

Exploring the Factors That Affect Personal Information Disclosure on Social Media

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Growth of social media

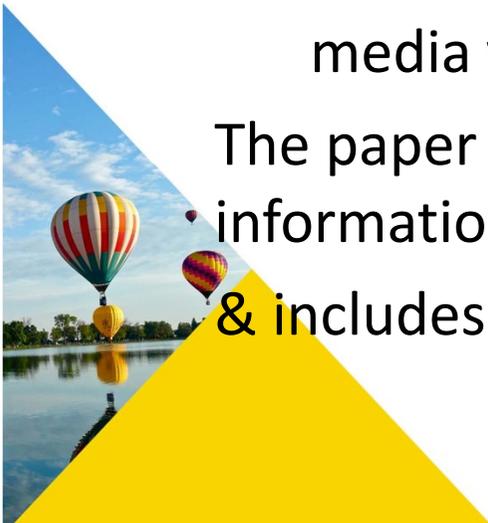
The exponential growth in adoption and use of social media has dramatically transformed how individuals, groups and organizations interact and contribute societal discourse, and how private and professional lives are managed.

Estimated social media user population

2.078 billion with a global penetration rate of 29%

In Africa 103 million with 85 million accessing social media via mobile devices

The paper discusses theories on the disclosure of personal information on social media
& includes a Ghanaian casestudy



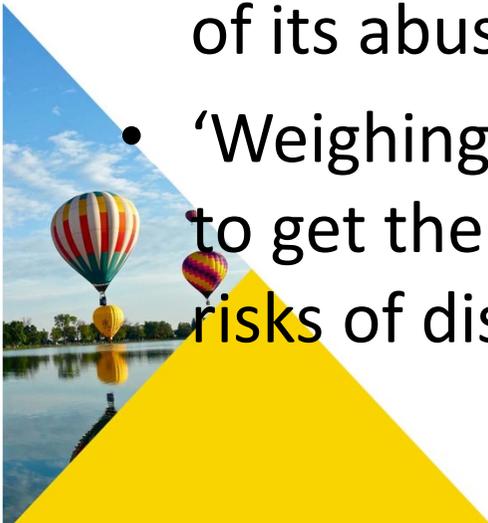
Adequate behaviour rules in social media engagements

- Individuals must have the ability to prevent sensitive information from one context (e.g. the working world, medical treatment, family life, etc.) from proliferating into other platforms.
- The protection of personal information is essential for a free and self-determined development of the individual.
- The self-determined development of the individual is a precondition in individuals' social media engagements.



The privacy paradox

- Privacy concerns: The extent to which individuals are disturbed about the information collection practices of others and how the acquired information will be used
- Users often disclose sensitive personal information on social media in spite of their expressed concerns of its abuse
- ‘Weighing’ the need to disclose personal information to get the benefits against the costs and potential risks of disclosure



Motivations in the privacy paradox

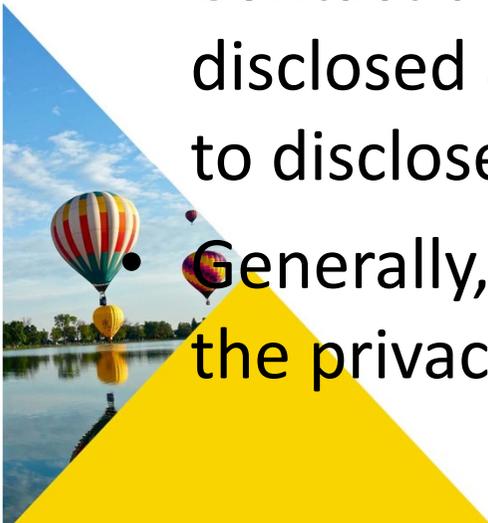
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- 250 students from a tertiary institution in Ghana answered a questionnaire/ were interviewed in 8 focus groups (end 2017)
- Required to select personal information attributes they were willing to disclose on a social media



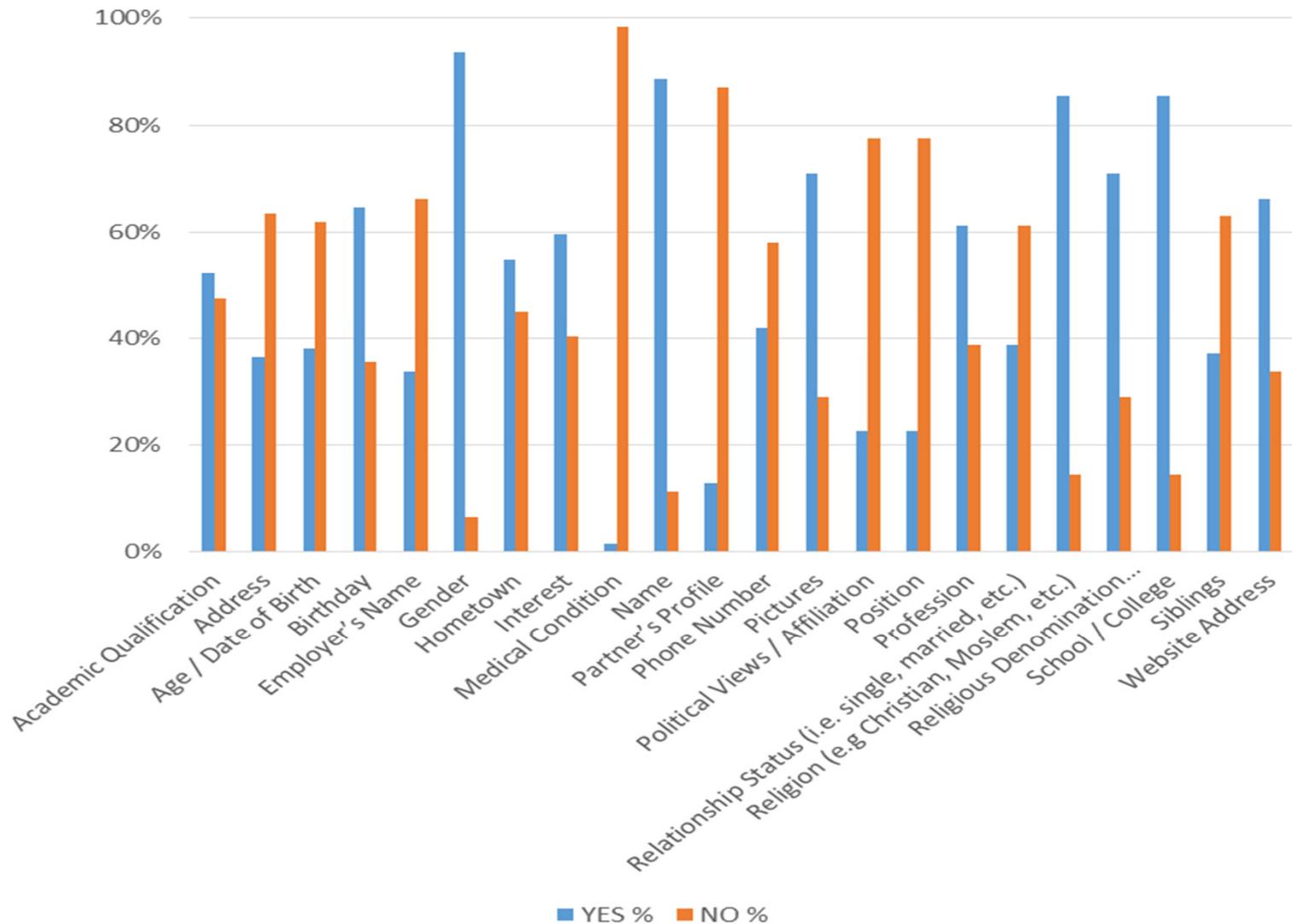
Main results

- Only about two percent willing to disclose their medical information
- 10% percent willing to disclose their partner's profile
- Many revealed their family photos, wedding pictures and birthday wishes to partners
- Contact details of many of the respondents were disclosed although about 60% stated unwillingness to disclose phone numbers
- Generally, a lack of awareness and understanding of the privacy settings and their implications



Disclose/ non-disclose in groups of info

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Influencing factors

- Strong correlation between the disclosure behavior and previous exposure of the respondents.
- Those with previous experience of any form of information abuse were less willing to disclose less harmful information.
 - These respondents were unwilling to even disclose their names and gender. In such situations, pseudonyms and gender were used to conceal their identity

