

There are three sides to every Facebook user: Your side, My side and The Truth

With over one billion daily active consumers on Facebook, the information that they choose to disclose could easily be searched, replicated or taken out of context which poses privacy implications. Consumer privacy has become a major concern with the growth of information technologies that enable marketers to collect, store and potentially misuse consumers' personal information all in the name of providing a personalised service.

However, the privacy-related concerns do not hold true for all social network consumers since a few studies on social networking sites have reported disparities between stated privacy attitudes and observed privacy attitudes. Extant research has used the Third-Person Effect (TPE) to explore the perception of the effect that social networking sites have on an individual as well as others.

Michael Colley, Reagen Kok and Thandeka Shozi, [Master's](#) students in the [Department of Marketing Management](#), conducted a study based on the theoretical framework of the TPE theory, by investigating the perceived privacy risks, perceived privacy concerns and perceived privacy intrusion. The focus of the study was based on the relationship of these constructs with personal information disclosure behaviour on a social network site. The sample included a total of 615 respondents who use Facebook.

The study revealed that, despite high privacy concerns and risks, consumers still disclose personal information on Facebook. A contributing factor to the high disclosure of personal information was due to the fact that consumers perceived privacy intrusion to be higher for 'other' consumers than for 'themselves'. The results also revealed that female respondents displayed larger TPE with regard to perceived privacy intrusion than males.

The results suggest that although there is a need for marketers to attain consumer information, consumers in turn, wish to protect their personal information. Marketers and organisations who engage with consumers on Facebook, are encouraged to understand consumers' privacy concerns and build trust with consumers that will encourage accurate disclosure of their personal information. Accurate consumer information will guide marketing campaign decisions on this platform and other social networking sites.

This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2015 within the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Michael Colley, Reagen Kok and Thandeka Shozi under the supervision of [Prof. Y. Jordaan](#).