

“When you are younger, you care less about privacy and security”: Exploring Young Adults’ Maturation Toward Social Media Safety and Privacy

Riya Dhuri, BASIS Chandler High School

Motivation & Goals

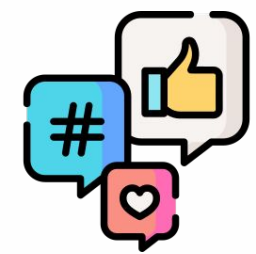
Teenagers are characterized as “unsafe and reckless” about their social media safety and privacy behaviors [1].

However, there is **no evidence** showing how teenagers' social media behaviors change over time.

We aim to fill this gap through a **15-minute survey** [2] with **young adults** (n=11) between **18-22 years**, extensively using **recall mechanism** to explore how their behaviors and attitudes on social media safety and privacy have evolved since their teenage years.

Survey Approach

Likert scale, close, and open-ended questions to understand:



Social Media Usage
and Activities



Safety and Privacy Awareness
Safety and Privacy Perceptions
Risks and Negative Experiences



Safety Attitudes of
People Around You

“How would you define a situation
where your safety or privacy is
compromised on social media?”

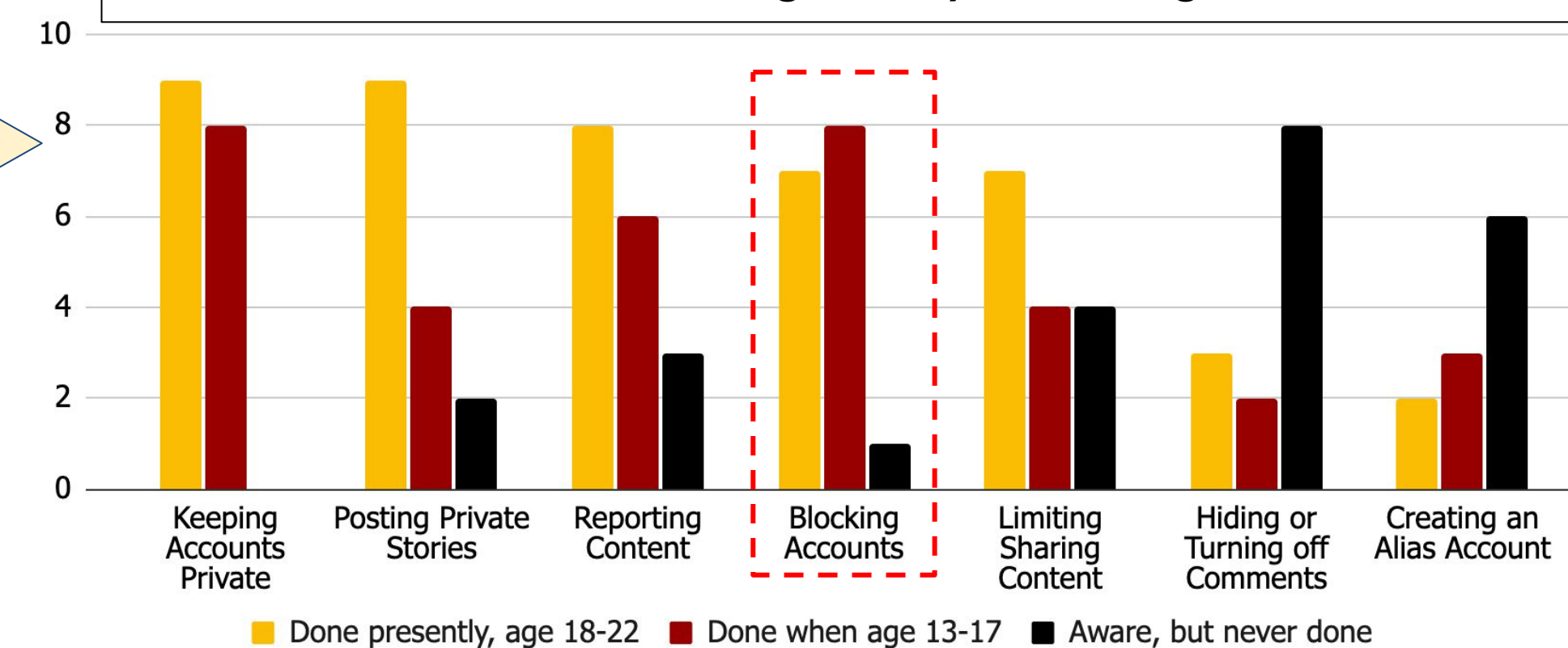
Account
getting hacked

Personal information
leaked/abused

Impersonation

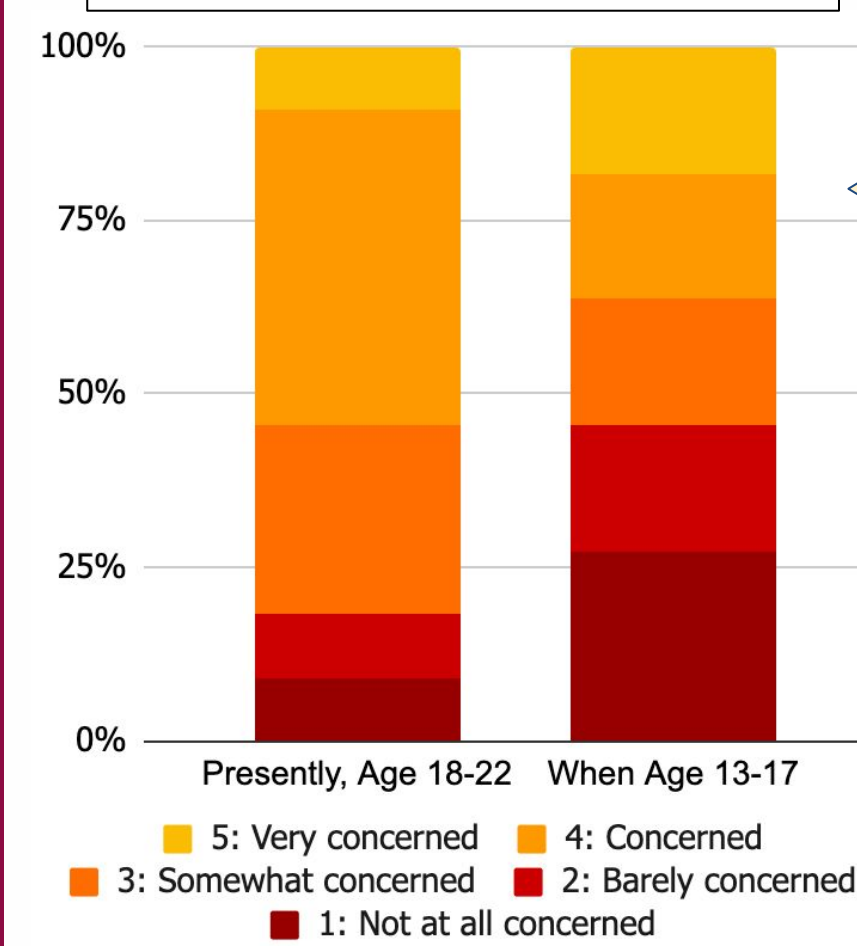
Findings

Evolution of Performing Privacy Enhancing Activities



Participants predominantly
rated their social media
security measures as strong,
indicating **high confidence** in
their account security.

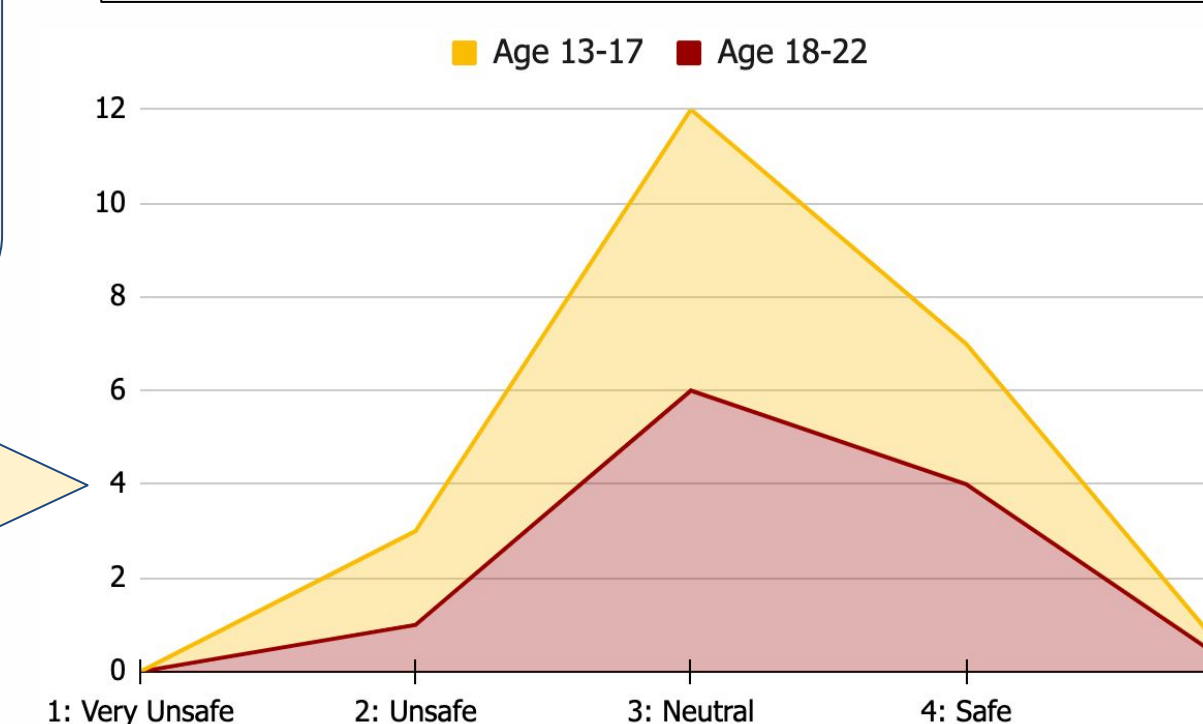
Evolution of Concern on
Social Media



This shows **growing concern**
about social media safety and
privacy from teenage to young
adulthood. This increase could
be due to greater **exposure to**
information about online risks.

Participants **did not consider**
their social media environments
as “**Very Unsafe**,” indicating that
extreme concerns about safety are
not prevalent.

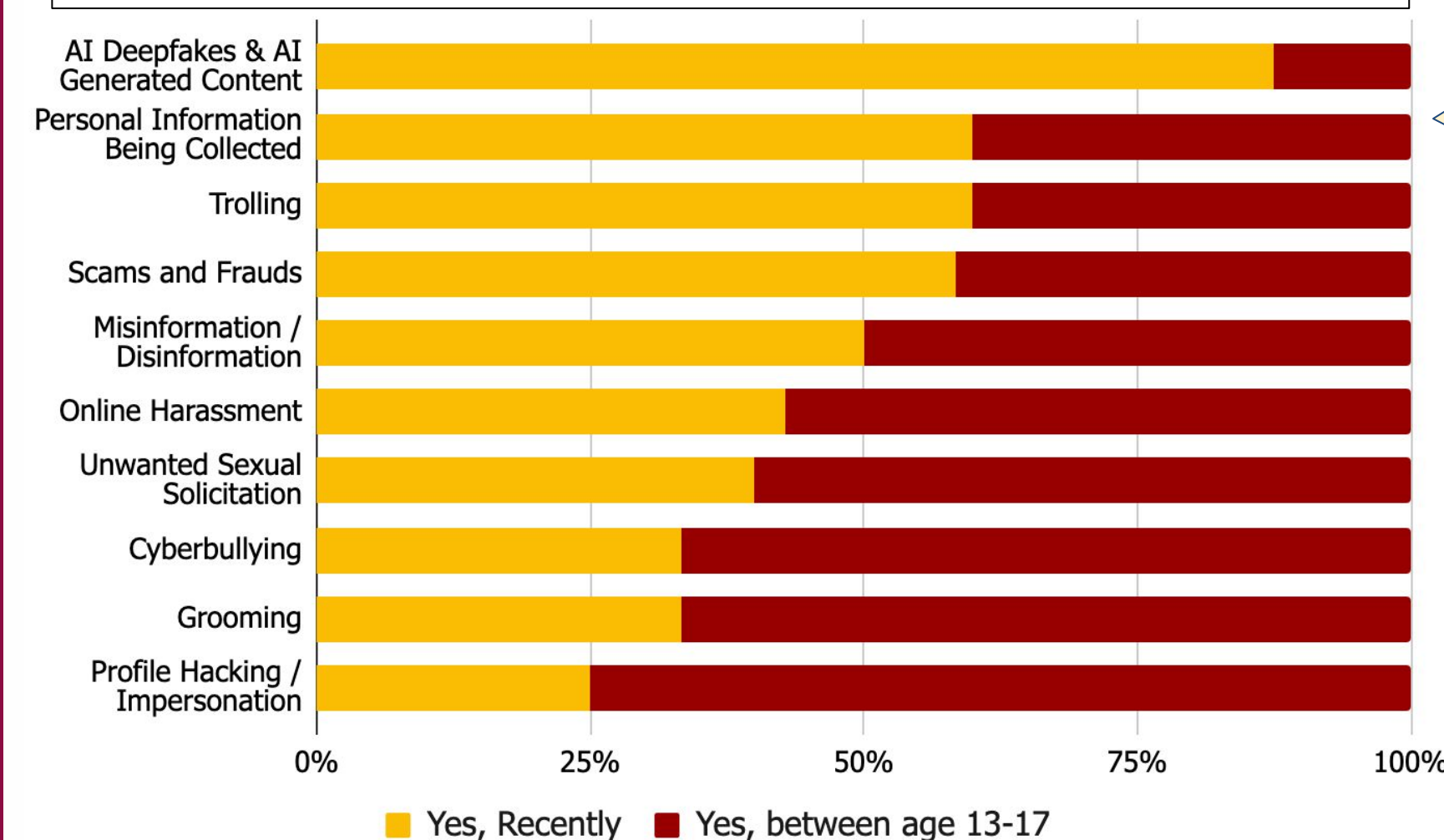
Evolution of Perceived Safety
on Social Media



There is a **noticeable change** in awareness
or prevalence of certain online risks, likely
due to shifts in technology and personal
security practices. This underscores the
need for ongoing vigilance and adaptation to
new threats.

“The **importance I place on maintaining my**
online privacy and safety has increased
over the years due to the **growing cases of**
cyber attacks, bullying, and scams. Hearing
about **hacking incidents and online**
harassment has made me more **cautious**
about sharing my personal info.”

Evolution in Perceived Risks on Social Media



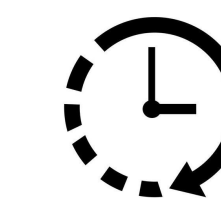
Skills Learned

- **Reading Research Papers**
 - Creating annotated bibliography of their focus and findings of interest to us
- **Making Surveys**
 - Wording Effect, sectioning, length, adding more specific questions from broader ones, piloting & revision
- **Analyzing and Reporting Survey Findings**

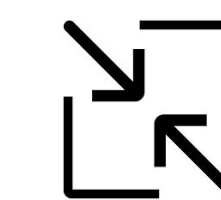
Challenges



Difficult to reach minors (consent issues).
We asked participant to reflect on teenage
years, while still capturing relevant insights.



Disadvantage of a retrospective survey:
Participants noted that it was “**difficult to**
recall events from [their] teenage years”



Creating more specific questions for
narrowing the scope, while also
maintaining a **reasonable length**

Next Steps



Narrowing the scope
to specific groups



Run a large-scale
global survey



Potential for
a paper

References

- [1] Agosto, D.E. and Abbas, J. (2016) “Don’t be dumb—that’s the rule I try to live by”: A closer look at older teens’ online privacy and Safety Attitudes’, *New Media & Society*, 19(3), pp. 347–365.
- [2] Redmiles, E. (2017) A summary of survey methodology best practices for security and privacy researchers.