.	16.5	20.5	22.4	25.4	15.2	2.98	1.36
I use two-factor authentication or other tools to secure my account.	20.1	18.2	19.3	24.1	18.3	2.98	1.32
Grand mean						3.36	1.35

Table 4: Nature of Privacy Concerns

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

Table 4 indicates that many of the respondents are privacy pragmatic. This means they weigh the perceived benefits and risks of disclosing their data online before posting. Hence, when the perceived benefits outweigh the cost, they become less concerned about privacy on Facebook. This finding contradicts Mobolaji's (2021) findings, where 14% (44) of respondents were extremely concerned and 35.3% (110) of respondents were very concerned about their privacy.



Table 5: Extent of Users' Self-Disclosure on Facebook and Instagram

Category	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Frequency of post		
Frequently	95	24.4
Everyday	131	33.7
Once in a while	90	23.1
Not at all	73	18.8
Total	389	100
Post 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
Texts & video	15	4.0
Nil	73	18.8
Total	389	100
Type of Information shared		
Information about others	96	24.8
Information on National issues	100	25.7
Information on general issues	81	20.0
Information about self	112	29.5
Total	389	100
Depth of Private Information		
Self-expressed posts	105	27.0
Self-images	16	4.1
Self-recorded videos	-	-
Basic information	195	50.1
None	73	18.8
Total	389	100

The data in Table 5 revealed that most respondents post regularly on social media on a daily basis. They share more information about their personal life than social, political or national affairs. Few of the respondents who were not so active in posting still share posts once in a while. This suggests that aside from daily posting, active social media activities likely involve engaging with the posts of other users by reposting, sharing, liking and commenting. This form of activity could also reflect some personal information on users' socio-political ideologies. Facebook and Instagram users believe it is okay to share regular updates about their daily activities online as many "cannot live any moment of their lives without posting information about themselves on social media platforms" (Mobolaji, 2021, p.60).

Test of the Hypotheses

H₁: There is no significant association between users' privacy concerns and the extent of their self-disclosure on Facebook.



Table 6: Association between users' privacy concern and their self-disclosure on Facebook

Variables	Privacy concern	Self-disclosure
Privacy concern	1	0.436
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	<0.001
N	389	389
Self-disclosure	0.436	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001	—
N	389	389

Note: Pearson correlation was used. N = 389

Table 6 shows a positive and moderate relationship between users' privacy concerns and the extent of their self-disclosure on Facebook ($r = 0.436$). The relationship was statistically significant ($p < .001$), indicating that users' privacy concerns are significantly associated with the extent to which they disclose personal information on Facebook. The positive direction of the relationship suggests that higher levels of privacy concern are associated with greater levels of self-disclosure. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

H₂: There is no significant difference in the self-disclosure activities of male and female users of Facebook.

Table 7: Gender Differences in Facebook Users' Self-Disclosure

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p-value	Decision
Female	197	20.25	4.33				
Male	192	23.32	2.26	387	8.73	< .001	Rejected

Note: Independent-samples t-test; significance level = 0.05.

Table 7 shows a significant difference in the self-disclosure activities of male and female Facebook users. Male respondents recorded a higher mean self-disclosure score ($M = 23.32$, $SD = 2.26$) than female respondents ($M = 20.25$, $SD = 4.33$). The independent-samples t-test indicates that this difference was statistically significant, $t(387) = 8.73$, $p < .001$. This suggests that male Facebook users in the study reported a significantly higher level of self-disclosure than their female counterparts. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the self-disclosure activities of male and female Facebook users, was rejected.

Discussion

This study provides valuable contributions to comprehensive social media discourse on privacy concerns and privacy paradox among youths in Nigeria. The findings of the study suggest that privacy may be irrelevant to social media users in Nigeria due to their online behaviour and socio-cultural values and ideologies. Empirical findings have proven that cultural differences influence people's privacy perception



and self-disclosure on social media. Family norms and social expectations make people from African countries, including Nigeria, be more cautious of their privacy and self-disclosure activities on social media (Malaji et al, 2022) but this does not reflect in their actual behaviour. There is a higher level of agreement that privacy on Facebook is open and prone to danger, nevertheless.

Youths in Nigeria generally believe it is impossible to manage their privacy and communication activity on social media, regardless of the privacy-setting mechanism. This reflects the level of the youth's privacy awareness and background. Research revealed that individuals from high-income backgrounds have higher privacy awareness and control over their information online (Malaji et al, 2022). While the youths registered their privacy concerns, this study found no correlation between users' privacy concerns and sharing activities. Some research found that trust strongly influences self-disclosure and moderates the association between privacy concerns and self-disclosure. Facebook and Instagram users who perceive the platforms' privacy policies as effective and understandable have higher trust in the platforms and engage in increased self-disclosure activities amidst their concerns (Coco et al, 2024; Yuan et al, 2021). Besides, by design and features, Facebook encourages sharing among users (Hossain et al, 2023). On the contrary, some individuals have argued that a larger percent of Facebook users lack the knowledge of Facebook privacy policies and fail to take proactive measures towards managing their private information online. Hence, they disclose private information publicly (Aliue et al, 2024). Privacy awareness influences self-disclosure more than privacy concerns (Lee & Attablayo, 2023). Besides, digital literacy, perceived risks and the value attached to a social media platform determine the level of users' privacy concerns.

Also, findings for hypothesis one showed that there is a positive and moderate relationship between users' privacy concerns and the extent of their self-disclosure on social media ($r = 0.436$). This means that users who express greater concern about privacy also tend to report greater self-disclosure. At first, this may appear counterintuitive because privacy concerns might be expected to discourage users from revealing personal information. However, the finding suggests that privacy concern and self-disclosure may coexist rather than operate as opposite. Findings on the second hypothesis revealed that gender is an important factor associated with Facebook self-disclosure behaviour among the respondents, with male users reporting greater levels of disclosure than female users. This indicates that male and female users may approach the disclosure of personal information on Facebook differently. A possible reason for this disparity by gender could be that women and men may have different perceptions of online interaction, privacy risk, social visibility and benefits associated with sharing personal information online. The higher self-disclosure score among male respondents may suggest that male users in this study are comparatively more willing to reveal personal information or participate in expressive forms of communication on Facebook. Conversely, the lower mean among female respondents may reflect greater caution in disclosing personal information or greater sensitivity to perceived privacy and interpersonal risks associated with online disclosure.

Furthermore, this study showed that perceived benefits and motivations mediate the association between individual privacy concerns, privacy perception and self-disclosure online. This finding confirmed the cost-benefit analysis of social penetration and privacy calculus theory. Consequently, youths in Nigeria share in-depth information about their private life on Facebook using the relational and positive self-disclosure techniques through a few texts, pictures or images. Also, they engage in increased and systematic revelation of positive information about themselves using self-promotion and exemplification of self-presentation skills to manage their reputation (Valencia, 2023). Among the self-disclosure techniques, Jian et al. (2024) found that positive self-disclosure attracts more public reactions from others through more likes or emojis, while negative disclosure of self attracts an offer of support through direct messages. Positive self-disclosure is socially desirable as it facilitates social interactions, enhances friendship quality (Chen et al, 2023) and influences subjects' well-being. Likewise, youths experiencing social anxiety gain more confidence through positive self-disclosure in their friendship quality, boosting



self-esteem and mood (Chen et al, 2023). In this light, Hossein et al (2023) research on the consequences of self-disclosure on social media revealed that self-disclosure positively impacts users' well-being and social support. Users' awareness of greater benefits or rewards of self-disclosure encourages more sharing of one's personal information online (Lee et al, 2023).

Furthermore, these research findings align with some studies (Coca et al, 2024; Jordan et al, 2024; Kolesnyk et al, 2021; Peng, 2021) that gender significantly predicts youths' self-disclosure activities on social media. Notably, its findings challenge studies (Coca et al, 2024; Peng, 2021) as it found that the male gender discloses more than the females. Coca et al.'s research found that younger people and women, though they are more concerned about their privacy, share more than men due to their emotional nature, which makes them more self-expressive. Also, the desire for social connections influences their sharing decision (Coca et al, 2024; Hossain et al, 2023). Clarifying the argument, Jordan et al (2024) argued that both the male and female genders equally engage in self-disclosure on social media; however, males are more inclined to withhold unfavourable information about themselves, such as negative personal experiences, struggles, emotions or failures, than the female gender. The research suggests that men perceive sharing negative information about their struggles or failures as a sign of weakness. Likewise, social norms on masculinity expectations influence men's perception of expressing vulnerability as weakness. In light of this, Kolesnyk et al (2021) reiterated that societal norms and traditional gender roles influence men to engage in exaggerated self-disclosure of their personal achievements, financial status and career fulfilment to enhance their reputation. Likewise, women present exaggerated versions of themselves for physical attractiveness using camera filters and selective images to enhance their social status. Succinctly, both male and female genders employ different self-disclosure techniques and share on Facebook for various needs (Steijn et al, 2016), influenced by social needs and individual desires

This research found a clear manifestation of privacy paradox among Nigerian youths, aligning with existing research, as there was a disconnection between their privacy concerns and self-disclosure activities. Extant (Lahza, 2020; Peng, 2021) research has found the manifest of the privacy paradox among youths due to their low privacy concerns. The older adults have more privacy concern on social media due to unfamiliarity with the platform and the decision to maintain personal boundaries (Steijn et al, 2016). It was evident that the youths were seldom concerned about significant privacy-threatening situations like the negative consequences of shared posts, being monitored by unknown persons or entities, as well as how information received may be processed or used by those who viewed them. Interestingly, research conducted among Taiwanese undergraduates, which found the absence of privacy paradox among adolescents, posits that low privacy concerns due to a lack of awareness of perceived privacy risks contributed to the absence of privacy paradox. Likewise, the study opined that users' trust in the platform stimulated their low privacy concerns and non-proactive privacy measures. While self-disclosure is a deliberate social activity, it is presumed that users with high privacy awareness of privacy risks and reduced privacy concerns become "rational decision-makers" with sharing personal information online as they "choose immediate gratifications over protecting their privacy" (Tahsili, 2022).

Significantly, the concept and manifest of privacy paradox is highly debated in the literature today. For instance, Wu (2018) argued that the privacy paradox is not a "paradox" per se in the social media environment. He noted that "paradox reveals different innate needs of SNS users" and self-disclosure and privacy autonomy are two opposite sides of a coin for users who want to create a self-identity online. Wu's submission points to users' motivation for using social media platforms.

Also, Solove (2020) recently argued that the privacy paradox is an illusion and a myth that does not exist and need not be explained. He argued that the disconnection between actual privacy behaviour and the expressed concern for privacy does not necessarily mean that they do not value their privacy or behave in contradiction with their beliefs. Instead, "the phenomenon demonstrates behaviour involving risk, where

many factors might influence people's decisions". He added, "the gap between privacy behaviour and attitudes is not an anomaly...the gap exists because the behaviour and attitudes are about different things. The effort to try to align them falters because they cannot be fully aligned" (p.51). Succinctly, he concludes that people's privacy behaviours online do not reflect their privacy preference and calls it a "behaviour distortion argument". As the world has become mediatised, such that it is entirely impossible to interact and perform one's daily tasks without the internet and social media, people's immediate needs and gratification are mediated by their privacy concerns. Hence, protecting one's privacy is not entirely left to individuals and social media users.

Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

This study is unique in its focus by examining the manifest of privacy paradox among youths in Nigeria as well as the influence of gender on privacy behaviours. The study also investigates youths' perception of privacy and privacy concerns. This study found the manifest of privacy paradox among the youths. Also, the youths have a negative and low perception of privacy, and there was a high level of agreement that social media (Facebook, Instagram) is open and susceptible to danger. Findings on youths' privacy concern suggest that the youths have a moderate privacy concern influenced by their level of knowledge, exposure, frequency of Facebook usage, perceived benefits and experiences. This study concludes that there is no association between the youths' privacy perception, concerns and sharing behaviour on Facebook. Therefore, youths' privacy behaviours are driven by their personal interests and needs.

The study is not without limitations. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey method and relied on users' self-reports of their self-disclosure activities on social media. Also, the study was conducted among young Facebook and Instagram users aged 15 to 35 years and within Kwara state only. While undergraduates in government-owned institutions appropriately fit the youth demographics, limiting the population to two universities makes the research inadequate to evaluate the privacy perceptions and attitudes of the whole youth population in Nigeria. Also, since research has proven the effect of socio-cultural factors and individual factors like age, economic status, background, and gender drive people's privacy perceptions, awareness and behaviour, future studies can examine the influence of specific cultures on adults' privacy perception and behaviour and among younger populations from different backgrounds. Also, future studies can examine the influence of parent style on privacy perception and expand the study population while adopting a mixed methods approach, such as in-depth interviews, focus groups and a content analysis of users' social media platforms to probe further into participants' sharing activities online. Likewise, future studies can investigate the level of use of privacy settings and users' knowledge of social media. Also, it will be interesting to investigate how the monetization of Facebook and other platforms affects users' self-disclosure activities, the breadth and depth and frequency of sharing online.

This study therefore recommends that people should engage in self-censorship and proper evaluation of the cost-benefit analysis of their behaviour before sharing core information about their private self-online. This will help them to avoid revealing communication links that could be harmful, uncontrolled and unintended, as well as consciously manage their personal boundaries while using social media. Based on the research findings, the following recommendations were made for practical implementation.

1. Social media companies like Facebook should engage in increased and continuous awareness campaigns on the platform's privacy policies and awareness of the negative consequences or perceived risks of disclosing certain private information online each times users choose to post on the platform.
2. Social media users, especially young adults, should seek more knowledge on platforms' privacy policies and take proactive measures to maintain their private lives online.



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