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TITLE

Fifty Shades of Privacy
Facebook Practices at the margins of Brazil and India

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ABSTRACT SUBMISSION (180/200 words)

Facebook serves as *The Internet* to majority of the world's poor through its controversial internet.org initiative. By providing free internet service to the poor in the global South, it has become the one-stop-shop for most social activity. Given the collapse of contextual diversity here, Facebook is both a forum of public expression and state control on morality and privacy rights. It is complicit in obfuscation that empowers and exploits. While universalizing virtual space for this vast populace with its global brand and algorithmic structure, specificities manifest through gender and racial enactments and codes of conduct across the global South. This text investigates how low-income youth in two of the BRICS nations- Brazil and India, exercise and express their notions on digital privacy, interpersonal surveillance and trust on Facebook. As Facebook situates itself as the dominant virtual public sphere for the world's poor, we are compelled to ask ourselves if digital inclusivity comes at the price of cultural diversity. This text provides fresh perspectives on how privacy is pluralizing for a globalizing and emergent digital public.

Keywords: digital culture, globalization, poverty, digital privacy, Facebook, India, Brazil

Introduction

In February 2015, Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook proudly announced that their

new initiative, *Internet.org*, would give the poor in India "access to free basic internet

services for health, education, jobs and communication.[i]" Highlighting the persistent digital

divide where more than a billion people in India have yet to access the Internet, he

promised that, "one day, we will connect everyone, and the power of the internet will serve

every community across India and the world." A year later, this supposed philanthropic act

brought hundreds of net neutrality advocates to the street in India. They called for the

shutdown of this project as it allowed access to only a select number of sites, serving a poor version of the internet to the poor people.

In another BRICS country, Brazil, in early 2015, there was celebration of the landmark internet regulation initiative, *Marco Civil*, a progressive bill intended to protect citizens online and keep the internet free and open to the public. Meantime, Whatsapp (owned by Facebook) partnered with certain Brazilian operators to offer free use of their application to their clients, many of whom are poor, violating the net neutrality principle of Marco Civil. In late 2015, Whatsapp was banned for 48 hours for failing to cooperate with the State in their request for data for a criminal investigation[ii]. Further, a radical reversal in the political climate has brought this bill under serious threat, signaling a step back to Brazil's recent dictatorial past of state censorship and control.

Unlike the West where laws and policies on privacy have been enshrined in the constitution for a few decades, the global South is only now starting to grapple with these issues. As the two BRICS contexts reveal, their digital and policy environments are far from converging under the neat label of the global South. Even within the country contexts, there appears to be numerous disjunctures between state sovereignty, corporate interests, and citizen rights in the shaping of the digital sphere. There are inherent tensions within the very regulations and architectures that promote digital inclusivity and digital freedom.

This continuing instability pervades at a time where people are increasingly expressing themselves online, particularly in regions of deep inequality such as India and Brazil. Considering that by 2020, digital data will predominantly come from the global South (The World Bank, 2016), it is critical that we understand how these citizens perceive and engage in virtual spaces. Privacy is of particular concern as it is a crucial enabler of democracy. While clearly there are distinct political ideologies and socio-cultural practices in

the contexts of Brazil and India, they appear to be bound by the dominant digital culture of Facebook. In the last five years in Brazil alone, Facebook users have doubled and the platform is expected to have a 90% penetration rate by 2018. In India, Facebook is so pervasive that for most users, the internet is Facebook to them. In fact, recent statistics on the top 10 countries with the highest Facebook users in the world list India and Brazil in the second and third position respectively[iii].

So, is Facebook with its global brand, algorithmic structures, privacy settings, and its 'free basics' initiatives universalizing the experiences of the poor in the global South, particularly India and Brazil? Can we claim that there is a *global digital privacy culture* in spite of disjunctures in policy and practice? To address these queries, this paper draws from a three-month ethnographic research project on privacy perceptions and behaviors on Facebook among low-income youth in India and Brazil. It hinges on the case studies of young participants who live in peripheral spaces in two cities in Brazil –Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro, and participants in outer suburban areas in India- Hyderabad and Ludhiana.

The findings reveal how the youth in both contexts build privacy values while navigating through Facebook and how and why they follow specific rules of engagement based on the socio-political ecologies within which they are embedded. Overall, this study offers insights into what marginalized youth in the global South consider private and public and to what extent we can claim a convergence of privacy norms and practices within the globalizing digital culture of Facebook.

Globalization and Digital media Cultures: Marriage for life?

The marriage between globalization and digital media cultures goes back decades with no eminent divorce in sight. Every novel technology reawakens the much-deliberated debate: on one hand, there is celebration that these tools create a new democratic sphere and empowered collectivities across national borders. The idea of a 'single place' (Robertson, 1992), an integrated, unified and borderless world unshackled from locality continues to absorb the imagination. On the other hand, there is fear that new technologies expand the scale and scope of exploitation by corporate monopolies and state entities by fostering new dependency cultures via mass media consumption (Banks and Deuze, 2009). Fordism is reignited in today's big data era. While these debates regurgitate to this day, we have made progress in our understandings of this complex relationship.

To start with, a useful definition of digital culture to go by is, "an emerging set of values, practices, and expectations regarding the way people (should) act and interact within the contemporary network society. This digital culture has emergent properties with roots in both online and offline phenomena" (Deuze, 2006, p. 5). Further, Appadurai's (1990) reconceptualization of global cultural transactions and flows across communities due to new media affordances continue to be deeply influential even though more than two decades old. His argument of how new technologies shape new geographies of affinity and feelings of deterritorialization has compelled us to attend to the *materiality of digital space.* While critiqued to date on his undermining of context in the dialogue on digital cultures, his work gave impetus to future scholars to confront such technological deterministic leanings by the mapping of real and virtual terrains (Graham, Stephens, & Hale, 2013; Arora, 2014). Today there is common acknowledgement that the two realms are deeply intertwined and cannot be extricated from one another. In situating digital cultures within urban geographies, we are able to avoid "a purely technological interpretation and recognize the

embeddedness and the variable outcomes of these technologies for different social orders" (Sassen, 2002, p. 837). As we seek to examine deeply marginalized social orders, as in the chosen contexts of the slums in India and favelas in Brazil, it is well worth considering to what degree the 'ghettoization' of the urban influence digital cultural life.

Another advancement in our understandings of digital cultures is the dominance of *global consumerism* within this sphere (Creeber & Martin, 2009). The much touted 'participatory cultures' coined with user agency in mind in the nascent years of social media, appear now to primarily serve the marketplace. In 2006, 'You,' the typical user became Time magazine's 'Person of the Year,' capturing the vision of a reversal in the power fortunes between corporations and consumers. Today, the user continues to remain at the center, but this time as the commodity through datafication of their online behaviors, captured and circulated by global IT companies (Andrejevic, 2015). Today, "metadata and data have become a regular currency for citizens to pay for their communication services and security" (Van Dijck, 2014, p.197). The poor in the global South are hardly exempt from this trend. They are the new frontiers to be conquered in this information economy. In the last five years, they have made significant strides in gaining digital access and becoming participants in the digital sphere. Among the poorest 20% of households, 7 out of 10 possess a mobile phone and are more likely to have access to a mobile phone than clean water for instance (World Bank, 2016). It's not just the usual suspects such as China and India taking over the digital domain but even regions such as Saudi Arabia and Myanmar. For instance, in Myanmar, the shift has been from a mere 1% of its population being online a few years ago to an expected increase of almost 50% by the end of this year. Hence, this newbie public will add to the global consumer culture through datafication of their actions.

However, how similar are their acts of participation within the seemingly universalizing space of Facebook?

Furthermore, what are these users consuming within these digital domains? Recent studies and browsing statistics reveal that *leisure* pursuits dictate the nature of these activities as people immerse themselves in gaming, socializing, romancing and shopping away online[iv]. As people Like Facebook posts, share their reviews on movies, swipe for love, and invite people to play Candy Crush with them, play overtakes work in this realm. This is seen as the mark of the 21st century, the arrival of a novel means of experiencing, producing and consuming leisure; "whether desired or not as part of any 'official' history of this currently central cultural medium, online recreation or 'virtual leisure' has been positioned among the dominant elements within the Internet's development" (Weiss, 2006, p.961). More so, leisure is not the prerogative of the West. In fact, recent studies have revealed a host of leisurely-oriented practices among those in the global South, even among low-income segments of society (Arora, 2012; Arora & Rangaswamy, 2013; 2014; 2015). For instance, Ganesh (2010) in her analysis of the usage of cell phones by farmers in Bangladesh discovered that instead of checking crop prices online, they primarily used these new tools to surf for pornography. Others such as Kolko and Racadio (2014) unpacked how low-income users in Brazil used government cybercafés for largely non-instrumental purposes such as chatting and gaming. Hence, we can argue that the global digital culture is in essence a digital leisure commons (Arora, 2014). The question remains on how these digital leisure architectures shape diverse consumer enactments, potentially homogenizing the user experience, regardless of their socio-economic position.

Overall, for us to attend to the specificities within global digital cultures, we keep in mind the *materiality of digital space* where context, "is not merely external to technology,

but actually penetrates its rationality" (Feenberg, 2010, p.7). In our examination of youth's online practices in the slums and favelas of India and Brazil respectively, we attend to how their highly resource-constrained and socially marginalizing environments influence their attitudes and behaviors on privacy online. Secondly, we recognize the *global consumerism* that pervade contemporary digital architectures and the overpowering algorithmic structures commodifying all users, regardless of their contexts. Yet, consumption practices do differ even within universalizing superstructures such as that of Facebook. Lastly, global digital cultures is characterized by *leisure*, manifesting in a range of non-instrumental uses of these spaces for emotional gratification, pleasure and sociality. However, with new digital technologies, we identify processes of personalization of leisure as individuals strive to fulfil their social needs through such platforms. Hence, between the 'universalizing' and 'provincializing' of digital media cultures lies the self-narrative, shaped by the socio-political ecology that surrounds it.

Privacy in the Facebook Context

Helen Nissenbaum in her classic book, 'Privacy in Context: Technology, Policy, and the Integrity of Social Life,' (2009, p.8) argues that privacy preferences are dependent upon context, "people don't choose in the abstract, but in a particular context." She goes on to make the point that if we are to judge the issue of privacy on social networks, we should thereby examine the context to determine allowances of being public or private. Again, the spectrum of an event is laid out before us, shifting meaning of what constitutes as private or public, "we do not have a dichotomy of two realms but a panoply of realms; something considered public in relation to one realm may be private in relation to another" (p.215).

That said, can we also talk in broader terms about public and private architectures? When behavior is contextually influenced but recurs time and again, does it become normalized and in-built into the culture of that specific space? Does this approach connote unrealistic power to individual choice instead of the larger socio-political systems at play? Today's social fabric has changed, becoming a more permissive society where we voluntarily share much of our personal information online (Andrejevic, 2015). The element of curiosity continues to drive communities online to pry and prod through social network sites for private information.

Westin's framework continues to stand the test of time in examining how privacy norms are set in society through the three lenses of the political, the socio-cultural and the personal (1970). Privacy at the political level for instance, demands that we consider the larger system it is within; an authoritarian society would consider the public sphere as central to social life and associate privacy as a requirement that is antithetical to the regime. On the other hand, a democratic system would favor individual freedom and expression but within this system, the 'free market' is given much weight as it is seen as a deliverer of social progress. At a socio-cultural level, class and race factors for example does influence the degree to which one has access to freedom. What constitutes as personal, how is it exercised in public space and its position as a public good is dependent on the social norms of the time. And lastly, the claims of privacy are exerted at the individual level where individuals differ on the extent to which they want to disclose and communicate to the public. Of course this self- management is deeply influenced by the political and the socio-cultural but is also independent to some degree on the former categories, resulting in a diversity of enactments.

Furthermore, we are experiencing digital cultures more and more within walled gardens (Arora, 2014). Users experience entire digital social lives within the confinement of a few dominant platforms. Many IT companies are shaping digital cultures into "an online environment where consumers go for information, communications, and commerce services and that discourages them from leaving for the larger digital world" (Turow, 2012). This trend is impacting those well beyond the economically resourceful. The digital divide has taken on a new walled garden form, led by technology moguls such as Facebook. With Facebook's free-basics initiative as described earlier, this platform is able to include a larger and less prosperous newbie clientele into the virtual leisure domain, albeit at the price of choice.

In fact, with Facebook being the dominant platform for today's global youth, several research studies have focused primarily on youth's social practices within this platform. In the last few years, privacy concerns on social networking sites have risen dramatically among the youth, shifting their behaviors and perceptions considerably. While the youth continue to use these sites in a freer and more playful manner to socialize and build a culture around them, they are also becoming more savvy about their self-presentation, friending of strangers and sharing among their peers (Montgomery, 2015). In the earlier years, youth were more susceptible to believing that Facebook was more private than it actually was; "those engaged exclusively in recreational domains probably feel this illusion most strongly" (Barnes, 2006, p.15). As with any newly designed and inhabited space, there is a learning curve in the understanding of its architectures and it is often a matter of time for the inhabitants to learn how to circumvent and play with the barriers to best suit their needs.

Boyd and Marwick (2011) disputes the narrative of youth naiveté on issues of privacy on social network sites through a large-scale survey on attitudes and practices on Facebook of 18 and 19 year-olds in the United States in 2009 and 2010. They found that teens have developed sophisticated socio-linguistic strategies that enable them to carve out privacy within Facebook's 'open' culture. By communicating through personally manufactured codes that are understood mainly by their peers, they are able to be public and private at the same time. The authors emphasize the contextual nature of youth practices wherein, "networked publics are shaped by their interpretation of the social situation, their attitudes towards privacy and publicity, and their ability to navigate the technological and social environment" (p.1). Also, the youth nowadays have become far more selective in their tagging, friending and sharing behavior where they limit these interactions primarily to 'Friends-only.' A follow-up study (Boyd, 2014), however, acknowledged that in spite of these strategies, ultimately, young people's motivation to spend time on social network sites to connect and bond with acquaintances and friends as well as new Facebook algorithms to maximize the sharing of personal data, continues to exasperate the vulnerabilities of the youth on these platforms. Facebook is structured for an ever expanding and consumer-oriented public, where what is perceived as privatized conversation often seeps out into the public at large. As user's content circulates and recirculates, it experiences a context collapse, enabling unpredictable and often harmful consequences as a result.

While we are well aware at this point on the problems associated with Facebook's digital culture and it's privacy affordances for the youth, these studies are mainly drawn from youth practices in the West. Furthermore, there are few studies that capture low-income youth's digital life in the global South, and particularly their privacy concerns as they join a platform that promises them global connectivity, sociality and pleasure. This is

puzzling considering that the poor have long served as the litmus test of surveillance and a communal group subject to ongoing intrusive programs in the name of empowerment and public safety. As Eubanks (2014) argues,

> The most sweeping digital surveillance technologies are designed and tested in what could be called 'low rights environments' — poor communities…where there are low expectations of political accountability and transparency…many of these technologies are first developed for the U.S. military to deploy in the global south, and later tested for civilian purposes on marginal communities in the United States. (p.2)

Hence, this chapter takes us on an exploratory journey into the narratives of a small cohort of youth in very different cultural environments to gauge how and to what extent these youth are partaking in a larger global digital privacy culture.

Approaching the Margins: Sites of Investigation

Data for this chapter is extracted from a study that focuses on perceptions about privacy and online behaviors among low-income youth in Brazil and India. It hinges on the case studies of 22 participants between the ages of 14 and 27, who live in peripheral spaces in two cities in Brazil -Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro, and 22 participants who live in outer suburban areas [peri-urban areas] in India- 12 from Isnapur, which is a small town 30 miles from the city of Hyderabad in South India and 10 from the city of Ludhiana in North India. We relied on a myriad of ethnographic methods, including semi-structured interviews, focus groups, photo-documenting participants' cell phones, their neighborhoods and homes, and participant observation of Facebook activity. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The semi-structured interviews gave us insight into the participants' perspectives on privacy and freedom of speech in the digital sphere, as well as demographic information and insights into their day-to-day online life. After analyzing interview data, we

conducted a series of focus groups to delve deeper into the core questions of our study and to ask participants to make sense of some of the findings from the initial individual interviews. Photo-documenting cell phones allowed us to record security measures via security settings. It also allowed us to triangulate interview data about Internet usage, based on the apps that the participants had downloaded and described as most frequently used.

We recruited the twelve informants in Belo Horizonte from a night school program for non-traditional students, where they were enrolled. All of the interviews were conducted at the school. The Rio de Janeiro participants were recruited through community leaders who had access to youth that met the parameters of our study. The interviews were conducted at two different community centers and an educational program site. Participants from Isnapur were recruited from public squares and playgrounds and in Ludhiana from a low-income population segment of college going youth and in blue-collar jobs. Throughout this text, we use pseudonyms to refer to the research participants in order to protect their anonymity.

This study is based on youth, living in low-income formal and informal neighborhoods that the UN refers to as slums in India and Brazil. They define a slum household as "one that lacks any of the following five elements: access to improved water, access to improved sanitation, security of tenure, durability of housing, and sufficient living area" (Martin and Mathema, 2009). Most slums are situated in the global south. In Brazil, a slum is a type of informal settlement that falls under the larger umbrella term 'favela.' Favelas historically have broadly been defined as illegal squatter settlements. In today's context, this definition is inadequate in light of recent government policies, such as *Minha Casa, Minha Vida*, aimed at legitimizing informal spaces, and legalizing land and home ownership among residents (Loureiro et al., 2013).

The infrastructure of slums generally entail makeshift shacks constructed of bricks, garbage and other discarded material, built in close proximity to the city. Other defining characteristics of this social construction involve specific entry points, an occupying population of low-income residents and in the context of Brazil, high rates of violence due to rivaling drug factions and clashes with the police (Goldstein, 2013). In both contexts, residents tend to live in high-density spaces and in the case of India, share mobile phones with multiple users (Rangaswamy and Cutrell, 2013). This compels a sensitization on the cultural and socio-economic specificities on the notion and materialization of privacy in one's day-to-day lives. These spatial configurations and social conditions shape the daily realities of residents, which, the following section reveals, influences their perspectives on issues related to privacy, freedom of expression, surveillance, and trust, both in digital and non-digital contexts.

Results and Discussion

In both contexts, youth struggled to define privacy. There is no obvious translation of this vocabulary in their local languages. The standard response initially was "no idea" to what they consider as private and public but they started to situate privacy based on the medium through which their messages are sent: usually this translated to them using messenger apps for private and Facebook for public communication. Facebook is a public sphere to them. However, the Indian and Brazilian context diverge when it comes to privacy concerns and practices, with the Brazilian participants being far more cautious and distrustful of the Internet than the Indian counterpart. Trust of digital information appears to be far more pervasive among the Indian than the Brazilian participants. Our select group of Indian youth almost always reveal all of their real information while the Brazilian participants are more

cautious; while they also give their real names, they are more prone to distrusting people and institutions on the Internet. As Raquel from Rio states, "there are many people that use it [cyberspace] for evil." The Brazilian youth are more protective of their privacy and do not share their cell phones as freely with others. According to Carlos, "I don't like that people touch my personal stuff. Because they will start looking at my personal stuff. And I do not let them. If they want to see something, I, myself, will show them. I do not let them use it." However, when in relationships, many of our Brazilian participants share their passwords with their partner. Overall, the following sections reveal certain disjunctures in online norms and behaviors between the two contexts, underlying the problematics in analyzing digital privacy within the BRICS as a consolidated and unified social value.

Facebook, no longer the "Land of Marlboro"

Facebook in both contexts is seen largely as a public and positive digital sphere. Several of the youth in both contexts expressed that Facebook is meant to be open and if you are on it, you are there to be seen and heard. However, they also demonstrated an awareness of the growing vulnerabilities posed by such open cultures. Ketlina from Belo Horizonte remarks on this shift, "the Internet was the land of Marlboro, everybody would do whatever they wanted and that would be it, not now, now people know there's a limit, but unfortunately you can only impose a limit once someone surpasses it."

While it may no longer be the wild wild West as expressed by Ketlina and envisioned by the first generation of internet scholars and enthusiasts, it evokes an affirmative and hopeful culture of aspiration, community, and intimacy. Facebook is a happy place, particularly to those whose day-to-day social lives are entrenched by poverty and violence, as in the case of the Brazilian context. For instance, Rodrigues insists that his Facebook wall

should be filled with positive messages and nothing else. He doesn't need Facebook to be an extension of his reality but rather a safe space away from it; "We live in Rio de Janeiro that is extremely violent, we have many tragedies, many bad things happening…if you only post bad things, soon my page on Facebook will only have bad things, so if I'm a guy who wants good things for me, I'll only post good things and soon there will only be good things on my Facebook page, if you open my Facebook page today you'll only find positive things, happy things." While violence was not evoked in the Indian context, the insistence of Facebook as a pleasure domain is a shared sentiment. Most of the Indian youth believe that Facebook is a place where you should mainly post jokes, spiritual and motivational sayings, and nice photos of beauty and inspiration. It is indeed a leisure commons for them (Arora, 2014), open to one and all.

Of course, communicating mainly positive posts requires effort at self-presentation, making sure to not reveal one's vulnerable side or too much of one's actual life. As Milana from Belo Horizonte says, "on Facebook depending on the day, I share a thought; for example, a short while ago, three days ago, I noticed I'm getting bald, then I posted a joke. Christmas is coming and I posted: 'Dear Santa Claus, I would like to ask for hair!' But in a more spontaneous way, I try to be spontaneous. But I do avoid using Facebook for outbursts, I don't like it, I think it's overexposing. Feelings I think is something particular to me, I think it's unnecessary, because not everybody who is on Facebook, is someone you know. I wouldn't like them to know about certain things of my life. So when you expose yourself, it's as if you're exposing yourself to judgment." Thereby, the presentation of one's self and life is connected to the diversity of one's 'audience' on Facebook. This is consistent with current literature on self-presentation across diverse cultures where it is found that people's control and positive manicuring of one's image becomes more challenging as their

Facebook friends come from diverse social groups like family, the work place, friends, acquaintances, strangers and the like (Rui & Stefanone, 2013). Further, authenticity in self-representation is contingent not just on the actual audiences but also perceived audiences (Wilson, Gosling & Graham, 2012). Additionally, cultural norms and social traits of the individual creates disjunctures in self-presentation, where for many, Facebook becomes a space of fantasy while for some, a space of authenticity. For instance, while the high levels of violence and racism in the favelas push several participants like Rodrigues to create a "happy" place on Facebook, few others like Bruno seek an 'honest' space instead. "Many people will say that I'm a criminal, that I'm saying many silly things…so for those who knows how to use the social network, for those who use the virtual world in general to talk about those things [about being systematically discriminated], it's good for us. Because in many places that we go to talk about those things, we go and knock on the door and they will slam the door on our faces, we won't be able to talk. And the social network is there and you say whatever you want."

When comparing another popular application, Whatsapp to Facebook, there were diverse rules of conduct expected on privacy practices in both contexts. Participants erase their histories quite often on Whatsapp but rarely on Facebook. The digital culture of Facebook is an accumulation of the past, a voluntary conduct facilitating permanence. Comparing these two apps, Meghana says, "with Facebook when you post a picture you post where you are, with whom you are, with WhatsApp I don't, if I want it, I can stay anonymous with it. Nobody will know what I'm doing and for me that's better." However, some participants are more skeptical about these differences in apps, believing that today they are converging into the same open culture, "WhatsApp is something more secret. But if

something happens on WhatsApp, it goes passing from one contact to another, then once you look at it again it's all over the world, because these days it's on based on the internet."

Hence, it appears that in both contexts, most participants perceive Facebook to be a "happy place," a leisure commons where play, sociality and positive impressions of one's self and life pervade. This is consistent with the dominant literature in the West, although driven by very different social reasons and motivations. While Facebook serves as a safety valve for youth by providing an alternative public sphere, there are disjunctures in how this manifests, from escapism to being an open forum for suppressed voices to be heard.

Friends, Romance and Countrymen

Friending and romance are dominant themes that emerged from our data, warranting a special focus, particularly as it relates to articulations on privacy. The Indian and Brazilian context often fall on the opposite sides of the spectrum when it comes to romance, dating and sexuality. Among the Indian youth, a quarter of their friends on Facebook are people they have never met nor expect to meet. Their friending decisions are based on profile photos and the nature of their posts: status updates most desired are those that are inspirational and spiritual sayings, romantic posts, and jokes. The Brazil youth, on the contrary, communicated and demonstrated far more reserve towards strangers and for the most part, do not accept stranger's requests for friendship much like the US youth on similar grounds of privacy.

Most Facebook studies in the West have revealed that online networks are mostly an extension of existing social networks, including weak social ties (Boyd, 2014). Yet, recent studies focusing on marginalized youth beyond the West have revealed that Facebook becomes an aspirational geography where disadvantaged youth seek to connect and expand

their networks well beyond their limited social capital. For instance, youth in the slums of

Hyderabad and Chennai,

> …searched for new friends based on familiar names or were happy to friend request any Indian person. Certainly others mentioned an interest in making friends with people far away, as a teenaged boy put it '… I will look for and friend certain names… Like Jack or John for instance…' For our young informants, Facebook engagements are gateways to unimaginable opportunities: composing second selves, making friendships and forging diasporic interactions. More importantly, underlying all these on-line activities is the urge to seek aspirationally endowing interactions with people from an elevated social status. (Rangaswamy and Arora, 2015, pp. 9-10).

Similarly, Kumar (2014) found that low-SES youth in India were able to circumvent their

caste, education status, and economic background and communicate with strangers around

the world with the help of Google Translate. She underlines that a major motivation for

using Facebook's unlimited real-time chatting with these strangers was due to new

government regulations in 2012 that no mobile user could send more than 200 short

message services (SMSs) per day. A comparative study between Namibia and US youth

revealed that while the latter did not friend strangers due to privacy issues (except 'known

strangers' who shared common social spaces and groups), the Namibian youth did as it was

considered rude to reject requests (Peters, Winschiers-Theophilus, & Mennecke, 2015).

Friendship is usually the pathway for more romantic inclinations in the Indian

context compared to the Brazilian counterpart. While the Brazilian context has more relaxed

social norms on sexuality and dating among the sexes, Indian youth are still subject to

arranged marriages and there are strong protocols and barriers in communicating with the

opposite sex. This creates high motivation for the Indian youth to reach out to the opposite

sex who are strangers online. In fact, several narratives emerged in the Indian context of

how Facebook romance reified into urban dramas, causing much chaos in their life. Rishi

from Isnapur shares one of these stories with us, "there is one friend…he loved a girl and

started making those posts and posting daily. He loved her so deeply but, her family members didn't like it and they got her married to another guy. He hit his head with a stone. He made a huge hole in his head. We stopped him else he would have been dead. We took him to Kakatiya hospital."

That said, girls are more cautious than boys. Some worry about their reputation, "if someone sends vulgar messages from my account, it will affect my social status." Some have migrated from one account to another because of strangers who started to stalk them, "I used to have an account which I removed because it became a head ache to manage it because of strangers." Also, girls are more likely to put restrictions on photos when sharing compared to the boys. This is consistent with the dominant literature on Facebook usage by gender across different cultural contexts (Rui & Stefanone, 2013) where women have continued to demonstrate more caution, given the consequences on their reputation, safety and social life in general can be more detrimental than for men as the next section reveals.

Globalizing of Revenge Porn Cultures

A major area of vulnerability is revenge porn, the non-consensual sharing of sexual content posted and distributed online of the person featured, with the purpose of shaming (Levendowski, 2014). We found that in both contexts, participants, primarily women were deeply concerned about their reputation as stories circulated in the media and within their neighborhoods of 'victims' of revenge porn. In fact, this practice is deeply pervasive worldwide. However, the attitudes towards the 'victim' diverge quite dramatically between the two contexts.

A common media narrative in India to 'slut-shame' the victim. For instance, as early as 2009, Muttalik of the conservative right-wing Hindu religious party in India suggested that

the young women have themselves to blame as they have been "corrupted by technologies" – their inappropriate use of their cell phones have made them "sluts." The digital sphere is seen as complicit. Here, 'sluttiness' is tied "not to sexual practices but to the presence of women in particular spaces and company" (Shah, 2015, p.4). With this perspective, Facebook is seen as imbued with an intrinsic digital culture of loose-morality and an extension of Western public space including pubs and bars, which bring together the sexes in ways that challenge so called Indian values and cultures.

In contrast, the Brazilian context has far less gender segregation and sexuality is more open and permissive. Even then, sexuality issues matter here. Media events such as the suicide of 17-year-old Julia Rebecca after the posting of the video online of her having sex with other minors pushed the revenge porn bill into motion. A recent court ruling in Brazil banned 'Secret,' the app that allows content such as this to be posted anonymously online. The court ordered Apple and Google to remove this app from their online services. In 2014, Brazil formulated a more sophisticated version of the Civil Framework for the Internet called 'Marco Civil,' incorporating protections for users including against 'slut-shaming.'

With these cultural events ongoing in our select sites, we found that young women in the Indian context were far more sympathetic to the women in released sex videos compared to the Brazilian counterpart. There was a shared feeling of camaraderie towards these women, viewed clearly as victims of these public violations; "I find it very wrong. It's their personal life and nobody has a right to judge" says Aysha from Isnapur, echoing a common sentiment. However, our fieldwork in Brazil revealed that many women blamed women, partly or fully on the release of revenge porn videos. Sandra from Belo Horizonte, like many of our participants here believed that in today's modern age, women were clearly at fault, as they should know better when using mobile technologies; "guilty is the person

who let the other person take his or her picture, for sure." Several (male and female participants) put the blame on the girl; "Of course. The girl sending nude photos to her boyfriend is at fault." Predominately, the perspective was that of shared guilt; "if I need to say who is to blame, I would say that the person who shares this content and the woman who allows these pics are both wrong." A few evoked their right to privacy in such discussions. While acknowledging self-blame, Elena from Rio stated clearly that it is a matter of rights. "I made the video with my boyfriend, we broke up and he posted it. Even though I'm wrong, I'm gonna go after my rights, because my image is there. Everybody has the right, so here nobody is a saint."

With few public spheres of permissibility and the dearth of gender agency in controlling one's choices as in the Indian context, can one argue that this results in more consolidated gender camaraderie than in the Brazilian site? The public sphere here appears to be synonymous with patriarchy dictating so called 'Indian values.' For instance, the young males in India when asked about their views on public display of affection, responded by saying that "we don't need that culture, we are Indians we have some standards. If I am an American I would have supported it." Another remarked that, "if they want to kiss, why don't they go to their home and kiss there?" Ironically, home in the context of low-income dwellings are often just as public as it is hard to escape family surveillance in one-room homes.

Kaya (2009) argues about the fragility and temporal nature of public space in patriarchal societies for women where even an inappropriate male gaze can transform what is deemed public into an intensely private moment. "While a woman's modesty dictates that men should not glance at her, she cannot expect this level of respect from strangers who have no obligations to her" (p. 260). Hence, there is a constant state of vulnerability for

women where even the most public domain can at any moment in time become private, situating their behavior as a violation to the norms dictating that space. This creates a perennial fear of violating the public sphere under patriarchal surveillance. Given that traditionally women's morality has been usurped as men's "symbolic capital" (Bourdieu, 1977), privacy becomes the protection of female virtue. Hence, the public realm becomes a deeply gendered space. Therefore, we can never talk about privacy without talking about gender equality, Lever compellingly argues (2015). Hence, digital cultures on sexuality confront larger systems and values embedded within these contexts such as the degree of patriarchy. The balkanized approach to sexuality online confronts the more globalized approach of privacy as a human rights issue.

Concluding thoughts: *Is there a global digital privacy culture?*

Privacy is a universal human need. There is no doubt about it. While an innate and intrinsic requirement for social life, the way it manifests across cultures is a question of continued debate. With every new technology that comes to the fore, there is speculation of both the utopic and dystopic kind of the globalization of social norms and practices. Privacy is no different. Context clearly matters as privacy is a response to the larger public spheres offline and online that surround us, shaping the choices we make in navigating through these territories. However, what happens as the digital context, in this case Facebook, becomes a dominant public space for the marginalized youth in the global South? The design of the platform maximizes one's personal sharing, and makes public individual choices, thoughts and overall ones' day-to-day life through its market-oriented algorithmic structures. With the universalizing of Facebook, is there a convergence of privacy cultures as well?

Currently, much of the privacy scholarship on Facebook point to certain directions and commonalities –youth have become more concerned about their privacy, particularly interpersonal surveillance from their own family members and romantic partners. They believe they are far more in control in spite of the shifting nature of these technological architectures, structured towards the furthering of commodification of user content. Unlike the past, few of the youth today 'friend' complete strangers. There are gender, ethnic and cultural differences in usage. Women and girls are far more active on these spaces but are also far more vulnerable as their private messages can and do circulate into the public domain without their consent. Revenge porn is a pervasive issue and has been at the forefront of pushing internet regulation and policy into action. While numerous studies acknowledge differences in cultural practices, there is no conclusive evidence to reify privacy norms across entire groups and communities. However, the classic Hofstede thinking of the East and West cultures divided along lines of collectivism versus individualism respectively continue to pervade. This paper does not subscribe to this approach and in fact, stands as a testimony to work against such beloved theories of reductionism that continue to influence our thinking on cultural practice. Impression-management on Facebook has received tremendous attention in recent years with scholars largely agreeing on the idealization of the self on this platform, fostering a primarily affirmative space.

While these findings appear to consolidate notions on the Facebook culture and push towards a globalizing of digital privacy cultures within this space, this study reminds the reader that these understandings are drawn dominantly from the context of the West. To date, we know little on the privacy behaviors, attitudes and usage by the youth in the global South. This is astonishing given the fact that 85% of the youth population resides in

this region. What is more remarkable is that there is almost no research on low-income youth's perceptions and practices online in a time where a majority are gaining quick access to these new tools. To address this yawning gap, we investigated low-income youth's perceptions and enactments of privacy on Facebook in Brazil and India.

As our findings have revealed, we clearly cannot pander to the dichotomy of the West and the rest or the global North-South as normalized bordering. Brazilian youth have more in common with the West, particularly in their cautious approach toward privacy than the Indian youth. Brazilian youth express and demonstrate far more awareness on the spectrum of privacy concerns and thereby, are more careful in their sharing and friending behavior as compared to the Indian youth. Furthermore, certain urban ecologies dominate each context: the high degree of violence in the favelas of Brazil deeply influence and shape online behavior among the youth while in India, the deep conservativism in the area of sexuality and dominant social norms such as arranged marriages (unlike in Brazil) influence their online behavior in the area of romance.

This is not to say that there are no convergences in this domain. In fact, revenge porn unfortunately is a global practice, revealing that regardless of cultures and socio-economic realities, teenage girls continue to be vulnerable to such violations. There are disjunctures in the perception of these girls by the public and particularly other women as outlined in this study. Indian women are far more sympathetic than their Brazilian counterpart, partly related to specific gender roles and expected knowledge of the digital sphere. Furthermore, there is a globally shared understanding of Facebook as a positive and open culture. Again, the disjunctures here are on the motivations for such affections, driven by escapism from violent realities in the case of Brazil versus high aspiration for romance in the case of India. As the youth in these contexts become more entrenched in this digital

sphere, it is worth asking if such voices from the margins will reflect and influence internet regulation and policy in this global era.

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