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Privacy and the Digital Generation Gap: Myth and Reality

Ruth Halperin
College of Management Academic Studies, Israel, ruth.halperin@gmail.com

Yuval Dror
College of Management Academic Studies, Israel, yuvald@colman.ac.il

PRIVACY AND THE DIGITAL GENERATION GAP: MYTH AND REALITY

Complete Research

Ruth Halperin, College of Management Academic Studies, Israel, ruth.halperin@gmail.com
Yuval Dror, College of Management Academic Studies, Israel, yuvald@colman.ac.il

ABSTRACT

Over the past decade the demise of privacy has been repeatedly pronounced by renowned technology executives such as Mark Zuckerberg declaring privacy as passé and anachronistic- "so 20th century" - the concern of old people. However, there has been relatively little research into privacy perception and behaviour among different generations that may relate to how people navigate their private lives in online settings. Furthermore, recent research reveals the ways in which privacy concerns of young internet users are enacted, thus challenging overgeneralized claims of a clear-cut generation gap associated with online privacy. As information privacy problems are becoming thornier, unfounded statement voiced by stakeholders with vested interests should be put to one side. Instead, systematic research is needed to understand how privacy is perceived and managed by people of different age groups, and what measures can and should be taken to address current and future concerns of internet users across generations. We address these questions and account for the results using a representative sample from Israel.

Key words: privacy, self-disclosure, generations, digital natives

1 Introduction

Information privacy is considered one of the most important ethical, legal, social, and political issue of the information age (Hong & Thong, 2013; Dinev, 2014; Acquisti et al, 2015). During the past decade, the problems involving information privacy— the ascendance of Big Data and fusion centers, the tsunami of data security breaches, the dramatic rise of Web 2.0, the growth of behavioral marketing, and the proliferation of tracking technologies — have become thornier (Solove, 2013: 1). Personalized web services and business intelligence software require the collection and mining of unprecedented amounts of personally identifying information. As consumers become content providers on web blogs and social networking websites (SNS), their personal information becomes ever more vulnerable (Hong & Thong, 2013). Researchers are advocating a re-examination of privacy concerns and consequences to reflect the contemporary nature of this dynamic construct (Anton et al, 2010). Under these conditions, understanding individuals' privacy concerns and behaviour is fundamental to the success of emerging digital technologies (Pavlou, 2011). In this paper, we investigate the differences in privacy concerns and behaviour between young and old generations. While many popular claims are in circulation (Nussbaum, 2007), findings on this question are limited at best (Steijn &Vedder, 2015). It is therefore important to establish based on rigorous, representative data, the effects of age on privacy related perceptions and practices and to increase understanding of actual generational divides to inform legislators and policy makers, as well as internet entrepreneurs (Steijn &Vedder, 2015; Wang et al, 2013).

2 Online Privacy and the Digital Generation Gap

The publication of Mark Presnky's article entitled 'digital natives, digital immigrants'(2001) gave rise to a fierce debate of the relationship between IT and age. Prensky argued that digital technology has brought about a radical generation break between young people, so-called 'digital natives', and the older generation of 'immigrants'. In line with this trend, and albeit the critical wave (cf. Herring, 2008; White and Le Cornu, 2011) a generational rhetoric entered the discourse about online privacy (Barnes, 2006). As social media proliferate, the prevailing notion persists: young people don't care about privacy while older generations still do (Tufecky, 2012; Boyd, 2014).

Yet, research to corroborate the claims is scarce. Few empirical studies can confirm that young people actually express fewer privacy concerns than adults (Steijn &Vedder, 2015). Recent literature indicates that young people are more, less, or equivalently preoccupied with privacy. Studies focusing on the consequences of young people's privacy concerns similarly offer contradictory results, including both increased protective behaviours and the development of risky behaviours (Miltgen & Peyrat-Guillard, 2014). While a growing body of literature focus on privacy issues related to young people engagement with digital technology (Lusoli & Miltigen, 2009), comparative studies with adults are limited at best (Steijn &Vedder, 2015).

Furthermore, empirical research on offer typically uses convenience samples of college students, inadequate to address age effects. This leads to the question: does a generation gap exist? (Banks, et. al. 2014). Few studies based on nationally representative samples have examined the relationship between online privacy and age. Surveying German Internet users, Taddicken (2013) found that age had little relationship to SNS information disclosure, or privacy concerns. Similarly, based on representa-

tive US sample, Hoofnagle et al (2010) found no significant differences by age across a range of privacy variables. However two Pew surveys of representative samples of the US population both found that older users were less likely to have changed their privacy settings, deleted unwanted comments, removed their name from photos or taken steps to limit information about them on SNSs (Madden & Smith, 2010, Raine et al. 2013). In a recent UK study, Banks et al (2014) reports results that contradict some of the previous studies. In their survey almost 95% of 14-17-year-olds have checked or changed their privacy settings. From there the percentage who has taken action to protect their privacy drops to 32.5% of respondents age 65 and over. As the authors note, results from previous research are mixed, and the ambiguities surrounding age make it fertile ground for additional research. The present study aims to contribute further, providing up-to-date findings on the Israeli population.

3 Method

This research is based on a national survey recently conducted in Israel. Survey sampling unit comprised of Israeli households, individuals age 12+. Telephone interviews were performed by the Mahshov Public Opinion Research Company using a Scout system. Each sector was interviewed in its native language by trained surveyors with appropriate native language (Hebrew, Arab, Russian).

3.1 Sample

The sampling method involved random probability sampling of a proportional stratified sample. The sample included 1,052 subjects, sampled proportionally according to their percentage in the general population so that the sample size from each stratum (sector) is proportional to the size of the strata population. Maximum sampling error is plus or minus 3 points for the sample size with a 95% confidence interval. Sampling of sectors: veteran Jews—68%, immigrants who arrived in Israel after 1990—12%, Arab sector—20%. A proportional random strata sampling was also performed for each sector based on residence district. A real-time sample control was also performed based on the age and gender variables of each cell using the data published in the current annual reports of the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test based on the CBS data, which was performed after the sampling, found that none of the distributions varied statistically from the CBS distribution apart from the Jewish sector sample. This sample had a statistically significant variance with a significance level of 1-5% for age distribution. The sampling design was planned as follows: controlled variables monitored district according to the CBS. Monitored variables monitored: gender, age, new immigrant (in order to preserve the limit for this population), religiosity (in order to monitor the ultra-orthodox – 'haredi' sector).

z-tests were conducted to establish the significance of distribution differences and a post-hoc Bonferroni test for multiple comparison was performed. Chi-square tests were also conducted in order to examine statistical independence between categorical variables. Throughout this paper, statistical significance $p<0.05$ is indicated using coloured cells.

Within the nationally representative sample, age groups were assembled drawing on generational categorization most common in the literature (How and Strauss, 2000; Rosen, 2010). Specifically, we divided the sample as follows: iGeneration consisting of adolescents, with age ranging from 12 to 17 years of age. YGeneration included young adults aged 18-34; X Generation ranging from 35 to 54 and finally, the BabyBoom generation of adults aged 55 and over.

3.2 Measures

The survey instruments included measures to assess both behaviours and perceptions related to online privacy. In addition to general patterns of use, behavioural construct included self-disclosing behaviours and privacy-protective behaviours. Perceptual constructs consisted of privacy self-efficacy and privacy knowledge.

To measure self-disclosure behaviour, three items were developed to capture distinct disclosure activities common is the use of SNS namely, sharing photos, sharing location and tagging. Respondents were asked how often they engage in these activities.

Privacy protective behaviours were measured with items assessing two coping strategies: application removal and password management. The items were adopted from prior studies investigating privacy protection behaviours (cf. Moscardelli & Divine 2007) and revised in accordance with current technological affordances.

Privacy self-efficacy was measured using two items, which were developed by examining prior work on a related construct (LaRose, et al 2001). This study developed items estimating confidence (or lack thereof) in protecting privacy from e-services' information practices. The two items used in this study were: "I know exactly which tools to use in order to protect my privacy while using the internet" and "I feel powerless in the face of internet companies' ability to collect information about me while using the internet".

With regard to privacy knowledge, researchers have operationalized different dimensions associated with knowledge of data collection risk (Park, 2012). Building on previous studies, our measure for privacy knowledge was aimed at assessing the level of awareness to common institutional practices of data collection and use, particularly by commercial stakeholders. Three items were used in this study: "companies regularly document my habits while browsing and are utilizing my personal information for commercial purposes"; "I know exactly which personal information is being collected about me by internet companies, applications and websites"; and finally a false statement: "information I disclose or share online is never passed on to stakeholder whom I did not disclosed to directly".

4 Results

Results from the research pertain to key variables of behaviour and perception, as they relate to online privacy. In what follows we elaborate on the categories and their subsets, providing corresponding results.

4.1 Privacy-related behaviour

The general category of online behaviour was divided into two main subsets. First we explored use patterns, which we divided into ***general use*** and ***self-disclosure behaviour***. Second, we examined ***privacy protecting behaviour*** more specifically.

4.1.1 Use patterns across generations of Israelis

Analysis of general internet use patterns across generations showed that 67% of Ygeneration goes online daily, several times a day. iGeneration followed with 65%. As age go up the percentage of users reporting going online several times a day decreases with significant difference as indicated in table 1.

Table 1: %who go online daily, several times day

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	I (12-17)
	40%	52%	67%	65%

4.1.2 Use of social networking sites

Social networking sites (SNS) encourage users to share substantial amounts of information about themselves. Indeed, social networking behaviour is essentially based on self-disclosure (Chen, 2013). Survey results on the question: 'How often do you access SNS such as Facebook, Twitter, Waze etc.' is indicated in table 2 below, showing frequency of use between different age groups.

Table 2: Frequency of SNS use across generations

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	I (12-17)
daily, several time a day	28%	43%	60%	63%
daily, once a day	17%	11%	14%	14%
almost everyday	6%	7%	8%	10%
once or twice a week	8%	7%	5%	4%
once to several times a month	4%	3%	0%	1%
every 2-3 month or less	2%	1%	1%	0%
never use social networks	35%	28%	12%	8%

In early 2014 claims were made regarding declining teen interest in SNSs, particularly Facebook (Kiss, 2014). Even though the present survey did not examine the frequency of Facebook use specifically but rather the frequency of SNS use as whole, results from Israel do not support the contention that teens are moving away from SNSs. Only 4% of adolescents aged 15-17 and young adults aged 18-24 said they had not registered on some kind of SNS. The percentage of high frequency internet users who use SNSs 'daily' or 'multiple times a day', is higher in the 12-34 age group and declines with age.

Table 3: high frequency SNS activity across generations

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	I (12-17)
	46%	61%	81%	77%

In sum, analysis of internet use patterns in general, and of SNS in particular, show significant differences across age groups, clearly dividing young generations (i and Y) from older generation (X and BB). As one would expect, young people are heavier users of digital technology and frequency of use decreases as age goes up.

4.1.3 Self-disclosure behaviour

Israeli internet users were asked whether they provide personal information such as ID number, home address, telephone number and other personal details when registering for eServices. 64% said they never provided such information. 6% said that they provided identifying information once but would not do so again. This compared with 28% who said that they did supply personal information when registering for various internet services. Generational analysis on this question revealed that significantly fewer adolescents (ages 12-17) supply personal information (17%) compared to users of older generations. This finding contrast with prevalent notions of risky online behaviour associated with adolescents. It corresponds, however, with recent studies showing lying behaviour displayed by youngsters as a privacy protection strategy ((Miltgen & Peyrat-Guillard, 2014).

Table 4: % who provide personal information online across generation

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	I (12-17)
	32%	32%	22%	17%

4.1.3.1 Disclosure of personal information on SNSs

People who use SNSs routinely engage in self-disclosure practices online, which in turn affect their privacy. We examined three common practices and their frequencies: (1) sharing personal photos /videos on SNSs such as Facebook, Flickr, Picasa, and YouTube; (2) tagging personal photos, and (3) allowing such applications as Waze, Facebook, and Twitter to receive information about location. Results show variances in the percentage of users who engage in these practices. Half the SNS users (51%) shared personal photos or videos compared with 46% who did not share photos or shared them in the past but won't do so in future. 43% tagged themselves or others in photos versus 54% who did not tag or used to tag but would not do so in the future. 47% shared their location with application providers, compared with 50% who did not.

When these practices were tested for age, it was found that they mostly apply to younger users: as age go up the percentage of users enacting these practices declines. The percentage of Baby boomers (55+) that shared self-photos differed significantly from all other generations. A significant difference was found in photo tagging between the younger generations (i and Y) and the older generations (X and BB). Similarly, a significant difference was found in sharing geographical location between the under 35 users and the 35+ users. These results are summarized in table 5.

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Table 5: SNS practices involving self-disclosure - distribution across generation

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	i (12-17)
I share my photos/video	28%	48%	56%	63%
I tag myself / others in photos	17%	34%	49%	62%
I allow application to know my geographic location	26%	39%	54%	57%

A direct significant correlation was found between the three practices examined and frequency of SNS use. When SNSs are used more frequently users will tend to share photos / videos, tag themselves, or let applications know their location. For example, roughly half the users (52%) who use SNSs multiple times a day tend to tag themselves in photos while only 32% of those who use SNSs once a day and only 16% of those who use SNSs twice a week or less, are likely to tag. A weak though significant correlation was found between the three practices and the frequency of SNS use, which persisted even after controlling for age and frequency of internet use. The heavy users who access SNSs multiple times a day differ significantly from other users in all three practices examined.

To conclude, young generations are heavier internet users in general and heavier disclosures, particularly in SNSs. Furthermore, analysis suggests that general use and self-disclosure are reinforcing one another, as use patterns and self-disclosure practices are positively correlated. Having addressed online self-disclosure behaviour, we move on to report results concerning privacy protective behaviour.

4.1.4 Privacy protective behaviour

Two kinds of online privacy protective activities were addressed. First we examined the extent to which users remove/uninstall applications due to demand for PII. Second, behavior related to password management was examined.

4.1.4.1 Application removal/uninstall

Users were asked whether they had removed / uninstalled applications or software from their PC or smartphone upon request for excessive personal information. 50% of teen users (iGen) and 52% of users aged 18-34 (yGen) uninstalled software/apps due to request for too much personal information. Such behavior decreases among older generations: 40% of users aged 35-54 (X Gen) and only one-third (32%) of users aged 55+ (BBs). The difference between the older and younger groups shows statistical significance.

Table 6: % who uninstall applications due to request for PII

	BB (55+)	X (35-54)	Y (18-34)	i (12-17)
I don't download applications	37%	32%	27%	24%
Done so several times	21%	26%	28%	30%
Done so once	11%	14%	24%	20%
Never happened to me	16%	20%	17%	20%
I do not have PC/smartphone	11%	5%	2%	5%
I refuse to answer	3%	2%	1%	4%

4.1.4.2 Changing Password for eServices

A security measure that can prevent unauthorized access to private online accounts is to change user password regularly. Nonetheless, only one third of all users (36%) change their passwords periodically. More than half (53%) never changed their password, and 7% changed their password in the past but had no plans to change it again. Analysis across generations shows no significant difference, as indicated in table 7 below.

Table 7: changing password for eServices

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	i (12-17)
I never changed my password	53%	53%	52%	56%
I change my password periodically	39%	34%	36%	36%
I've changed in the past but won't do it again	5%	7%	9%	4%
Not applicable/refuse to answer	4%	6%	4%	4%

Concluding results on privacy protective behavior, we find that in terms of application/software removal due to demand for PII, young generations are significantly more cautious of their privacy compared with their older counterparts. As for password management, majority of all users never change passwords for their online accounts thus enacting privacy protective behavior, or rather lack thereof, in a similar manner.

4.2 Privacy Perceptions

We incorporated two key constructs to examine generational differences related to privacy perceptions: self-efficacy and knowledge. Self-efficacy was originally defined as one's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations (Bandura, 1977). This construct has been adopted in studies of privacy perception to capture and measure 'Privacy self-efficacy' that is, individuals' confidence in their abilities to protect their privacy from e-services' information collection and sharing activities (Youn, 2009).

4.2.1 Privacy Self-efficacy

4.2.1.1 Ability to use privacy protecting tools

Based on prior research, we developed two items estimating confidence (or lack of) in protecting privacy from e-services' information practices. These are presented next with corresponding results.

Digital platforms enable companies and other stakeholders such as friends, family, employers, and government agencies to gather information about individual users. However, some privacy protection tools are available online, at times free of charge. Are users familiar with such tools? Do they know which tools could potentially protect their privacy to certain extent? More than half of the respondents (57%) claim to know which tools to use. One quarter (25%) admitted that they did not know. We found a correlation between the rate of agreement with the statement 'I know exactly which tools to

use in order to protect my privacy while using the internet' and age: as age goes up the rate of agreement with the statement decreases. Thus, almost three of every four adolescents (73%) claim to know which tools to use to protect their privacy, but as respondents' age increases, the percentage who agrees with the statement decreases and over the age of 55 only 42% of users agree they know which tools to use.

Table 8: "I know exactly which tools to use in order to protect my privacy while using the internet'"

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	i (12-17)
Agree	%42	%50	%62	%73
disagree	%33	%29	%22	%12
Sometimes agree and sometimes disagree	%13	%15	%14	%10
No opinion/not applicable	%12	%6	%2	%5

4.2.1.2 Inability to control personal information online

Privacy self-efficacy was further measures with responses to the following statement: "I feel helpless in the face of internet company's ability to collect information about me"- an emotional statement expressing feeling of frustration. 48% of the respondents agree with the statement, one third (33%) disagree, thus believing in one's ability to fend off efforts to collect information about them. Here too, results suggest that young generations feel more capable to fend off information gathering techniques than adults. Nevertheless high proportions of all users share a feeling of helplessness in this regard.

Table 9: "I feel helpless in the face of internet company's ability to collect information about me"

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	I (12-17)
Agree	%50	%53	%44	%44
disagree	%28	%29	%38	%36
Sometimes agree and sometimes disagree	%12	%12	%14	%13
No opinion/not applicable	%10	%6	%3	%6

4.2.2 Privacy knowledge

Building on previous studies, our measure for privacy knowledge aimed at assessing the level of awareness to common institutional practices of data collection and use, particularly by commercial stakeholders.

4.2.2.1 Knowledge of personal information collected by third party

Do Israeli internet users think they know which personal information is collected about them by services, software, and websites? Results are mixed. 40% say they do not know 'exactly' what personal information is being collected about them and 39% say they do know. Fewer users agree with this statement as respondents' age go up. For example, while 48% of iGeneration say they know exactly what information is collected about them, 37% of XGeneration agree and only 31% of BB aged 55+ agree with the statement. Generational differences are significant as indicated in table 10 below.

Table 10: I know exactly which personal information is being collected about me by internet services, applications and websites

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	i (12-17)
Agree	%31	%37	%41	%48
disagree	%44	%40	%42	%31
Sometimes agree and sometimes disagree	%10	%16	%13	%12
No opinion/not applicable	%14	%7	%4	%9

A major privacy issue associated with digital information sharing concerns use of PII by third party (Nissenbaum, 2010). We investigated users' awareness of such practice as function creep by asking their response to the following statement: "information I disclose or share online is never passed on to stakeholder whom I did not disclosed to directly". Analysis shows that nearly half (48%) the users disagree with the statement. In other words, they believe that at some stage personal information about them is transferred to other parties. About a third (35%) agreed with this statement. That is, they think the information they supply to a particular company remains with that company. 11% were neutral, 6% had no opinion. Analysis by age group reveals that as respondents' age increases so does the percentage of respondents realizing that information they disclose is transferred to other parties (leading them to disagree with the statement). A significant difference was found between iGeneration (30%) and all three older generation as indicated in table 11.

Table 11: information I disclose or share online is never passed on to stakeholder whom I did not disclosed to directly"

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	i (12-17)
Agree	%26	%34	%36	%46
disagree	%55	%48	%48	%36
Sometimes agree and sometimes disagree	%8	%13	%13	%9
No opinion/not applicable	%10	%5	%3	%9

4.2.2.2 Awareness of common surveillance practice

We asked respondents whether they agree that companies track their habits and use their data for commercial purposes. Results show that overall 54% agreed and 28% disagreed, while 12% provided the neutral response (sometimes agree, sometimes disagree), and 7% offered no opinion. We found significant difference between iGeneration and all three older generations as shown in table 12: youngster seems most naïve and less knowledgeable about common surveillance practice in the digital environment.

Table 12: companies regularly document my habits while browsing the internet and are utilizing my personal information for commercial purposes

	BB (55+)	X(35-54)	Y(18-34)	i (12-17)
Agree	%51	%55	%58	%44
disagree	%27	%29	%25	%37
Sometimes agree and sometimes disagree	%11	%11	%13	%12
No opinion/not applicable	%11	%5	%5	%7

5 Discussion

This nationally representative study was designed to address dimensions of both behaviour and perception related to online privacy across four generations of Israelis. More specifically, we measured and compared behaviours involving self-disclosure and privacy protection. Privacy perceptions included two key construct, namely, privacy knowledge and privacy self-efficacy. In this short discussion section we reflect upon, and draw attention to, some of the key findings arising from this research.

As far as online self-disclosure is concerned this study comes to conclude that a digital generation gap exists between young generations of Israelis (i and Y generations) and older generations (X and BB). This conclusion finds support in a series of results, all of which pointing to significant differences in levels of digital participation and disclosure behaviours. Reflecting on the nature of this apparent gap, we note that contrary the previous findings (cf. Hoofnagel et al, 2010) young users seem conscious of their disclosure and of the associated privacy risks. This becomes evident from patterns of privacy protective behaviour as discussed further on. Similar findings also emerged from a recent European-based study (Miltigen & Peyrat-Guillard, 2014). We note, however, that self-disclosure practices among younger generations does not appear entirely optional. Indeed, over 90% of this cohort enacts such practices compared to 75% (XGen) and 52% (BB) as age goes up. We propose that young users are compelled to take privacy risks because digital participation, which necessitates disclosure, is a social must. In contrast, older users are seen to disclose less and with more discretion. For generation X and more so, for Babayboomers, digital abstinence or partial participation still remains a practical option. We therefore concur with Blank et al (2014) contention that digital technology have become so embedded in the social lives of users that to maintain their social lives they must disclose information on them despite the fact that there is a significant privacy risk in disclosing this information. Hence, at the heart of the generation gap lies not the issue of awareness as previously suggested (Barnes, 2006) but rather the social price and lost opportunities (Livingstone, 2008) of preserving privacy by restraining self-disclosure - an intolerable price for the digital natives, yet an acceptable one for the 'immigrants'.

On the issue of privacy protective behaviour however, a different picture comes into view. Contrary to widespread impression, our findings show that young internet users do not do less to protect their

online privacy compared with their older counterparts. If anything, they seem to be doing more. To the extent a generational gap exist at all – it operates against the commonly held view of young generations as lacking concern for privacy and by implication, doing less to protect it. For example, our finding that young generations uninstall software / applications due to demand for PII significantly more compared with older generation may well indicate awareness to privacy risk otherwise why take measures to mitigate it? The few studies that have addressed this issue using representative samples (in UK, USA, and Australia) arrived at a similar conclusion, namely, that young people are much more likely to have taken action to protect their privacy online (Blank et al, 2014). Furthermore, findings from recent ethnographic research reveal the ways in which young people navigate privacy online. Bypassing prescribed technological affordances such as privacy settings, ignoring Terms of Service, and enacting a range of subversive practices (Raynes-Goldie, 2010; Young & Quan-Tasse, 2013) such as deactivating accounts, manipulating access to meaning (Marwick & Boyd, 2014) and providing false information (Miltigen, & Peyrat-Guillard, 2014) are examples of the strategies observed. We speculate that such obfuscation practices (Brunton, & Nissenbaum, 2015) are less common with adults. This may also account for findings regarding privacy self-efficacy showing significant generational differences in perceived ability to protect one's privacy online. We found that 73% of iGens believe in their ability to use privacy protecting tools compared to 62% of Ygeneration, 50% Xgenerations and only 42% within BBs. Additionally, we found that a sense of *helplessness* to control personal information online correlates with age. Although statistical significance was found between age groups, we note the large proportion of the population - nearly half - feeling powerless in the face of internet services' ability to collect and use information about them (44% of both iGeneration and Ygeneration; 53% generation X, and 50% BB).

Drawing on these findings, we argue that privacy solutions in the digital environment can no longer focus on the sole responsibility of individual users as implied by the privacy self-management paradigm currently dominating the internet (Solove, 2013). Our results regrading privacy knowledge suggest naivety (Hoofnagle et al 2010) is still at play, particularly within iGeneration but among older generations as well, suggesting remedy in the form of education and awareness. However, users are increasingly helpless and seem gradually to become aware of it. As online privacy becomes ever more networked (Marwick and Boyd, 2014) technological means of control based on individual notions of privacy becomes obsolete.

6 Conclusion

The result of the exploratory survey analysed in this paper reveals the intricacies involved with online privacy behaviour and perception of Israeli internet users representing four generations. Contrary to simplistic notions of a radical generation break, and of privacy perceptions clearly dividing the 'old who cares' vs. the 'young who doesn't care', analysis portrays a more nuanced picture. While a generational gap does exist in certain dimensions of privacy related behaviour and perception, it does not concur with widespread impressions and popular media myth. Young generations are heavily involved online; as such, they enact more practices of self-disclosure through a variety of social media affordances, and with greater frequency. However, the enactment of risky behaviour is both conscious and inevitable. Findings do not support the view of young generations as lacking concern for privacy since clearly they do more rather than less to protect it, as compared to their older counterparts. Debating as we are on the future of online privacy policies (Aquisti et al, 2015), arguments drawing on the allegedly reduced appreciation of privacy by young generations can have important implications for the development of future policies (Steijn &Vedder, 2015). Further research is called for, to increase understanding of individuals' appreciation of privacy and contribute to informed decision making better addressing the needs and concern of current and future generations.

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