

Chapter 18

The Interplay Between Privacy Policies and Self-Disclosure on Social Media: The Mediating Effect of Trust

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ABSTRACT

With the increasing adoption of social media platforms, privacy concerns and self-disclosure behaviors have attracted much attention in academic and business circles. Based on the antecedent-privacy concern-outcome (APCO) model of privacy concerns, this study develops a moderated mediation model to examine the mechanisms by which social media privacy policies (including both dimensions of privacy policy understanding and perceived effectiveness) influence self-disclosure. To test the model, this study used a deductive approach with a quantitative research design. Data were collected from social media users through a self-reported questionnaire. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the research model and hypotheses. The results of this study show that trust in social media mediates the relationship between privacy policy and self-disclosure, and that privacy cost moderates the relationship between privacy policy and trust in social media. Moreover, the relationship between privacy policies and self-disclosure is a complex multilinear model with a mediated effect.

INTRODUCTION

The growing popularity of social media as an important communication and information dissemination channels has attracted much attention from both academia and business in recent years. Taddei and Contena (2013) describes social media as interconnected communication platforms where users: (1) publish their personal profiles that include user-supplied media, other user-supplied content, and system-supplied data; (2) interact and connect with other users; and (3) interact with or access user-generated content

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provided by user associations in social media networks (Ahmed, 2015; Smith, Dinev, & Xu, 2011). Social media platforms and other Web 2.0 technologies provide users with convenient and easily accessible ways to interact and disclose personal information not only with their friends and acquaintances, but also with complete and relative strangers with unprecedented openness. This, in turn, has increased people's longevity and ability to share more information about themselves and their relationships with their families and friends through a variety of media, including video, photo, and text, enabling them to build and maintain social and business relationships. However, when using social networks, users often face privacy disclosure risks, leading to increasingly serious privacy threats, including privacy disclosure and privacy sharing without the user's consent; as a result, users are becoming more cautious about disclosing private information (Ampong et al., 2018; Arpaci, 2020; Bandara, Fernando, & Akter, 2020). According to Brown (2020), nearly half of Internet users were affected by cybersecurity incidents in the first half of 2020, of which 23.3% were due to personal data disclosure (Cottrill, Jacobs, Markovic, & Edwards, 2020). To address this issue, social media platforms often protect users' privacy and related rights by publishing privacy policies. Privacy policies include a set of procedures for managing and protecting users' personal data, as well as establishing basic rights and obligations, with the aim of reducing perceived risks arising from users' transactions with the platform (Dhir, Talwar, Kaur, Budhiraja, & Islam, 2021).

Previous research on social media has examined various features and capabilities that promote self-disclosure (Dhir et al., 2021; Dienlin & Trepte, 2015; Gioia & Boursier, 2021; Taddei & Contena, 2013), weighed the costs and benefits of privacy measures, and highlighted concerns about privacy and the extent of control over information collected from users (Gupta & Dhami, 2015; Ireland, 2020). Nevertheless, there is a paucity of research that addresses the determinants and motivators of self-disclosure behavior from a privacy and information flow perspective. Previous studies (Ahmed, 2015; Guo, Wang, & Wang, 2021; Gupta & Dhami, 2015; Ireland, 2020) have examined only a few variables limited to a specific social network such as Facebook. In their theoretical Antecedent-Privacy Concern-Outcome (APCO) model, Smith et al. (2011) propose that privacy policies are positively associated with self-disclosure. Although the APCO model provides a systematic explanation of the influence mechanism of privacy policies and self-disclosure, it is limited to the unidirectional path "privacy policies @ trust @ self-disclosure" and lacks an explanation of the influence mechanism of privacy policies (Chan, 2021; Dienlin & Trepte, 2015; Gruzd & Hernández-García, 2018). Therefore, to understand the influence mechanism of privacy policies and self-disclosure in the context of social media use, it is necessary to further elaborate the mechanism, including the policies and practices related to the collection, use, processing, storage, transfer and disclosure of personal data. To explore this mechanism in depth, this study divides privacy policy into two dimensions: privacy policy understanding and perceived effectiveness, conceptualizes a research framework based on privacy theory, incorporates the moderating variable of privacy cost, and examines the interaction mechanism with self-disclosure.

The purpose of this study is to empirically examine the relationship between social media privacy policies and user self-disclosure and determine whether this relationship is mediated by trust in social media, taking into account the moderating effect of privacy costs. To this end, this study used a deductive approach and quantitative research design by developing a moderated mediation model and empirically testing hypotheses that establish a relationship between social media policies and user self-disclosure. Data were collected from 212 social media users using a self-administered questionnaire. Stepwise multiple regression and regression-based path analysis were used to test the research model and hypotheses. The results of the study show that trust in social media has a mediating effect between privacy policies and

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