

## Privacy Online A Concern Around the World

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Abstract:

Social media encompasses a wide range of websites and applications like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and many others. People rely on these applications to connect socially. A day without selfies is considered an imperfect day. In recent times, many of us are getting passionate to share our life stories with our friends and colleagues and enjoy spending time on social media. Due to higher usage of social sites, the breach of privacy of an individual is scrutinized as a potential risk. The more users disclose them the more offered benefits they can enjoy. Consequently, safety and security on social sites turn out to be a burning issue, so as a group we decided to review the situation and reflect upon it. According to the recent era, technology has been responsible for many advances in modern life. People do not imagine their life without social media. Recently, the COVID 19 pandemic necessitated adaptations and transition from physical to virtual activities. Therefore, the use of social media platforms like Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter has led to escalating its use. Consequently, with increased usage, it has produced unavoidable issues. This article will emerge the minds of readers towards the impact analysis of privacy in the social network where people need to think about the privacy of their content by recognizing their digital friends and differentiate between their well-wishers and antagonist. Moreover, this paper will also discuss the different perspectives regarding hindered privacy in social media.

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The increased online scams and privacy staples encourage us to write different views of various perspectives related to online self-disclosure. Therefore different perspectives like social, religious, legislative, health, and ethical perspectives will be discussed further.

The authors derived propositions from the above topic.

**“Is it appropriate to share personal data on social media? “And “How much self-disclosure is appropriate on the social web.”**

### **Social Perspective:**

Social Media have a great impact on our lives and our societies as a whole. It gives us opportunities to connect with our colleagues and loved ones. Most of the time the exchange of personal information happens without privacy orientation which sometimes troubles the user. The estimated number of users of social media is dramatically increased with time. We have seen much increase in the number in recent years and especially in the pandemic era. According to [Digital 2020 July, Global Snapshot](#) published on 21st July 2020, “The active social media users are 4.57 Billion in which 346 Million users are added within last 12 months.” As the number of users of the social network increased, it also brings the consumers into a risky situation without having an idea of the extent of their communication transmission. It is also evident that most of the social media users are youth and some of them even are not legal adults. This age group has certain limits of knowledge and privacy of self and others. The young sometimes are not aware of the consequences attached to any situation.

According to the BBC News 2013 report, more than 67% of Facebook users are teenagers who used social media to get connected with their colleagues and community. Teenagers also share negative and baseless information, hide their identity, and leaking of others' data. These activities forced them to share unethical content (Shabir, Mahmood, Hameed, Safdar, & Gilani, 2014). The social blackmailing, which is caused by making the norms of the society null and void, results in self-made sanctions in response to the mental exploitations of the girl who was blackmailed and later on died on her own. People use social media for their contentment and spend significant time online, which leads them to disconnect from their family and society.

There are other several issues, which harm the social life of youth. At the very top is privacy, which has a greater impact on the user's life. According to Gasser, Maclay, and Palfrey (2010), using social media for an inappropriate reason, no tools for privacy, sharing own private data with others, kept teenagers at high risk. Another study suggested that hackers on the site reached their private data very easily as they do not know privacy (Carlson, 2010). On the contrary social sites are one type of forum for people to exchange new ideas and their opinion globally. It is a good channel of communication for the people living in restricted areas where they have no freedom of speech and they did not share their opinion openly (Aamoath, 2011). Social media give them the opportunity and forum to express and shared their ideas and opinion with others. Social media brings similarly minded groups like students, teachers, etc. to the same platform to share their ideas. (Blumler & Katz 1974). Every so often it is a good channel for expressing ideas and getting aware of international trends. Social media is also used to market a brand and it is also an

impactful medium for customer service and their satisfaction evaluation. Lastly, it promotes research for innovative ideas.

### **Cultural Perspective**

The specific regional cultures of Pakistan present a picture of rich diversity making it difficult to speak a single Pakistani culture. Pakistan is a multicultural state with an Islamic ideology. Cultural traits vary from one ethnic group to the next based on the origin of the culture such as Panjabi, Pashtun, Balochi, Muhajir, Saraiki cultures, etc. Different factors have refrained the communities from publicizing their things on social media, whose usage is also prevailing in these communities, who are the part of modern technological needs on the contrary female are still banned for using it at large. In this aspect, different ethnic groups have different ideas and opinions on this modern and fascinating world of science. Almost all-ethnic groups turn down this fact as social media violates norms of their cultures.

It is strictly prohibited to share personal information especially in the form of photography on social media, to validate all the above description; many examples of honor killing are obvious, In which women are killed by a male dominant of family or by the evil of society if she is thought to have brought dishonor defaming the family reputation and its culture (Lawrence & Javeed, 2020). Such social medial fame named Qandeel Baloch was assassinated by her brothers for sharing photos and videos on media. Secondly, I quote to Kohistan video leak scandal. The viral video showed the women clapping while two young men were dancing to a local Pashto song during a wedding in a Seerto village of Koshistan in 2012. The women belonged to the Azadkhel tribe while the two boys from the Salekhel tribe. When the video was leaked to the Azadkhel tribe, a Jirga comprising of 12 elders objected to the video with and allegations were imposed on social offenders of the video. Later it was reported that the four women in the video, along with the minor girl, were killed on May 30, 2012, following the Jirga decree. (The Tribune, 2018).

### **Religious Perspective**

According to the Bureau of Statistics Government of Pakistan, “more than 96% of people following Islam a major religion in Pakistan”. At the time of creation, Pakistan was the first modern Muslim state and largest world Muslim country in the world. Currently, it is the second most populated Muslim country after Indonesia. In this country, the autonomy of a person is respected from the perspective of law, religion, and culture. Generally, autonomy is considered the independent conception of a person to his thought and action. However, Islam does not allow a man to fulfill his wishes inappropriately but has generated some limitations and certain rules and regulations. These rules and manners can be seen from scripture and the life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) (Aksoy & Tenik, 2002).

Similarly, autonomy from an Islamic perspective: Van Bommel stated that “For a Muslim, absolute autonomy is very rare, there will be a feeling of responsibility towards God, and he or she lives in social coherence, in which influences of the relatives play their roles”. So it is now cleared that man is autonomous in his action and thought but he will be responsible for their action. Relating this concept to above mention scenario everyone is autonomous to share their personal things on social media but keeping the religious belief of a person and school of thoughts in mind.

Islamic source of knowledge describes the evil eye as truth. Greed and jealousy are considered satanic strategies, which later stimulate the evil eye, and cause harm to a person (Qamar, 2013). Moreover sharing personal data on social sites is inappropriate and especially females are not allowed to disclose themselves to others.

### **Legal Perspective**

The Constitution of Pakistan provides their nationals, fundamental rights which include freedom of speech, freedom of thought, association, information, press, religion, as well as freedom of assembly. But there are some rules, regulations, and restrictions not to share everything on social media such as age-restricted and community norms restricted material. To focus the proposition derived, in the beginning, sharing thoughts and feelings on social media, and if share content was not community restricted then of course law gives this basic rights of freedom of speech and expression. As freedom of speech and expression is a precious gift and of any citizen and this is not only guaranteed by Pakistan's constitution but is also guaranteed under the UN's Universal Declaration of human rights 1948. Pakistan is a signatory to this declaration.

In any human's life, privacy serves as the foundation upon which many citizens' rights are built. Privacy helps us to establish boundaries, these boundaries express that who may have access to or touch our bodies, uses our places and our things as well as access to our communication and our information. The Constitution of Pakistan guaranteed us the right to privacy. As Article 14(1) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, this article states that "The dignity of man and, subject to law, the privacy of home, shall be inviolable." The Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA)(2016) also contains a number of sections related to data privacy. PECA act makes it a crime for anyone to gain unauthorized access to any information system or data, and it is punishable with a prison sentence up to three months to seven years or a fine of up to fifty thousand to 10 million rupees. Here we can see that several laws in Pakistan can protect women against cyber harassment, however, there should be more awareness about laws and victims should be encouraged to report the offenses more often.

The Digital Rights Foundation (DRF) has set up a Cyber Harassment Helpline (0800-39393) in Pakistan for victims of online harassment and violence through which legal advice, digital security support, psychological counseling, and a referral system is provided to victims of online harassment. Moreover, there are many laws and fines are imposed on residents of UAE to abide by the rule of cybersafety. According to Gulfnews UAE "The TRA highlighted a provision of the UAE's anti-cybercrime law that seeks to penalize violators with an imprisonment or fine of up to Dh1 m\Million." In light of these laws, an individual is protected by regulation but educating users about their privacy footprints are not the responsibility of legislation.

### **Health Perspective**

Health care professionals share information, debate health care policy and practice issues, promote health behaviors, engage with the public, and educate and interact with patients, caregivers, students, and colleagues by using social media tools (Kaufman, 2012; Bernhardt, Alber & Gold, 2014; Fogelson, Rubin & Ault, 2013); Moorhead et. al, 2013). It has also been noticed

that medical staffs take pictures of patient's wounds and body parts and share them with their fellows through social media applications, although this objective behind these acts is for better learning, follow up and continuity of care, but, other means of communication can opt so that confidentiality of the patients does not get breached. Moreover, verbal consent has to be obtained before taking such pictures and all the highest measures are taken to maintain their privacy and confidentiality.

It is also been evident that many individuals use social media sites to unwind and gain emotional release caused by strenuous work hours, role demands, and family issues. So when these measures of deviances cause the trouble of privacy breaches online, they get mentally and emotionally disturbed. Loss of privacy around personal health data may harm an individual's health (Parker et. al, 2019). If privacy is not maintained, this can impact mental health very badly. Cybercrime can also put an individual at risk and online scams and threats are noteworthy issues to cause distress. The cybercriminals target our health care organization's electronic health records (EHR). In EHR, we have all the histories and details of patients and they try to steal their personally identifiable information as well as financial information (Fuentes, 2017).

Social media became famous during the COVID situation, we have learned about different social media activities/tools such as Tele clinics for the patients, conducting and attending online classes, workshops, and seminars on Zoom and Microsoft Teams virtually. People were attracted to social media websites for getting knowledge about health and wellness. Indeed, social media acted as a blessing and played a significant role in providing health education where face-to-face classrooms were not possible.

### **. Ethical perspective**

An ethical perspective is an individual way to assess any problem. Privacy is an emerging issue in social networking. The users show concern about the privacy and security of their personal information in recent years. The best example is Cambridge Analytica. The firm exploited the private information of over 50 million Facebook users to influence the 2016 presidential elections (Criddle, 2020). This example has evoked the attention of million if they are not able to control their data on social media. According to a Pew Trust report, 80% of social media users are concerned about the businesses and advertisers access their social media posts (Brenner, 2013). In these growing privacy and security concerns, there is a need for cybersecurity professionals who will play a vital role in protecting social media users' personal information.

Ethical and moral values are very important to integrate ethics in self-disclosure online. Some many ethical principles and theories help us to interpret ethical norms to relate to the privacy of an individual. The four basic ethical principles are linked with privacy and security claims. Respect for autonomy, no maleficence, beneficence, and justice. Respect for autonomy states to respect the choices and decisions of others by telling the truth, respect the privacy of others, and safeguard the confidential information of others. The principle of beneficence articulates to do well to others and benefit them and it is only possible through protecting and defending the rights of others. On the other hand, the principle of no maleficence discusses not harming others. The principle of justice is about equal and equitable distribution of benefits and risks. Each person should have an equal share and they should get according to the need. To summarize the ethical

point of view, it is a vital responsibility of users to maintain the code of conduct of cyber safety and privacy. Moreover breaching others' privacy or using misleading information is ethically very inappropriate and can be very disturbing.

### **Recommendations**

We realized that social networking sites have major accountability to protect the users' data from getting leaked or navigated to other websites. Networking sites have to implement strict policies for safeguarding people's profiles and from hacking. We recommend that networking sites should share clear pathways through which data is been transferred and proper awareness has to be flushed periodically to the users to remind their role. Another important recommendation is for the implementation of proper law against cybercrime, although laws and regulations are formed those have to be implemented, in this aspect, networking sites should take the lead and trace the criminals performing cybercrime. The school-going population should be educated from school by providing awareness sessions about cyber safety and cyberbully. If the adolescent and kids are informed of the safety and privacy issues of social media the nation can be protected from many mental health issues as well. Finally, this is an utmost responsibility of user to secure their data and always follow the rules of cyber safety and security. Together with the efforts of people and social networking site's stakeholders, these problems can be minimized to an acceptable extent.

### **Conclusion**

This structured paper helped us analyze the security concerns in light of religion, society, culture, ethics, health, and law. We learned that social networking sites are playing a crucial task in making this world a global village but it has also posed major data safety concerns to the users. It enabled us to ponder on the current situation faced by the people closely involved with social media and the techniques through which we can address the negative outcome of using social media. Awareness of proper social media utilization by networking sites, parents, organizations, and friends plays an important role in overcoming the challenges currently facing by users. Networking sites and the users, both hold their key responsibilities to perform where implementation of proper law regulations will be an assistance to make the great impact. This topic changed our frame of mind and taught us to always explore any issue with various dimensions to make a sound, justifiable and ethical decision.

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