

The Influence of Levels of Anonymity on Online Self-Presentation, Self-Disclosure and Impression Management.

Abstract: The main aim of the current study is to determine whether levels of anonymity influence one's levels of self-regulation, self-disclosure and impression management among both public and anonymous online platforms. For the purpose of this study, the websites being explored included Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, and 4chan. Participants (N = 221, M = 114, F = 107), were approached online through a Google Forms link which consisted of the Compensation and Self-Presentation subscales of the Psycho-Social Aspects of Facebook Use Questionnaire (PSAFU) (Bodroža, and Jovanović, 2016). These were followed by researcher-generated questions, which assessed participants levels of self-regulation, self-disclosure and negative attributes. It was hypothesised that those who use public platforms will engage in censoring, self-regulatory behaviour, which the results showed to be true. The second hypothesis stated that those who use public platforms will also be less likely to discuss negative attributes due to fear of societal expectations, which the results also showed to be the case. The third and final hypothesis stated that those who use anonymous platforms will engage with them with more honesty and self-disclosure, which the results showed to be supported.

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Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology

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Literature Review:

The main aim of the present research proposal is to extend the line of research that is surrounding the concept of self-presentation, self-disclosure and impression management that is prominent across both anonymous and 'nonymous' digital settings. Is it possible to behave in a way online that is separate and detached from 'ourselves'? Or is it true that the online world has become such an integral part of our lives, that our behaviour online is rather, a reflection of our true selves? The findings of this proposal are believed to increase our understanding of the influence that these ever-growing virtual environments have upon us.

Self-presentation and impression management are concepts that are not specific to computer-mediated communications and have been ingrained in human behaviour for centuries, as early as William Shakespeare (1599) who once said, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players". Since then, the concept has improved, and it is more appropriate to state that since the introduction of social media, the way people present themselves and communicate with others has been vastly altered from where it once was. Zhao, Grasmuck & Martin (2008) noted that research of the impact of online platforms on an individual's self-presentation and identity have been routinely investigated over the past twenty years, however many of these studies have focused on the impact of anonymous settings such as chat rooms and bulletin boards that require a pseudonym rather than any identifying characteristics (Surratt, 1998; Turkle, 1995). Further research by Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs' (2006) noted that those who use both anonymous and 'nonymous' (public) platforms tend to engage with the site differently and portray different personas. These results are extremely important, and the implications are vast, as they suggest that the digital world is non-linear or uniform, and the way in which a person presents themselves is dependent of the nature of the medium they use. In more recent years, research has begun to focus on new and leading social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook, a platform designed for individuals to promote their photographs, engage in conversations with existing colleagues, share personal information and ultimately communicate ideas with other members (Buckman, 2005). Both research of public and private settings is necessary for the field to progress, for behaviour to be comparable.

It is possible that a person's identity is not a fixed construct, but rather something that is malleable and changeable depending on the context the individual has placed themselves within. Markus and Nurius (1986) conceptualised the theory of possible selves, which is a thought process which states that a person's self-concept and sense of sense can be extended to represent an individual's ideas of what they would may become, what they would ideally like to become, and what they fear they may become. Possible selves are important because they incentivise an individual's potential future behaviour, by either continuing in a particular direction or avoiding altogether. Their research continues to state that ultimately human cognition falls into two distinct categories, known as the "now self" and the "possible self". A person's possible self is an identity that is unknown to others, which can be maintained through the withholding of personal information and unattractive character traits. Social networking sites make it significantly more difficult to preserve one's reputation through lying about one's identity – the relationships that are present on these networking sites pre-exist the site themselves, and due to a number of grounding factors, such as the user's physical appearance that is known to others and mutual friends, it is not possible to completely falsify one's identity across these platforms. However, these online environments provide a platform that is ideal for an individual to establish their "hoped-for" possible selves, an extension of themselves which represent they type of person they feel they can be, given the correct circumstances. An example of this may be a person exaggerating their attractiveness by posting a digitally edited picture or merely choosing their best picture, exaggerating their success by posting frequent statuses regarding their lives, and finally exaggerate their personality characteristics in a way that is undetectable from those who use the site (Oyserman, Bybee, Terry, & Hart-Johnson, 2004). The sense of self that is kept hidden from peers however, is the individual's "dreaded" possible selves, which can represent their fears, such as becoming mentioning that depressed, feeling lonely and unattractive. These factors are often not discussed openly on social media platforms out of fear of going against societal expectations and separating oneself from their perceived social identity (Oyserman, et al., 2006).

There are a variety of contexts in which an individual can make false claims about an identity that is not their own; both online platforms and face-to-face real-world situations provide adequate measures for people forming these new identities. In

face-to-face interactions with a stranger, a person's identity is constrained in its potential claims as there are several 'gating' features that are associated by the presence of a physical, visible body. Such exaggerated claims about an individual's age, sex, and level of attractiveness are restricted by their obvious physical characteristics. However, a person's past accomplishments, social circle and level of education are not strictly visible within these encounters and are within the realms of being exaggerated or fabricated. Similarly, in these face-to-face interactions, with someone who is already known to the individual, the restriction placed on their claims is even more challenging, as the mutual knowledge of both individual's backgrounds prevents false claims about their prior achievements. It is not impossible, however, to portray a certain identity to people within these face-to-face encounters, as the manipulation of 'physical' settings that are detached from the person's physical attributes, such as the way in which they have decorated their homes. An individual may also use a 'personal front' which can be characterised by their dress sense, mannerisms and language used to portray a desirable version of themselves (Goffman, 1959). The way in which people can manipulate face-to-face interactions in a real-world setting, can also be visible in the same manner across online, public settings such as Facebook. On Facebook, those who are 'friends' are already known to the other person in some way outside of Facebook, whether it be through work, college or meeting through mutual friends within the same social circle. In any case, it is difficult for users to make outrageous claims about their lives as there are many people who will know that these claims are simply not true, and as a result could lead to one's reputation being diminished or damaged in some fashion. However, just as it is possible to manipulate the physical settings in a face-to-face encounter, it is also possible to manipulate the physical settings in an online context, too.

This manipulation of physical settings in an online context can take the form of capturing multiple photos of oneself but only posting one in which they look their best, exaggerated or boastful status updates or 'photo-shopping', which is the process of digitally editing a picture to improve one's appearance. All of these measures allow a person to promote an online identity that is not strictly their own, however remaining in the realms of possibility within their social circle as to not raise suspicion from those who view these profiles. All of these points portray the

perspective of the person who is forming these identities online, however research has begun to assess the effect that these perceived identities have on those who perceive them. “Facebook Depression” is a term used to describe the feeling of melancholy one has upon spending an extensive amount of time on social networking sites (Kross et al., 2013; Blease, 2015). Those who frequently use Facebook may be exposed to visual reminders of Facebook friends and public figures who give the appearance that they are progressing more than themselves. This can be visible through a number of features such as photo uploads, status updates or number of likes on their recent updates. As an outsider viewing these posts, it may give these users the opportunity to question why they are not living in the same way, why they do not have as many likes, or as to why they do not have as many friends. Questioning these points in depth may permit the individual to view themselves in a negative light (Moreno et al., 2011).

Anonymous Platforms

Reddit (reddit.com) is a social news and entertainment website that allows users to share, explore and post any form of content that does not break the site’s rules. There are thousands of ‘subreddits’ that act as a forum in which users can discuss specific topics, e.g. /r/funny is a subreddit dedicated to posting funny pictures. Users are required to create a free account before commenting or interacting with the website. Once an individual has joined the community, they have a public profile which shows the history of all their comments and posts. However, there is no option to incorporate a picture of oneself, or a description of themselves, which makes Reddit a semi-nonymous website.

4chan (4chan.org) is a simplistic image-board bulletin wherein users can post their unfiltered opinions freely on any topic without repercussion, it is completely anonymous, and a registered account is not needed for an individual to engage with the site (4chan.org, 2016). Every post is merely reduced to a randomly generated number and it is not possible to privately message other users. 4chan’s first and most popular board is known as “/b/” and is responsible for over 30% of the site’s traffic (Sorgatz, 2009).

Public Platforms:

Facebook (www.Facebook.com) is a public social networking platform developed by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004. This platform allows its users to share personal information regarding their daily lives, promote their common interests and upload photographs. The main aim of Facebook is to connect with others and expand one's social circle through sending "friend requests" to those who they may know.

Facebook can be described as a public platform as a person's name, address and pictures can all be visible to other users. Research by Sikström (2014) found that Facebook gives users full control over the self-presentation of their self-image, while also giving control to how they can personally benefit from the social interactions on the website (Kang, Brown and Kiesler, 2013).

Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1:

Participants will engage in self-regulatory, censoring behaviour while using public platforms.

Hypothesis 2:

Participants will feel discouraged from openly discussing negative attributes on public platforms due to perceived societal expectations.

Hypothesis 3:

Participants who use anonymous environments will engage with these platforms with more self-disclosure than those who use public platforms.

Rationale:

The rationale of the current study is to gain a better understanding of the influence that both public and anonymous platforms have on both their users and non-users, taking into consideration that the rise of the virtual world is ever-growing and will continue to climb, it is important to understand the way in which these platforms are influencing human behaviour.

Evidence of this is seen as of April 2017, Facebook has 1.23 billion users who are active daily, Instagram has 700 million active monthly users, and Twitter has 313 million monthly users, while Snapchat has 158 million daily active users.

Methods:

To ensure that a high level of responses were attained, an online survey was chosen as the sole method of collecting data. The benefit of using an online survey is that there are no constraints in sharing the survey with those who do not reside within the country in which the research is being completed. Using other methods of data collection such as an interview, or an offline, paperback survey would be reliant on all of the participants being within the same country. This may render the findings to not be adequately generalizable to a wider population as the results would not factor in a difference across cultures. Whereas collecting data using an online survey allows for it to be shared across many platforms, which will be visible to those in a variety of countries and would therefore gauge a more accurate representation of the way in which people behave online.

Participants:

The design of the proposed study is a quantitative, cross-sectional between-groups design. The dependant variables are levels of self-presentation, self-disclosure and impression management, while the independent variables consist of public and anonymous platform usage. The current study (N = 221) consisted of a relatively even number of males and females (M = 114, F = 107), with 94 (M = 24, F = 60) of those participants being attributed to the group who use “public” platforms, and 127 (M = 81, F = 46) participants being accredited to the group who use “anonymous” platforms. This imbalance in gender is not an issue however, as it is an accurate representation of the gender breakdown of those who use anonymous and public platforms (Dentil, et al., 2012). For participants to be eligible to take part in the study, they must engage with either ‘public or ‘anonymous’ platforms regularly. For the purposes of this study, public platforms can refer to Facebook(.com), Instagram(.com), Twitter(.com), or any other public platform in which one’s identity such as face, name, or other personal identifiable information, is known to others. Anonymous platforms can refer to 4chan(.org), Reddit(.com), Twitter(.com), Tumblr(.com), or any other online platform in which one’s identity is concealed from other users.

“Twitter” can be regarded as public or anonymous depending on the way in which the user interacts with the website. It is optional to have a profile picture, biographical

description, or to provide any personal details. It is for this reason that for the purposes of this study, Twitter can be applicable to both groups of users. All eligible participants chosen are over the age of 18 years old which means that parental permission will not be necessary in any case for this research. The online survey had a text-box implemented for participants to state their age, as opposed to picking their ages from a drop-down menu. This measure was to ensure that those who stated that they are under the age of 18 would be not recorded in the final data calculation. However, no participants claimed that they were under the age of 18 so this measure did not need to be executed. There were no participants in this research that fall into the category of a 'vulnerable' population, such as social, legal, institutional or cognitive vulnerability. Participants were selected through a mixture of convenience sampling, homogenous sampling and snowball sampling. Homogenous sampling was chosen to focus on particular characteristics of two specific groups in-depth (public and anonymous platform users). Snowball sampling was used as it allowed the survey to be shared among participants who otherwise would not have had access. This use of sampling was particularly useful in the case of participants knowing someone personally who uses anonymous platforms, as it is difficult to make contact with many anonymous online users. Convenience sampling was used to gather participants who fit the criteria of 'public' platform users. Those who are chosen through convenience sampling are also encouraged to forward the survey to a friend or family member who fit the required criteria of the study.

Materials:

Participants were assessed using a modified version of the “Psycho-Social Aspects of Facebook Use Questionnaire” (PSAFU) by Bodroža, and Jovanović (2016). This scale is measured on a 5-point Likert scale and is used to assess psychological processes on Facebook based upon the 5 components: Compensation, Self-presentation, Socialization, Facebook Addiction and the Virtual Self. The initial PSAFU scale was comprised of 72 items which had been adapted and inspired from several sources including the Facebook Questionnaire (Ross et al., 2009), the VBSN scale (Bodroza et al., 2009) and the “Internet Addiction Test” (Young, 1998a). Both the anonymous and public group were examined using this scale. However, due to the nature of the anonymous questionnaire, in the case where “Facebook” is mentioned, the phrase “anonymous platforms” is substituted instead to ensure it is applicable without detracting from the overall structure of the scale. E.g. “On Facebook, I feel less pressured to be what others want me to be” had been altered to say, “On anonymous platforms, I feel less pressured to be what others want me to be.” For the purposes of the current research, participants were assessed using both the ‘Self-presentation’ and ‘Compensation’ subscales of the PSAFU. When participants were assessed using the modified 26-item model, Cronbach’s alpha coefficients showed to be .917 for ‘Self-presentation’ and .918 for ‘Compensation’ (Bodroža, and Jovanović, 2016). Following the PSAFU measure, there were several brief researcher-generated questions included at the end of the questionnaire. These questions were developed to adequately assess each of the three components being examined in the hypotheses – Self-regulation, Self-disclosure, and Negative Attributes. The inclusion of these questions and an initial demographics section meant that the questionnaire became a 40-item measure in total.

The online survey was created using Google Forms, and gathering from the results of the pilot study, took approximately 4-6 minutes to complete. Participants were informed at the beginning of the survey via a cover-sheet that they are free to opt out of the research at any moment. To ensure that there were no cases of random responding, a validity check question such as “Which anonymous / public platform do you use most frequently?” was utilised within the survey. An optional text box was implemented at the end of the questionnaire for participants to enter their e-mails if they wish to be informed of the results of the research upon completion, or if they

would like to be entered into a draw to win an Amazon gift card worth €20. This gift card did not act as an incentive for participants to complete the survey, but rather a sign of appreciation for their time.

A pilot study (N=10) (M=7, F=3) was run to test the hypotheses, measures, and overall structure of the research. The participants for the pilot study were recruited solely using convenience sampling. The results showed a positive correlation with all three hypotheses, and as such, indicated that it would be permissible to continue further with the research project. The results of the pilot study did not warrant any changes to the research project, but rather gave an insight into potential sampling issues such as gender differences and the difficulty of gathering anonymous participants.

Procedure:

Participants were recruited for this research using a variety of online methods. Participants who were recruited for the 'public' platform group were contacted through e-mail, direct messages, a post on my personal profiles that included a link to complete the survey. This post was made public to ensure that it could be shared with other users. Participants who were recruited for the 'anonymous' platforms were gathered through e-mail, direct messages, and posts across boards such as Twitter, Reddit and 4chan. Informed consent had been achieved through the implementation of a cover document that prefixed the questionnaire itself which outlines the purpose of the research, the institution in which it is taking place, the age required to participate, a reminder that participation is entirely voluntary, and finally, a contact e-mail of the researcher for any future comments or questions. Participants will also be reminded that all of the data that they provide will be kept confidentially, and that if the research became published the data will be kept anonymous and unidentifiable.

Ethics:

There are few ethical concerns that have arisen upon conducting this research project. One issue which had been taken into consideration involved the age of participants. At the beginning of the questionnaire it had been stated that participants must be over the age of 18 to contribute to the research, however it was hypothesised that users may fabricate their credentials to complete the survey. To counter against this, a text-box for participant's ages had been implemented, as opposed to participants choosing their ages from a drop-down menu. E.g. "18-25, 26-35, 36-45". The utilisation of this text box allows participants to state their age rather than being confined to choosing from a limited categorical age bracket. It was the intention that if any participants were to claim that they are below the age of 18, their responses will be removed, and their data will be unrecorded. However, it was the case that none of the participants claimed to be below the age of consent for this research, so this was ultimately not deemed to be a major issue. Another ethical concern that had been taken into consideration was regarding the anonymity of participants. To ensure that anonymity is adequately achieved for both groups, participants were not requested of their name, location, or any other identifiable information. The only data required included their gender, age, their time spent on public / anonymous platforms, and their answers to the subsequent PSAFU measures and researcher-generated follow up questions.

Results:

Hypothesis 1:

Participants will engage in self-regulatory, censoring behaviour while using public platforms. The first hypothesis stated that those who use public platforms while engage in censoring behaviour and was assessed in the questionnaire using the question “On anonymous / public platforms, I censor the things that I post in order to appeal to an audience”, which was measured using a 5-point Likert scale. As predicted in the first hypothesis, results from an independent samples t-test indicated that individuals who frequently engaged with public platforms ($M = 3.3$, $SD = 1.2$, $N=94$) scored much higher in their levels of censoring behaviour, compared to those who use anonymous platforms ($M = 2.6$, $SD = 1.1$, $N = 127$), $t(219) = 4.3$. $p < .001$, two tailed. These results suggest that those who use public platforms feel as though they are censoring their posts to appease the community, as opposed to those who use anonymous platforms, who felt more freedom in sharing certain opinions. These results can be further examined in Table 1, which shows a bar chart to further emphasise the influence that an individual’s anonymity has on the content they share. Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Leven’s F test, $F(219) = .01$, $p = .905$. The 95% confidence interval around the difference between group means was relatively precise (.37 to .99). A graphical representation of the total mean scores and the 95% confidence intervals can be seen in Figure 1.

Table1:

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skew</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
Public	94	3.33	1.17	-.178	-.932
Anonymous	127	2.65	1.14	.222	-1.002

Descriptive statistics associated with censoring behaviour across both platforms.

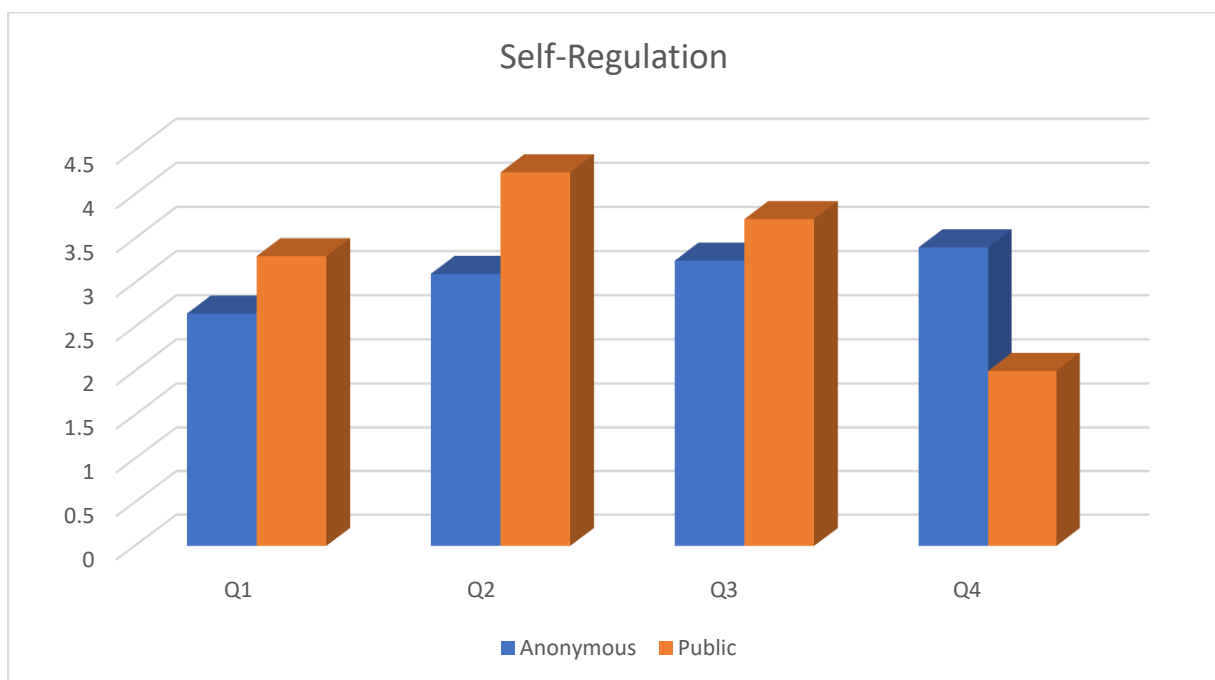


Figure 1: Displaying the total mean scores for all questions assessing Self-Regulation.

Hypothesis 2:

The second hypothesis stated that participants will feel discouraged from openly discussing negative attributes on public platforms due to perceived societal expectations. The subscale of the questionnaire dedicated to assessing “Negative Attributes” consisted of four researcher generated questions, which were combined during data analysis to create a total score of negative attributes for both anonymous and public platforms. The results showed a significant difference in mean scores between both groups, with a total score ($M = 11.4$, $SD = 2.8$) for anonymous users, while a total score ($M = 15.2$, $SD = 2.4$). A further independent samples t-test was performed to compare the mean of those who use public and anonymous platforms, on whether they feel they can share their negative attributes on either of those platforms, due to what other users may think of them. As predicated, there was a significant difference in scores among the public group ($M = 3.5$, $SD = 1.2$, $N = 94$) who showed to be less likely to share their negative attributes, compared to those who use anonymous platforms ($M = 2.4$, $SD = .9$, $N = 126$), $t(218) = 7.03$, $p < .001$, two tailed. Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Leven’s F test, $F(218) = 7.1$, $p = .008$.

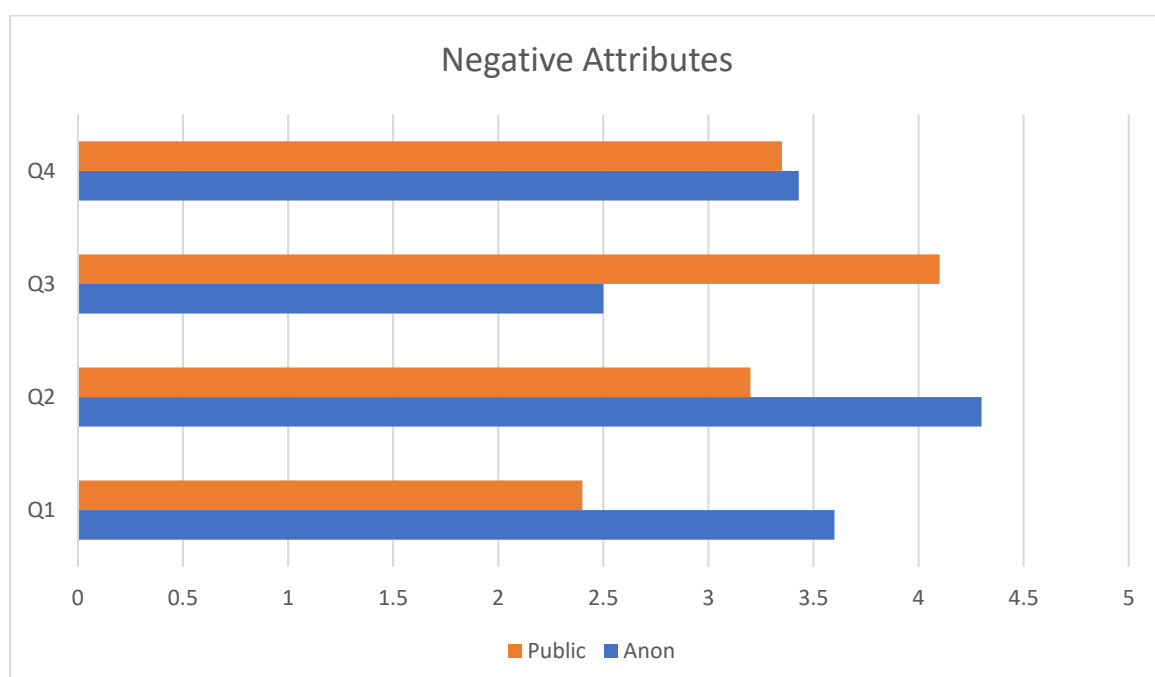


Figure 2: Displaying the variance in mean scores for the Negative Attributes component.

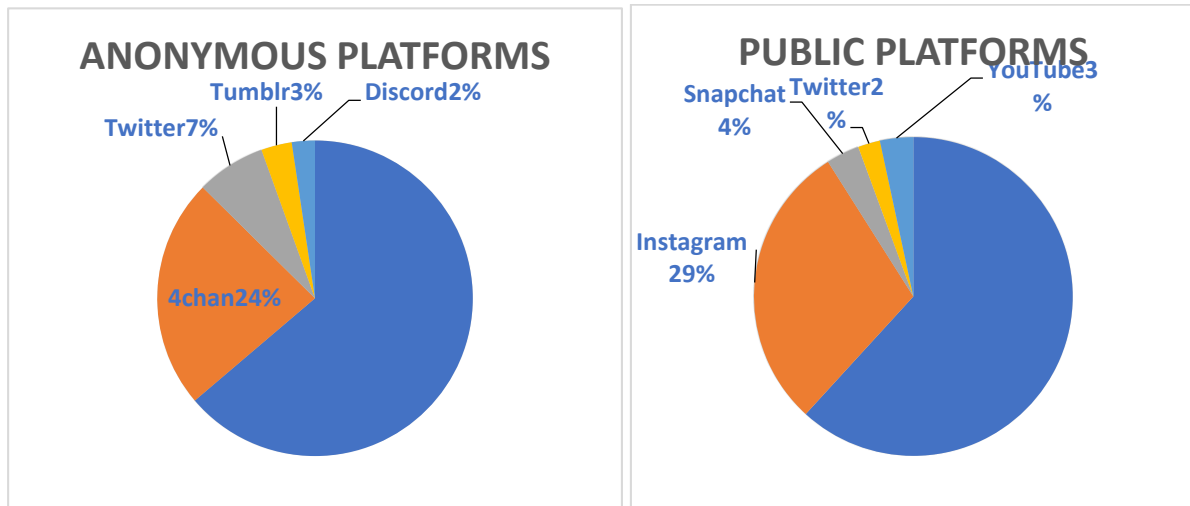


Figure 3: Displaying the variance of website usage across both anonymous and public platforms.

Hypothesis 3:

The third and final hypothesis stated that participants who use anonymous environments will engage with these platforms in a more honest manner than those who use public platforms. Their 'honesty' was measured through 6 researcher generated questions assessing their levels of self-disclosure across the two platforms. An independent samples t-test was run to compare the mean scores of self-disclosure between both groups, factoring for question 6, "On anonymous / public platforms, I feel like I am presenting my 'best' self rather than my true self. The results indicated that individuals who frequently engaged with public platforms ($M = 3.5$, $SD = 1.3$, $N=94$) scored much less in their levels of self-disclosure, compared to those who use anonymous platforms ($M = 2.6$, $SD = 1.1$, $N = 127$), $t(219) = 5.3$, $p < .001$, two tailed. This result can be interpreted to mean that those who use public platforms feel as though they are presenting their 'best' self rather than their 'true' selves, whereas those who frequent anonymous platforms feel that they are more likely to portray their 'true' selves. Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Leven's F test, $F(219) = 1.0$, $p = .306$. These results can be further examined in Table 2, which displays a table portraying descriptive statistics and frequencies for the total scores of self-disclosure. The 95% confidence interval around the difference between group means was also precise (.55 to 1.2). A graphical representation of the total mean scores and the 95% confidence intervals can be seen in Figure 4.

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skew</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
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Public	94	3.49	1.12	-.396	-.982
Anonymous	127	2.62	1.16	.353	-.811

Table 2: Descriptive statistics associated with censoring behaviour across both platforms.

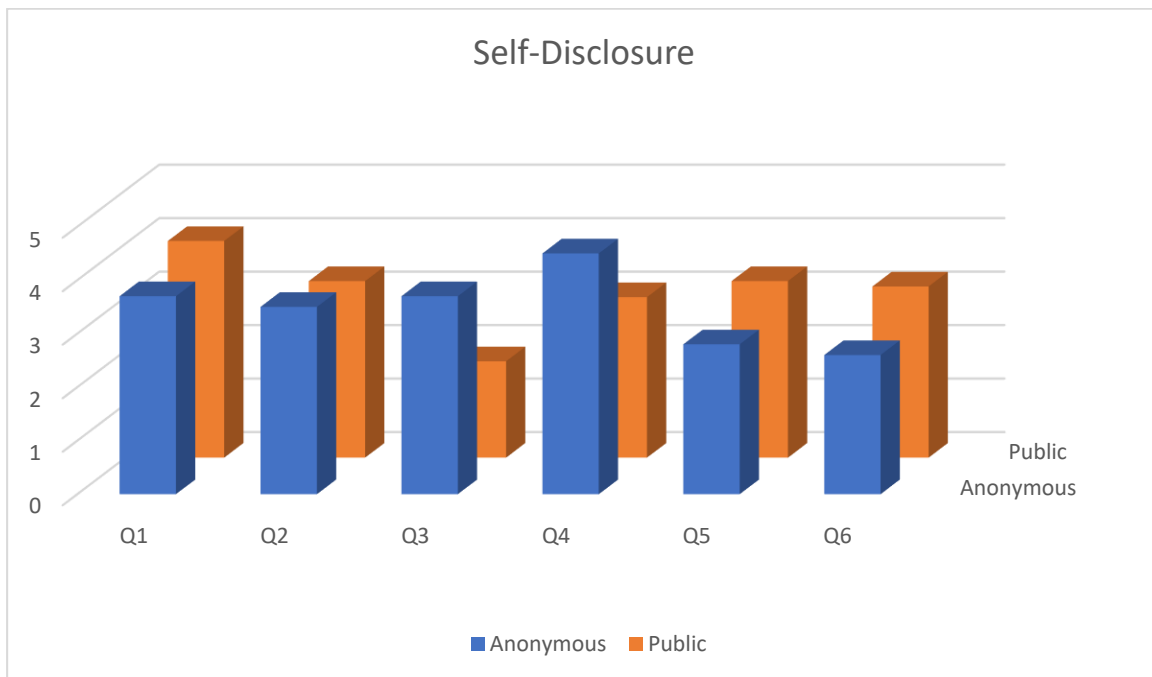


Figure 4: Displaying the variance in mean scores for the Self-Disclosure component.

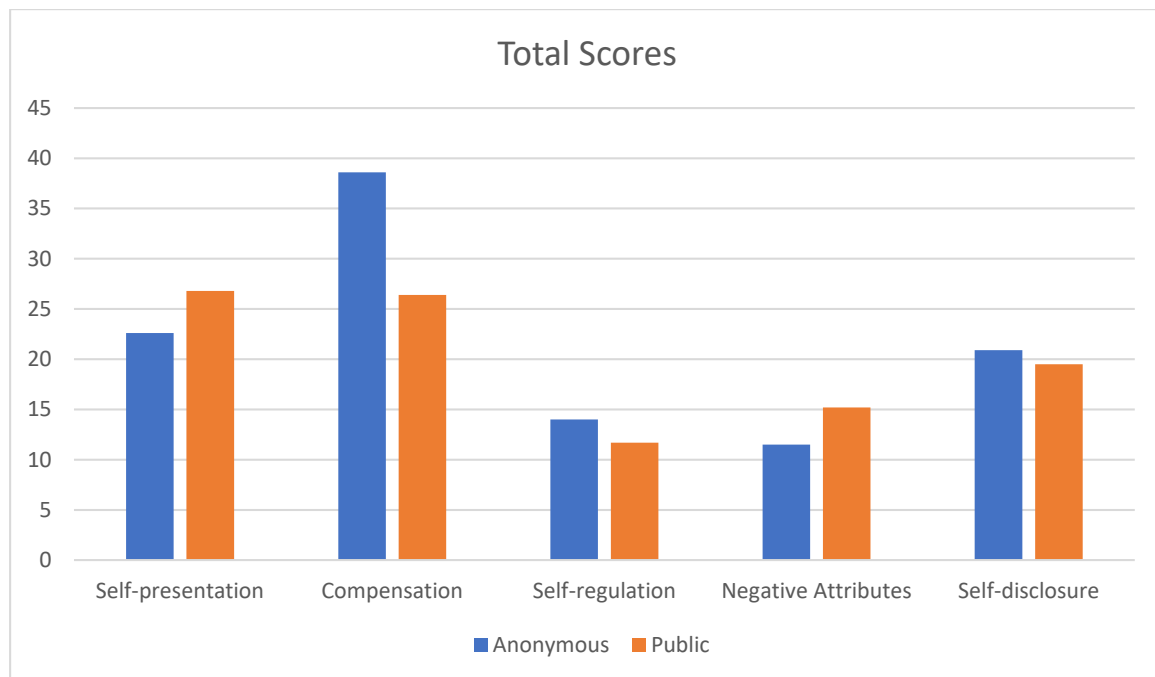


Figure 5: This table displays a summation of all mean scores totalled together and compared among both anonymous and public platforms.

The results show the two weaker components consist of self-regulation and negative attributes, which scored significantly lower in both mean scores and reliability. A reliability analysis was carried out to determine the Cronbach's alpha among all components. The results of this analysis suggest that the strongest and most statistically reliable components of the survey are Self-Disclosure ($\alpha = .546$ for Group 1, $\alpha = .906$ for Group 2), Compensation, ($\alpha = .868$ for Group 1 $\alpha = .853$ for Group 2) and Self-Presentation ($\alpha = .625$ for Group 1, $\alpha = .857$ for group 2). Cronbach's alphas for the anonymous and public Self-Regulation items were .32 and .15, respectively. Self-Regulation for public platforms denoted an increase to the Cronbach's Alpha if item 3 had been deleted. It should also be noted that both components had fewer than 5 questions attributed to them. As such, removal of these items should be considered to increase reliability and integrity.

Discussion:

The aim of the current study was to determine the influence that levels of anonymity have on an individual's level of self-regulation, self-disclosure and impression management. It was first hypothesised that participants who engage with public platforms will do so with self-regulatory, censoring behaviour. The results have shown that those who use public platforms are more likely to censor the things that they post in order to appeal to an audience, as opposed to anonymous platform users who felt less restriction and more freedom in their posts. One possible reason for this outcome may be because people who use anonymous platforms have reduced the social risk of sharing opinions that the majority may deem to be unpopular, or 'taboo' topics that may be viewed as too inappropriate to share (Bargh, McKenna and Fitzimons, 2002; Yurchisin, Watchravesringkan, 2005).

"The subject matter of my posts is less controversial on a public forum, as opposed to anonymous I rarely censor my thoughts or behaviors." #96

Another possible reason for this outcome may relate to the brief, ephemeral nature of anonymous platforms. Those who post anonymously may be aware that if something personal is posted, not only can it not be attributed to them, but it will be soon be 'buried' by other posts due to the fast-paced nature of these platforms, which causes it to be more difficult, if not unattainable, to find. This combination of being anonymous, mixed with the ephemerality of anonymous platforms creates an environment where users feel free to share their inner thoughts without prejudice, judgement, or long-lasting criticism.

The second hypothesis stated that those who use do public platform will feel discouraged from discussing negative attributes due to the perceived societal expectations. The results of the second hypothesis showed a strong positive correlation between those who feel discouraged discussing negative attributes and those who use public platforms. Those who use anonymous platforms felt more comfort in disclosing negative attributes. The results further showed that those who frequent public platforms claimed that they mostly post pictures in which they look attractive. This finding directly refers back to Markus and Nurius (1986) research which put forward the concept of people promoting their best self, rather than their true selves. In the context of this study, those who used public platforms to post their

most attractive pictures were reflecting the concept of one's "hoped for possible self". These results refer to Sikström's (2014) research who claimed that Facebook gives its users full control over their self-presentation and can be used in a way for them to socially or personally benefit from those encounters. One of the reasons for this manipulation of self-presentation may be the perceived expectation to appear "confident, successful or happy" on platforms such as Facebook (Bazarova, et al., 2017).

The third and final hypothesis stated that there will be a difference in levels of self-disclosure among those who use anonymous and public online platforms. This hypothesis was supported in the results as the majority of those who used public platforms claimed that they are less comfortable disclosing personal information, and both groups claimed they would feel more comfortable sharing personal information on an anonymous platform. These results directly reflect past research claiming that many factors are not disclosed on social media platforms due to the fear of upsetting the societal expectations, and the ensuing backlash and ostracism which may occur once they become separated from the social identity they have built (Oyserman, et al., 2006).

"Since they know me personally, I feel like there is an image I want to almost portray when I use the internet in front of them. A subconscious effort to 'impress'. When they aren't around, I have freedom to explore without any fear of judgements." #45

Further research by Kang, Brown and Kiesler (2013) developed a cost/benefit analysis to determine the positives and negatives of either using public and anonymous platforms. They found that being anonymous online allows users to give honest opinions and recommendations but being public allows them to build a trusted identity and reputation. They also found that social connections can form on anonymous platforms and can thrive as there are lower barriers to create new friendships, as opposed to the gating features that can be found on public platforms. Ultimately, these findings suggest that there are benefits and risks associated with both platforms. The way in which a person interacts with these platforms is decided based on their motivations, preferences and goals of what they would like to achieve. As found in the results of this study, with anonymity users are not afraid to share their inner thoughts without fear of the opinions of those who know them outside of

the platform. This may be argued to cause better discussions as the opinions are 'real', or it can be argued that the opinions will be more antagonistic as the respondent's inhibitions are lowered. In either case, whether the responses found on anonymous platforms are brutal and criticising, they are undoubtedly raw, passionate, and free from all fear of societal retribution.

"As they can't see I am more open. I don't have to fear what they will think. Also lets me talk about my hobbies which I like to keep secret from people." #71

Limitations

It was noted while gathering data that anonymous participants were approached in a different way than those who use public platforms. On anonymous platforms, it is often not possible to directly message other users, which means that most participants were approached passively, by discovering the post on the platform themselves and deciding whether they wished to take part. However, on public platforms, many participants were approached through direct messaging and, as such, were more likely to complete the survey. It may have occurred that those who were directly messaged felt a social obligation or responsibility to respond as it had been sent directly to them. This finding may further explain the difficulty of gathering anonymous participants.

One factor which had initially been thought of as a limitation was the differences in gender among both groups, but as research progressed it was discovered that the differences in genders were rather an adequate representation of the individuals who use those platforms. In the anonymous group ($N = 127$), 81 of those participants were male and 46 were female. These findings are supported by research which found that of a population of 592 Reddit users, 470 claimed to be male while 122 of those claimed to be female (Finlay, 2014). Similarly, the opposite effect of gender differences had been found with the public group of participants which consisted of 34 males and 60 females. This finding was also initially treated as a limitation, however further research denoted that similar findings were common across public platforms. Research Biernatowska, Balcerowska and Bereznowski (2017) by found that of a sample of 433 Facebook users, 262 of those were female and 171 were male.

"I generally post more often, but due to the upvote/downvote system on Reddit I tend not to post anything that is unpopular (regardless of usefulness to the topic at hand)."
#17

The quote above by participant #29 brings up the notion that Reddit, although de-identified from one's real-life identity, can still be considered to be semi-anonymous as there is a voting feature, a profile with a 'karma' score attached to determine one's reputation, along with pseudonyms which can be tagged and easily recognised. The implementation of "Upvotes" on Reddit, and "Likes" on Facebook ultimately, in the larger subsections of those websites, promote the most popular ideas. Users can create "throwaway" accounts that can be used to post something anonymously which is completely detached to their main Reddit account, which is generally used in instances where a user needs to share something personal without damaging the reputation of their original Reddit 'identity'. This suggests that impression management is not only a concept within public platforms, but rather something that exists in human behaviour, to the point of managing the impressions of one's secondary online identity.

Future Research

Future research should consider collecting the data over a longer period, to ensure that there are more opportunities to contact those who use anonymous platforms. The results of the pilot study made it known that it would be extremely time consuming and difficult to find anonymous platform users who were willing to take part in this research. This discovery meant that more time was spent attempting to approach anonymous users, and as such, resulted in the finalised data pool having 33 more participants belonging to the anonymous group ($N = 127$) than the public group ($N = 94$). Due to the short-lived nature of posts on 4chan, Reddit and Twitter, the survey was subsequently pruned or deleted from the front-page of these anonymous platforms in a short time frame, which resulted in less people having an opportunity to participate, which in comparison to Facebook, stayed at the top of the page for a reasonable amount of time to gather participants. It is for this reason that it is recommended for future research to not begin data collection for both groups at the same time, but rather dedicate more resources towards recruiting anonymous participants, as it will ultimately require more time. Ultimately, future research may want to not only test a person's motivations for their choice in online platforms, but to

delve further into the aspects of **why** individuals choose to use anonymous platforms over public for sharing their inner thoughts. Do these societal expectations truly exist, are people held to a certain standard and have an expectancy to follow? Or is the notion of the perceived societal expectations enough to make people feel as though they must conform? If an individual were to post their true thoughts on these public platforms for their friends and family to view, would they be greeted with the hostility in which they fear, or would they be understood and heard, or praised for their opinion? Essentially, future research may consider asking participants how **they** would hypothetically react upon seeing that someone within their social circle post on a public platform without engaging in censoring behaviour, with more self-disclosure, and with more willingness to discuss negative attributes. How would their opinion of that person change, if at all, and why? Further research into this area would uncover whether the expectation to be appear “successful, confident, or happy” on these public platforms fundamentally exists, or whether the belief in this idealistic standard merely reflects one’s vulnerability to share their self-concept.

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Appendix A:

Information Sheet

Study Title: The Influence of levels of Anonymity on Online Self-Presentation, Self-Disclosure and Impression Management.

Purpose of the Research

I'm currently a final year Cyberpsychology student in Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT) and as part of my final year project, I am required to conduct a research study. The current research is assessing the influence of levels of anonymity on online self-presentation, self-disclosure and impression management. The overall aim of the current research is to determine whether people behave differently when they are anonymous online, but more specifically, how the various levels of anonymity affect their levels of self-presentation (the way in which they present themselves to others), levels of self-disclosure (how much personal information they share with others), and impression management (how they behave to maintain certain relationships online). Please Note: The questions used are taken directly from the Psycho-Social Aspects of Facebook Use (PSAFU) scale. If it is the case that you use Instagram, Twitter, or another 'public' platform more so than Facebook then please answer each question with that platform in mind.

Invitation

You are being invited to consider taking part in the research study The Influence of levels of Anonymity on Online Self-Presentation, Self-Disclosure and Impression Management. This project is being undertaken by Darragh Kelly. Before you decide whether you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information carefully and discuss it with friends and relatives if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is unclear or if you would like more information.

Am I eligible to take part?

To participate in this study, you must be above the age of 18 and engage in regular usage of 'public' platforms. This research consists of two groups of participants - the first group is composed of those who use public platforms while the second group is composed of those who use anonymous platforms. All information obtained will be kept confidential and all responses will remain anonymous. You are free to decide whether you wish to take part or not. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time and without giving reasons.

If I take part, what do I have to do?

You will be given a questionnaire to complete which will consist of the Self-Presentation and Compensation subscales of the PSAFU, followed by brief researcher-generated questions assessing your levels of self-disclosure, self-regulation, and discussion of negative attributes. The questionnaire will take

approximately between 4 - 6 minutes to complete depending on how fast you progress. This questionnaire will be presented to you online using Google Forms.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?

Taking part in this study would improve the field's understanding of how people behave online depending on whether they feel they are public or anonymous. Further benefits of taking part would include a better understanding for yourself of your own behaviours and motivation.

What are the disadvantages and risks (if any) of taking part?

There are no disadvantages of taking part in this research, apart from taking up a few minutes of your time if you are busy.

How will information about me be used?

The data received will be stored and retained for a minimum of 1 year. However, if this research is to be further published, then the data will be kept for up to 5 years as most scientific journals require the raw data to ensure the findings are valid.

Who will have access to information about me?

The online responses will be stored securely using Google Forms, editors will be prevented from changing access to the responses or adding new people. The option to download, print or copy the responses will be disabled for all commenters and viewers. All information that is provided will be de-identified and anonymous, as participants do not need to sign in to their Google account to complete the survey, nor are their names being requested. The data will be further protected by using two-factor authentication on my Google account which has been made specifically for this research. Responses received from Google Forms will be stored on a password protected computer.

What will happen to the results of the study?

Results of the study will be used in my Master's degree in Cyber-psychology being studied in Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology. The results will be accessible through the institutional website and are also available upon request of myself through e-mail.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been approved by the Department of Technology and Psychology Ethics Committee (DTPEC).

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher who will do their best to answer your questions. You should contact Darragh Kelly or their supervisor Liam Challenor.

Contact for further information

My student e-mail to be contacted if any queries or questions arise:

N00162919@student.iadt.ie

N00162919

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Date

28/4/17

Appendix B:

Questionnaire for the Public Group:

The influence of levels of anonymity on online self-presentation, self-disclosure and impression management.

Hello,

I'm currently a final year Cyberpsychology student in Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT) and as part of my final year project, I am required to conduct a research study. The current research is assessing the influence of levels of anonymity on online self-presentation, self-disclosure and impression management.

What is the purpose of this research?

The overall aim of the current research is to determine whether people behave differently when they are anonymous online, but more specifically, how the various levels of anonymity affect their levels of self-presentation (the way in which they present themselves to others), levels of self-disclosure (how much personal information they share with others), and impression management (how they behave to maintain certain relationships online).

How long will it take?

The questionnaire will take approximately 4 - 6 minutes to complete.

What is required for me to be eligible?

To participate in this study, you must be above the age of 18 and engage in regular usage of 'public' platforms. This research consists of two groups of participants - the first group is composed of those who use public platforms while the second group is composed of those who use anonymous platforms. All information obtained will be kept confidential and all responses will remain anonymous.

What are the benefits and risks of doing this research?

There are no risks from being involved with these research. At the end of the questionnaire you have the option to leave your e-mail to enter a random draw to win a €20 Amazon voucher.

Who can I contact for more information?

If you have any questions or comments, you can contact me directly at darraghk2122@yahoo.com.

Please Note: The questions used are taken directly from the Psycho-Social Aspects of Facebook Use (PSAFU) scale. If it is the case that you use Instagram, Twitter, or another 'public' platform more so than Facebook then please answer each question with that platform in mind.

Thank you for your time and your participation.

Demographics

Gender

Your answer

Age

Your answer

Nationality

Your answer

Facebook Activity

Which platform do you use most frequently?

Your answer

On average, how many minutes per day do you spend on this platform?

15 or less

20 - 60

1 - 2 hr

2 - 3 hr

3hr+

Other:

How long have you been using this platform?

6 months or less

1 year

2 years

3 - 4 years

4 - 5 years

5 - 6 years

6 - 7 years

8+ years

Other:

Facebook Self-Presentation

I try to make a good impression on others by the things I post on my timeline.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

1.

1.

Before I post anything on Facebook, I think about how others might perceive it.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2.

2.

When I post information about myself on Facebook I think about how I would like others to perceive me.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3.

3.

I try to present myself positively on my Facebook profile especially for those people who do not know me well.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4.

4.

I pay a lot of attention to details of my Facebook profile, because I want to make a good impression on those who view it

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

5.

5.

I post different contents on Facebook (statuses, links, photographs, etc.) to attract the attention of others.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

6.

6.

I only post on my profile photos in which I look attractive.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

7.

7.

Facebook Compensation

I have more fun socializing on Facebook than in the real life.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

1.

1.

I find it easier to communicate with people on Facebook than in face to face real settings.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

2.

2.

When I'm not on Facebook I withdraw into myself (i.e. I feel more depressed and indifferent)

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

3.

3.

I communicate more freely on Facebook than I do in real life.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

4.

4.

I find it easier to communicate on Facebook, because I don't have to think about how I look.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

5.

5.

On Facebook I feel more accepted and appreciated than in real life.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

6.

6.

On Facebook I feel less pressured to be what others want me to be.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

7.

7.

I sometimes feel like I live two lives one real and one virtual.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

8.

8.

It happened to me when meeting in person people who I met and became close to on Facebook, to figure that in reality we had nothing in common.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

9.

9.

I have more fun chatting and exchanging different content (messages, photos, links, etc.) with people on the Facebook than in any other way.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

10.

10.

I feel that on Facebook I can be whatever I want.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

11.

11.

I am more satisfied with myself since I started using Facebook.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

12.

12.

My Facebook friendships have made me feel better about myself.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

13.

13.

Self regulatory behaviour

On Facebook, I censor the things that I post in order to appeal to an audience.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

1.

1.

If my friends and family could not view how I use the internet, I would use it differently.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2.

2.

How would you use it differently? (optional)

Your answer

My Facebook profile is a true reflection of myself.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3.

3.

I think Facebook is a good measurement of how well others are doing.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4.

4.

Negative Attributes

I don't post how I truly feel on Facebook because of what others would think of me.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

1.

1.

Often I am not feeling good but I would rather keep it to myself than share it on Facebook.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2.

2.

I feel there is pressure on Facebook to appear confident, successful or happy.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3.

3.

When someone opens my Facebook profile, they can easily get the impression of what kind of person I am.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4.

4.

Self-disclosure

The public nature of Facebook (having a name and photo attached to my posts) influences the way I use the site.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

1.

1.

If I were anonymous online, I would feel more comfortable sharing personal information with a stranger.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

2.

2.

If I had a personal issue on my mind, I would prefer to seek the help of a stranger online than ask those on my Facebook.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

3.

3.

There are things I would like to get off my chest, but I feel like I have nowhere to talk about them.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

4.

4.

If I were anonymous online I would be more honest with myself.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

5.

5.

On Facebook, I feel like I am presenting my 'best' self rather than my true self.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

6.

6.

I would like to be updated on the findings.

I would like to enter a draw to win a €20 Amazon voucher.

Your e-mail: (optional)

Your answer

SUBMIT

Page 1 of 1

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_Forms

Questionnaire for the Anonymous Group:

The Influence of Levels of Anonymity on Online Self-Presentation, Self-Disclosure and Impression Management.

Hello,

I'm currently a final year Cyberpsychology student in Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and

Technology (IADT) and as part of my final year project, I am required to conduct a research study. The current research is assessing the influence of levels of anonymity on online self-presentation, self-disclosure and impression management.

What is the purpose of this research?

The overall aim of the current research is to determine whether people behave differently when they are anonymous online, but more specifically, how the various levels of anonymity affect their levels of self-presentation (the way in which they present themselves to others), levels of self-disclosure (how much personal information they share with others), and impression management (how they behave to maintain certain relationships online).

How long will it take?

The questionnaire will take approximately 4 - 6 minutes to complete.

What is required to be eligible to participate?

To participate in this study, you must be above the age of 18 and engage in regular usage of anonymous platforms. This research consists of two groups of participants - the first group is composed of those who use public platforms and the second group is composed of those who use anonymous platforms. All information obtained will be kept confidential and all responses will remain anonymous.

What is considered to be an anonymous platform?

For the purposes of this study, the term 'anonymous platforms' can refer to any online network in which one's identity (face, name, and other personally identifiable information) is unknown to the other users. If you use both public (Facebook) and anonymous platforms, please think only of how you behave when using anonymous platforms. Some examples of these platforms are Reddit, 4chan, Yik Yak, Twitter, Tumblr, and various online boards and forums.

What are the benefits and risks of doing this research?

There are no risks from being involved with these research. At the end of the questionnaire you have the option to leave your e-mail to enter a random draw to win a €20 Amazon voucher.

Who can I contact for more information?

If you have any questions or comments, you can contact me directly at darraghk2122@yahoo.com.

Thank you for your time and your participation.

Demographics

Gender

Your answer

Age

Your answer

Nationality

Your answer

Online activity

Which anonymous platform do you use most frequently?

Your answer

On average, how many minutes per day do you spend on anonymous platforms?

15 or less

20 - 60

1 - 2 hr

2 - 3 hr

3hr+

Other:

How long have you been using anonymous platforms?

6 months or less

1 year

2 years

3 - 4 years

4 - 5 years

6 - 7 years

8+ years

Other:

Online Self-Presentation

I try to make a good impression on others by the things I post online.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

1.

1.

Before I post anything online, I think about how others might perceive it.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2.

2.

When I post information about myself on anonymous platforms I think about how I would like others to perceive me.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3.

3.

I try to present myself positively through my anonymous posts especially for those people who do not know me well.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4.

4.

I pay a lot of attention to details of my online posts, because I want to make a good impression on those who view it

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

5.
5.

I post different contents online (threads, links, photographs, etc.) to attract the attention of others.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

6.
6.

Facebook Compensation

I have more fun socializing on anonymous platforms than in real life.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

1.
1.

I find it easier to communicate with people online than in face to face real settings.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

2.
2.

When I'm not on anonymous platforms I withdraw into myself (i.e. I feel more depressed and indifferent)

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3.

3.

I communicate more freely on anonymous platforms than I do in real life.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4.

4.

I find it easier to communicate on anonymous platforms, because I don't have to think about how I look.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

5.

5.

On anonymous platforms I feel more accepted and appreciated than in real life.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

6.

6.

On anonymous platforms I feel less pressured to be what others want me to be.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

7.

7.

I sometimes feel like I live two lives one real and one virtual.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

8.

8.

I have more fun chatting and exchanging different content (messages, photos, links, etc.) with people on anonymous platforms than in any other way.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

9.

9.

I feel that on anonymous platforms I can be whatever I want.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

10.
10.

I am more satisfied with myself since I started using anonymous platforms.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

11.
11.

My online friendships have made me feel better about myself.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

12.
12.

Self regulatory behaviour

On anonymous platforms I censor the things that I post in order to appeal to an audience.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

1.
1.

When my friends and family could not view how I use the internet, I use it differently.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2.

2.

How do you use it differently? (optional)

Your answer

My anonymous posts are a true reflection of myself.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3.

3.

I think the content of one's anonymous posts are a good measurement of how well they are doing.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4.

4.

Negative Attributes

I don't post how I truly feel on anonymous platforms because of what others would think of me.

Strongly Agree

Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

1.

1.

Often I am not feeling good but I would rather keep it to myself than share it on anonymous platforms.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

2.

2.

I feel there is pressure on anonymous platforms to appear confident, successful or happy.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

3.

3.

When someone views my anonymous posts, they can easily get the impression of what kind of person I am.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

4.

4.

Self-disclosure

The anonymous nature of these platforms (having no name and photo attached to my posts) influences the way I use them.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

1.

1.

When I am anonymous online, I feel more comfortable sharing personal information with a stranger.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2.

2.

If I had a personal issue on my mind, I would prefer to seek the help of a stranger online than ask those on Facebook.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3.

3.

There are things I would like to get off my chest, but I feel like I have nowhere to talk about them.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Disagree
Strongly Disagree

4.

4.

When I am anonymous online I am more honest with myself.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

5.

5.

On anonymous platforms, I feel like I am presenting my 'best' self rather than my true self.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree Nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

6.

6.

I would like to be updated on the findings.

I would like to enter a draw for a €20 Amazon voucher.

E-mail (optional)

Your answer

SUBMIT

Page 1 of 1

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Forms

Appendix C

SPSS Output

T-Test

Notes

Output Created		27-APR-2018 01:36:52
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\Tricia\Documents\Updated Coded2.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	250
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics for each analysis are based on the cases with no missing or out-of-range data for any variable in the analysis.
Syntax		T-TEST GROUPS=AllParticipants(1 2) /MISSING=ANALYSIS /VARIABLES=GroupScoresSelfDiscQ6 GroupScoresNegAttQ3 GroupScoresNegAttQ1 /CRITERIA=CI(.95).
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.00
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.03

Group Statistics

	Public and anonymous participants	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Group scores for self disclosure Q 6	Public	94	3.49	1.251	.129
	Anonymous	127	2.62	1.168	.104
GroupScoresNegAttQ3	Public	94	4.06	.948	.098

	Anonymous	127	2.54	1.367	.121
GroupScoresNegAttQ1	Public	94	3.45	1.224	.126
	Anonymous	126	2.40	.989	.088

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	t	df
Group scores for self disclosure Q 6	Equal variances assumed	1.053	.306	5.295	219
	Equal variances not assumed			5.241	192
GroupScoresNegAttQ3	Equal variances assumed	31.667	.000	9.258	219
	Equal variances not assumed			9.758	218
GroupScoresNegAttQ1	Equal variances assumed	7.142	.008	7.036	218
	Equal variances not assumed			6.823	174

Frequencies

Notes

Output Created		27-APR-2018 01:54:58
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\Tricia\Documents\Updated Coded2.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>

	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	250
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data.
Syntax		FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=GenderForAllParti pants /STATISTICS=STDDEV VARIANCE RANGE MINIMUM MAXIMUM MEAN MEDIAN MODE /BARChart FREQ /ORDER=ANALYSIS.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:01.22
	Elapsed Time	00:00:06.90

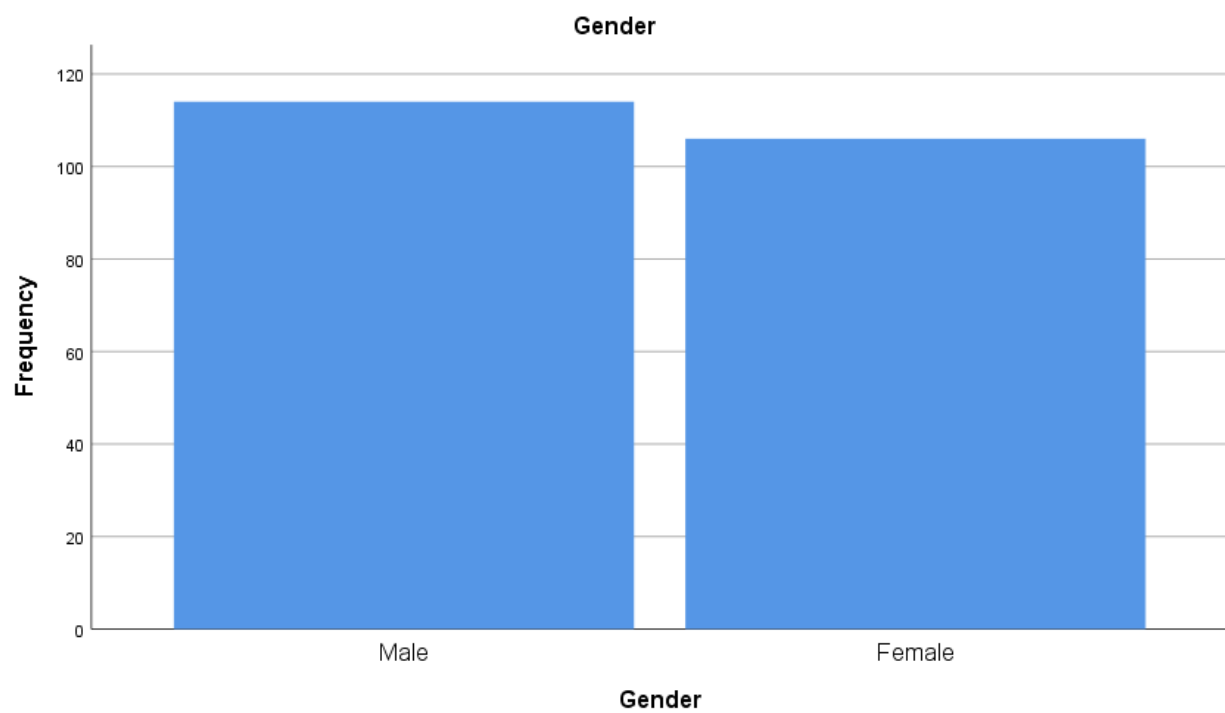
Statistics

Gender

N	Valid	220
	Missing	30
Mean		1.48
Median		1.00
Mode		1
Std. Deviation		.501
Variance		.251
Range		1
Minimum		1
Maximum		2

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	114	45.6	51.8	51.8
	Female	106	42.4	48.2	100.0
	Total	220	88.0	100.0	
Missing	System	30	12.0		
Total		250	100.0		

**Means****Notes**

Output Created		27-APR-2018 02:05:32
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\Tricia\Documents\Updated Coded2.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	250
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	For each dependent variable in a table, user-defined missing values for the dependent and all grouping variables are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Cases used for each table have no missing values in any independent variable, and not all dependent variables have missing values.
Syntax		MEANS TABLES=FBGender AnonGender BY AllParticipants /CELLS=MEAN COUNT STDDEV RANGE SKEW KURT /STATISTICS ANOVA LINEARITY.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.00
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.00

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Included		Excluded		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
FB Gender * Public and anonymous participants	93	37.2%	157	62.8%	250	100.0%

Gender * Public and anonymous participants	127	50.8%	123	49.2%	250	100.0%
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Report

Public and anonymous participants		FB Gender	Gender
Anonymous	Mean	1.65	1.36
	N	93	127
	Std. Deviation	.481	.483
	Range	1	1
	Skewness	-.617	.580
	Kurtosis	-1.656	-1.690
Total	Mean	1.65	1.36
	N	93	127
	Std. Deviation	.481	.483
	Range	1	1
	Skewness	-.617	.580
	Kurtosis	-1.656	-1.690

ANOVA Table^{a,b}

--	--	--

a. Fewer than two groups - statistics for FB Gender * Public and anonymous participants cannot be computed.

b. Fewer than two groups - statistics for Gender * Public and anonymous participants cannot be computed.

Frequencies

Notes

Output Created		27-APR-2018 02:06:01
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\Tricia\Documents\Updated Coded2.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	250
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data.
Syntax		FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=AnonGender FBGender /STATISTICS=STDDEV VARIANCE RANGE MINIMUM MAXIMUM MEAN MEDIAN MODE /BARCHART FREQ /ORDER=ANALYSIS.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.89
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.39

Statistics

		Gender	FB Gender
N	Valid	127	93
	Missing	123	157
Mean		1.36	1.65

Median	1.00	2.00
Mode	1	2
Std. Deviation	.483	.481
Variance	.233	.231
Range	1	1
Minimum	1	1
Maximum	2	2

Frequency Table

Gender

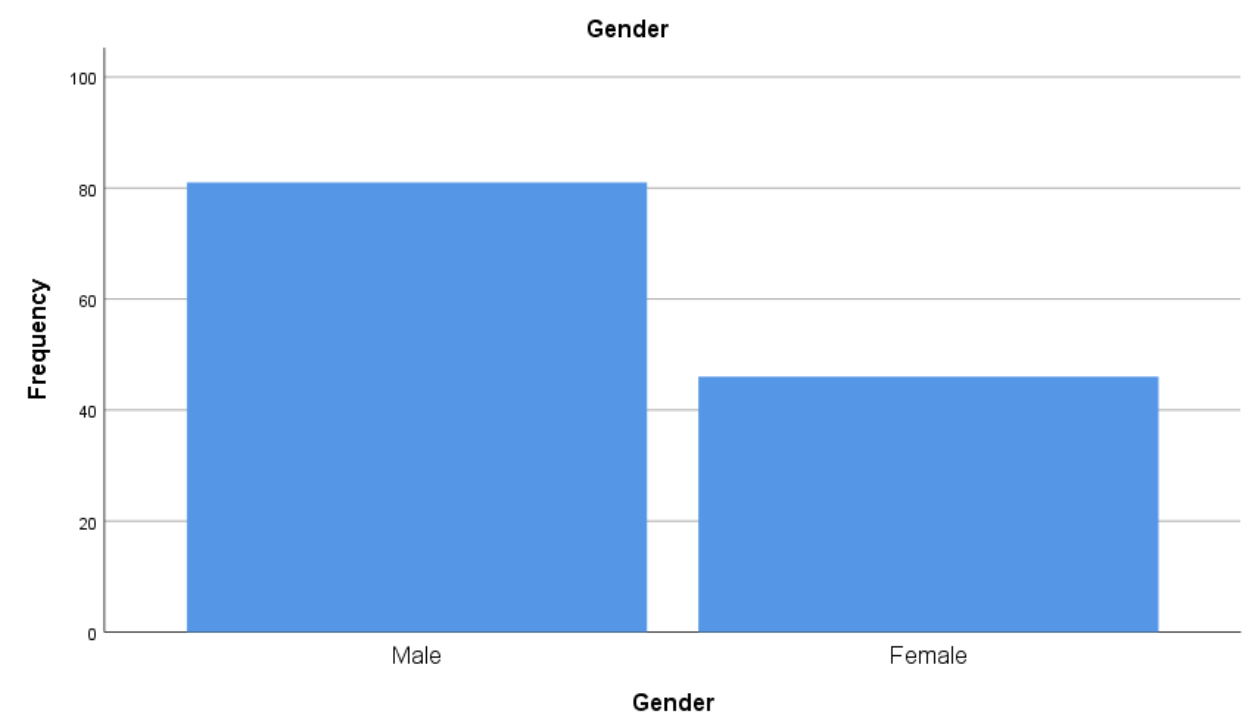
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	81	32.4	63.8	63.8
	Female	46	18.4	36.2	100.0
	Total	127	50.8	100.0	
Missing	System	123	49.2		
Total		250	100.0		

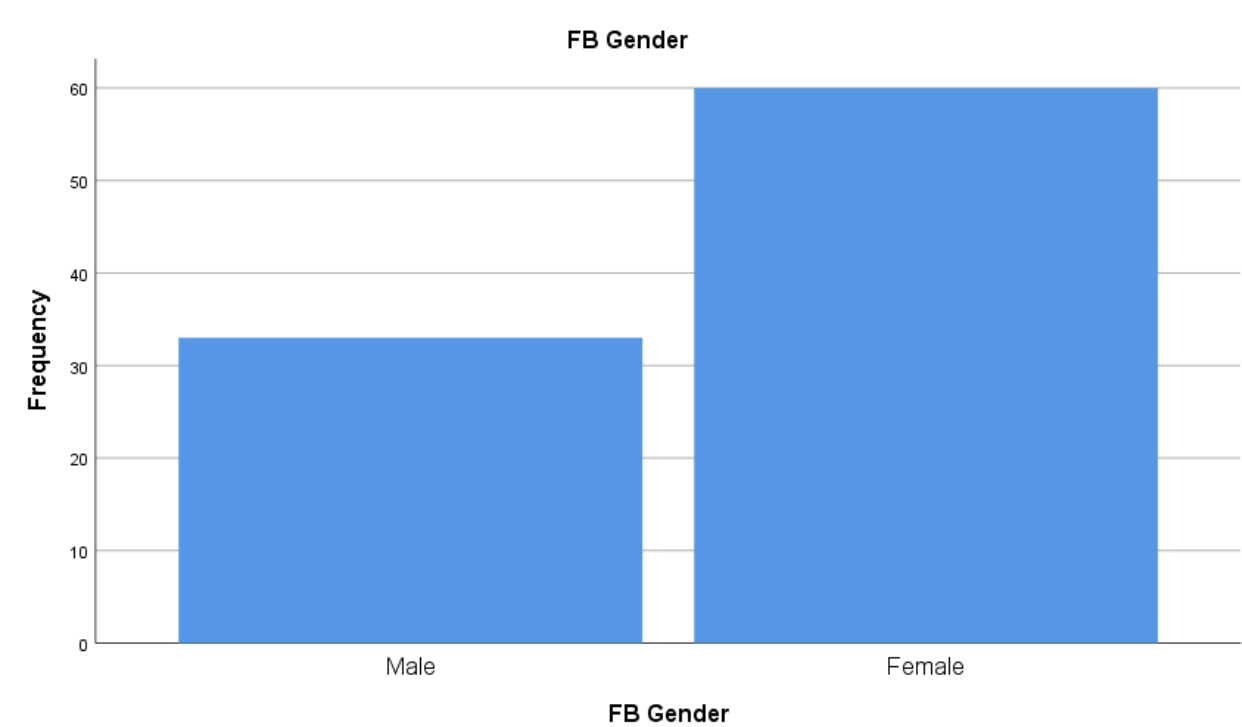
FB Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	33	13.2	35.5	35.5
	Female	60	24.0	64.5	100.0
	Total	93	37.2	100.0	
Missing	System	157	62.8		

Total	250	100.0		
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Bar Chart





Frequencies

Notes

Output Created		27-APR-2018 02:15:35
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\Tricia\Documents\Up dated Coded2.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	250

Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data.
Syntax		<p>FREQUENCIES</p> <p>VARIABLES=AnonActivityQ1 FBActivityQ1</p> <p>/STATISTICS=STDDEV VARIANCE RANGE MINIMUM MAXIMUM MEAN MEDIAN MODE</p> <p>/BARChart FREQ</p> <p>/ORDER=ANALYSIS.</p>
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.42
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.33

Statistics

		Which anonymous platform do you use most frequently?	Which platform do you use most frequently?
N	Valid	127	94
	Missing	123	156
Mean		1.57	1.86
Median		1.00	1.00
Mode		1	1
Std. Deviation		.931	1.514
Variance		.867	2.292
Range		4	6
Minimum		1	1
Maximum		5	7

Frequency Table**Which anonymous platform do you use most frequently?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Reddit	81	32.4	63.8	63.8
	4chan	30	12.0	23.6	87.4
	Twitter	9	3.6	7.1	94.5
	Tumblr	4	1.6	3.1	97.6
	Discord	3	1.2	2.4	100.0
	Total	127	50.8	100.0	
Missing	System	123	49.2		
Total		250	100.0		

Which platform do you use most frequently?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Facebook	55	22.0	58.5	58.5
	Instagram	26	10.4	27.7	86.2
	Twitter	1	.4	1.1	87.2
	Snapchat	4	1.6	4.3	91.5
	YouTube	3	1.2	3.2	94.7
	Other	1	.4	1.1	95.7
	7	4	1.6	4.3	100.0
	Total	94	37.6	100.0	
Missing	System	156	62.4		
Total		250	100.0		

Bar Chart