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The impact of third-person effect on social networking sites privacy risks and protective measures adoption among Yemeni students in Malaysia

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Abstract

This investigation utilized the Third-Person Effect (TPE) theory to comprehend how individuals perceive the impact of Social Networking Sites (SNS) privacy risks on themselves versus others. The TPE theory posits that individuals tend to believe that media messages, particularly negative ones, exert a diminished or negligible influence on themselves but wield a substantial impact on others. First introduced by Davison in 1983, this theory has historically been employed to examine perceived negative influences in media content, such as stereotyping and pornography. The current study focuses on the perceptions of individuals regarding the influence of SNS privacy risks, specifically among Yemeni students in Malaysia. The study aimed to achieve three primary objectives: Firstly, to investigate whether individuals perceive SNS privacy risks as affecting others more than themselves. Secondly, to examine the connection between the difference in perceived risk between oneself and others and the likelihood of recommending SNS privacy protective measures to others, and Thirdly, to evaluate the relationship between the difference in perceived risk between oneself and others and the likelihood of adopting SNS privacy protective measures for oneself. Through judgmental sampling, a total of 387 participants took part in the study, involving the distribution of an online questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. The results of the study indicate a pronounced Third-Person Effect concerning SNS privacy risks among Yemeni students. Additionally, the study revealed that these students not only recommended privacy-protective measures to others but did not adopt the same measures for themselves. In summary, the findings support the validity of the Third-Person Effect (TPE) theory in the context of SNS privacy risks, suggesting that individuals tend to perceive the impact more on others than on themselves when experiencing fear. © 2024 The Authors

Author Keywords

Behavior; Harassment; Perceptions; Perceptual gap; Privacy; Protective measures; Risks; Social networking sites; Third-person effect; Yemen

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