

# Online Privacy Management

*THE ONLINE PRIVACY MANAGEMENT OF DUTCH  
YOUNGSTERS ON FACEBOOK*

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## Abstract

Social media have become incredibly popular among youngsters all over the world. Social media platforms have grown continually and have become parts of our daily lives. Each of these social media platforms has their own guidelines, rules, goals and purposes. For this research, the focus will be on the most popular social media platform Facebook. Because of its popularity, it has been studied multiple times. This study will only focus on one group of Facebook-users, namely youngsters, and more specifically, Dutch youngsters. Dutch youngsters are using Facebook, but no study yet has focused on this specific group. The aim of this research is to find out what Dutch youngsters are exposing on their Facebook profile, why they choose to share this information, and why they decide to not share other information. Moreover, this research will gain knowledge on how Dutch youngsters protect themselves from privacy issues, and how they build their own online privacy protection strategies. To gain knowledge about the actual behavior of the Dutch youngsters, 10 in depth interviews were held with boys and girls, between the ages of 13-18, born and raised in the Netherlands. The results derived from the in depth interviews were very interesting. The sample of Dutch youngsters seemed to be quite generous in sharing their personal information online, while doing little to no adjustments to their standard privacy settings on Facebook. However, while the standard settings were left untouched, other privacy protection strategies were actively used. While the participants did not completely understand the meaning and opportunities of the standard Facebook settings, they did not feel that they needed to learn anything new about privacy issues and privacy protection strategies.

## 1. Introduction

Over the past decades, the Internet has become a big part of our daily life. The Internet has evolved into a tool, which is used by almost all members of developed societies for many daily activities (Khang, Kim & Kim, 2013; Odacı & Çıkrıkçı, 2014). In the last couple of years the Internet has made a shift from computers to mobile phones and tablets. These have not only become important communication tools, but have become necessary social accessories (Goswami & Singh, 2016). The usage of these mobile phones is often a start for an ongoing discussion between elderly and youngsters. Often, the older generation claims that the youth has become less social, since they are always busy with their phones, while neglecting their real life environment. “No phones at the dinner table!”

The massive use of mobile phones/internet cannot be unseen in daily life. When riding the subway, walking the streets, bicycling through town, running in the park, or even while paying attention during lectures, it is rare to find somebody who isn't looking on his/her smartphone. When using their smartphones (or laptops/tablets), the Internet is almost always involved. The Internet is often used for leisure activities. A popular leisure activity for (mainly) youngsters on the Internet and smartphones is social media. These sites have been incredibly popular among global audiences. Social networking sites can be explained as web-based services, wherein users can create profiles within bounded systems. These systems provide lists of other users with whom they share a connection, and where users can view and traverse their list of connections and those by others. The nature of these systems differs per social networking platform (Ellison & Boyd, 2013).

One of these social networking platforms is Facebook. Since their beginning in 2004, Facebook has been incredibly popular. It is Facebooks' mission is to “give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected” (Company info, 2016). With an astonishing number of 1.65 billion monthly active users, and an average of 1.09 billion average daily users in March 2016, Facebook can be seen as one of the most popular social networking platforms all over the world.

The success of Facebook as a social networking platform is based on the personal information disclosure of its users. Facebook is merely based on what its users create. Facebook users create accounts and add personal information like demographics, personal networks, hobbies and photos to their profiles. Research shows that this information revelation is based on the fact that users want the ability to converse with their connections/friends, share digital cultural artifact and ideas and want to be connected to vast networks of people (Boyd & Heer, 2006). While information disclosure has been the key factor of success for Facebook, and other social networking sites, it has also shown to have some downfalls and even risks for its users (Barnes, 2006). Young and Quan-Haase (2009) identify these risks as being vulnerable for cyber- and physical stalking, identity theft and surveillance. Despite that, users still massively put their personal information on social networking sites, while simultaneously being afraid that their privacy is being violated.

Because of the big success of social media and more specifically Facebook, it has been a popular topic of research for the past years. Previous research has mostly focused on the amount of information disclosed on social networking sites and the type of information that was shared. Moreover, research has focused on how university students and high school students from the USA use their Facebook accounts in terms of information disclosure and privacy strategies (Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Govani and Pashley, 2005; Young and Quan-Haase, 2009; Boyd, 2007; Marwick, 2011)

While much research has focused on either the USA, or Asian countries, the topic has not yet been researched Europe, let alone in the Netherlands. In the Netherlands, Facebook is very popular and widely used. Even though the Netherlands is a small country in Western Europe, it has its own unique national culture, with specific values and practices. Therefore this research will focus on the Dutch youngsters. How do they use their Facebook accounts? And how do they protect themselves from privacy risks as explained by Barnes (2006) and Young & Quan-Haase (2009)?

## **1.1 Scientific & societal relevance**

This research examines the Facebook usage of Dutch youngsters. Through in depth interviews this research will seek to find what the Dutch youngsters do to disclose personal information and how they manage to keep their privacy. Moreover this research wants to see which privacy management strategies are used to protect their online privacy. Research on this topic has both scientific and social relevance. Both are discussed in paragraphs below.

### **1.1.1 Scientific relevance**

Ever since social networking websites have become so popular worldwide, a lot of research has focused on this topic. Many sections of the platforms are investigated and researched. Hence, privacy on social networking sites has been a topic of interest to many researchers. Previous research provides us information about how high school students, university students and adults cope with privacy issues on social networking sites (Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Govani and Pashley, 2005; Young and Quan-Haase, 2009; Boyd, 2007; Marwick, 2011).

However, from all social media users, youngsters are the most active category of users on social media. While 74% of Dutch adults use social media, 99% of Dutch youngsters are active on social media (Gebruik sociale netwerken sterk toegenomen, 2015). Because of this high percentage of social media usage, it is most interesting to see how this specific group of Dutch youngsters behaves in terms of information disclosure and privacy management.

Doing research on a topic like social media is quite challenging, since the online environment changes really fast. Because of that, it is not unthinkable to find complete new insights on information disclosure and online privacy management compared to past research, since Facebook changes its content and privacy policy continually. Therefore this study will contribute to the older researches done on this specific topic. Moreover, this research will provide a more in depth insight in the existing body of knowledge on this topic.

### 1.1.1 Social relevance

Besides having a scientific relevance, this research also has social relevance. Children are exposed to the Internet and social media at a very early age. Therefore they are exposed to the risks of online privacy issues in very early stages of their lives (Livingstone & Bober, 2006). This research will provide a better insight on how these teenagers between age 13 and 18 manage their privacy online. According to CBS, 91% of the young population in the Netherlands uses social networking platforms such as Twitter and Facebook (Sleijpen, 2011). With this percentage, the Dutch are in the top 3 highest percentages of youngsters using social networking sites in the European Union. Therefore it would be really interesting to get better insights on the social networking habits and privacy issues of Dutch teenagers, since of its extreme popularity in this country.

Based on the results of this study, parents and maybe even teachers can get a clearer view on what youngsters are doing on Facebook and how they manage themselves in terms of privacy issues. The outcomes of this research might even provide insights to which elements should be emphasized during the education about Internet privacy and the consequences of it. This would help society to better understand the behavior of youngsters online when coping with privacy issues.

## 1.2 Research questions

This paper presents a research designed to study what youngsters expose on Facebook, which factors influence the disclosure of personal information on Facebook, and which online privacy strategies have they developed to protect themselves against privacy threats. To get a clear understanding of this, two main research questions will be central in this study:

*RQ1: What do Dutch youngsters between age 13 and 18 do to disclose personal information and manage their privacy on Facebook?*

*RQ2: How do Dutch youngsters between age 13 and 18 develop privacy management strategies on Facebook?*

### 1.2.1 Sub research questions

To clearly answer the main research questions, the following sub-questions will also be answered in this research. These sub research questions will be answered through combination of the results of the qualitative interviews, and the present literature available. The sub-research questions are divided per main research question, since both questions focus on other assets. The following sub-research questions are part of the main research question 1:

1. *What amount and type of personal information do Dutch youngsters reveal on their Facebook account?*
2. *What type of information are Dutch youngsters reluctant to reveal on Facebook?*
3. *What do Dutch youngsters perceive as risks involved with revelation of personal information on Facebook?*

To better help answering the second research question of this thesis, the following sub-research questions are developed:

4. *What kind of strategies do Dutch youngsters use to manage their privacy on Facebook?*
5. *From which sources do Dutch youngsters learn about privacy issues on Facebook?*

## 1.3 Structure

In order to answer the two main research questions and the sub-research questions, this research aims to demonstrate what Dutch youngsters expose on their Facebook profiles, and why they expose that information. Also, the privacy management strategies of teenagers will be demonstrated. To answer these questions, this paper builds on a theoretical framework, consisting of the relevant academic literature from other researchers. In the theoretical framework of this research the concepts of *social networking sites, information disclosure, trust, reluctance, risks, privacy and privacy protection strategies* will be discussed, through relevant academic literature. After that, this paper describes the research design; including the purpose of research, the chosen research method, the units of analysis, the sampling method and the



operalization. The answers to the main research questions will be partly answered in the findings sections through in depth interviews with Dutch high school students. Finally, the most relevant outcomes and understandings, with the answers of the main research questions will be discussed in the final conclusion. Limitations of this research will be discussed lastly.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

In order to answer all of the research questions of this research, a clear understanding of the theoretical concepts is necessary. This chapter consists of a theoretical framework conceptualizing and discussing the main theoretical concepts. This starts by examining social networking sites, and specifically the social networking platform Facebook. On these social networking platforms, a lot of information is shared. Online information disclosure is therefore discussed in this section. While a lot of information is shared on social media, more information is kept from social media. The reluctance of sharing certain information is therefore discussed. Paired with the reluctance of sharing information are the perceived risks of sharing information on social media, and the trust people have in social media. These two topics will therefore also be discussed in this section.

When exposing information, privacy issues and privacy management always intertwine. These two concepts are therefore discussed in relation to information disclosure on social networking sites. While people share a lot of information on their social networking sites, they almost always create some sort of privacy protection strategy. There are a lot of different strategies, and ways to build such strategies. These are discussed in relation to social networking sites during this theoretical framework. When a good understanding of these concepts is created, it will serve as a platform and baseline for further conclusions and discussions.

### ***2.1 Social networking sites***

Social networking sites have been an interesting topic of research ever since they became so popular on the World Wide Web. As described in the introduction, social networking sites are web-based services where users create their own profiles, within a bounded system. The nature and rules of the bounded systems differ per social networking platform (Ellison & Boyd, 2013). A more bounded definition of social networking sites might be that they are websites that enable users to share their information and communicate with their friends online (Fang & LeFevre, 2010). According to Livingstone (2008) this online communication with friends on social media is very diverse. Social networking sites provide a platform where emailing,

messaging, but also website creation, diaries, photos, music and video uploading are features to communicate with an ever widening circle of friends and connections.

The diverse methods of communication explained by Livingstone (2008) can be both person-to-person and person-to-network communication. This often depends on the purpose of the specific social networking platform. Platforms could for example be social, political, commercial, and informational or entertainment focused (Morton, 2015). Moreover, the type and way of communication is often influenced by the layout of the platform. While some are primarily focused on text, other platforms are image or even video based (Morton, 2015). Well-known examples of social networking sites are YouTube, Instagram, Flickr, Twitter, Vine, Snapchat, LinkedIn and Facebook.

The term social networking sites may suggest that the platforms are mostly used as tools to network with unknown people with the same interests, jobs or hobbies. However, the networking part of social media is not networking as it is in its common perception. The connections we have on our social networking sites are mostly with people whom we know in the offline world as well (Ellison, 2007). However, since the articulated social networks within these platforms are critical organizing features, they are labeled as “social networking sites” (Ellison, 2007).

The fact that the networks within social media platforms are such important features explain the amount of users on the most popular websites. At this moment, Twitter has 310 million monthly active users (Company, 2016), Instagram is a community with 300 million members (About us, 2016) and last but not least, Facebook has over 1.65 billion active users per month (Company info, 2016). The amount of users of Facebook has grown over the past years. Three years ago, in 2013 Facebook had 1.11 billion active users (Key Facts, 2013). These numbers show that social media platforms are incredibly popular, and are becoming more popular than ever. Ten years ago, Myspace was considered as one of the most popular social networking sites with 38.4 million visitors in 2006 (Livingstone, 2008). Today, this number would be nothing compared to the amount of users of Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. At this moment, Facebook is one of the most popular social networking platforms worldwide. The focus of this research will therefore be on

this platform. Including all other social networking sites into this research would outreach the scope of this research, since it is almost impossible to focus on all social networking sites due to their different purposes, layouts and usages.

The social media trend is also very alive in the Netherlands. While in 2011, 91% of all youngsters used social media regularly (Sleijpen, 2011), in 2014 this percentage has even grown to an astonishing 96% of all Dutch youngsters. From this 96%, the majority spends between 1-3 hours on social media per day, while 16% of the girls use social media over 5 hours a day (see figure 1)

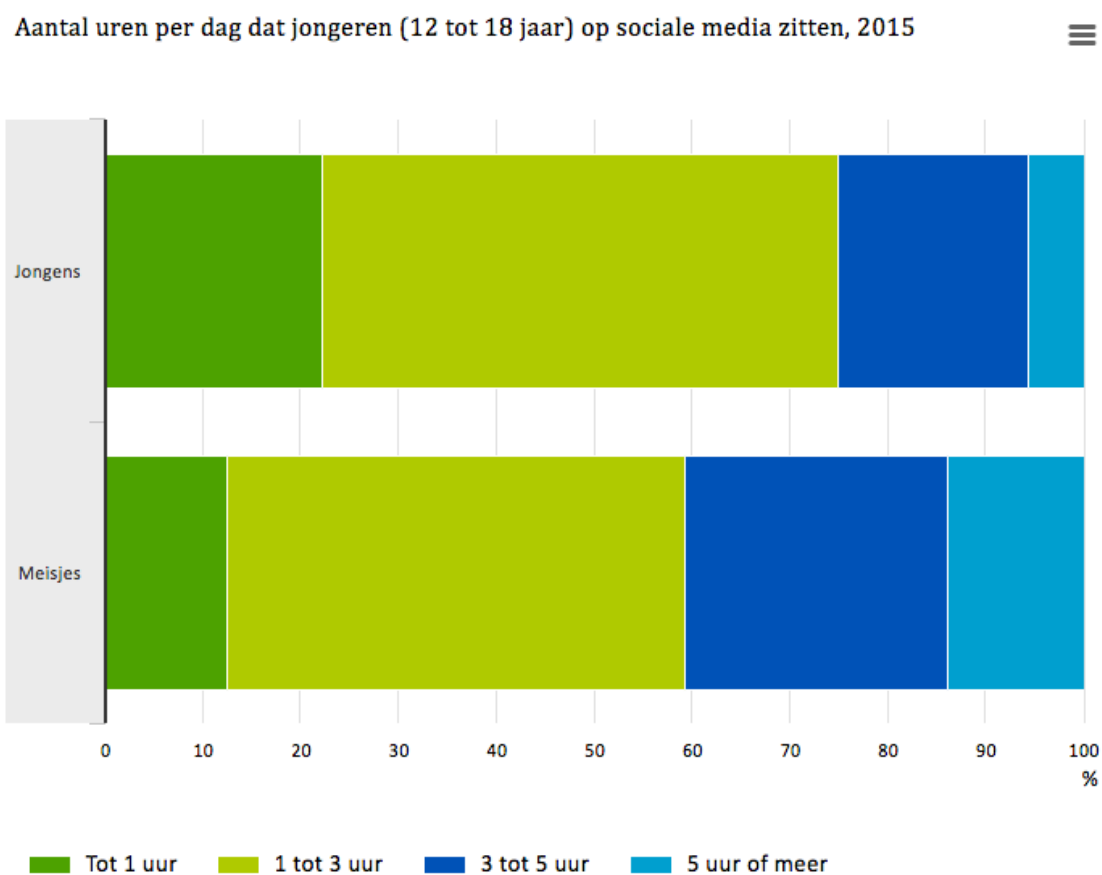


Figure 1. Amount of hours per day youngsters (12 to 18 years) spend on social media, 2015. (Een op de zes jongeren zegt verslaafd te zijn, 2015)

Since Dutch youngsters are spending so much time on social media on a daily base it would be interesting how these youngsters use their accounts. What information do they share? And why?

## 2.2 *Information disclosure*

In her article, Livingstone (2008) believes that creating content on social networking sites is becoming “an integral means of managing one’s identity, lifestyle and relations” (Livingstone, 2008, pp. 4). When keeping this thought in mind it is not a big surprise that youngsters today share a lot of information on their social media accounts.

While information disclosure often refers to the process of making the self known to others (Jourard & Lasakow, 1958, p.91) in this research we focus on the information disclosure on social media. Therefore, self-disclosure in the context of this research might be referred to as the amount and type of information disclosed on a persons profile, including the communication process that follows with their peers (Krasnova & Veltri, 2011). Hereby the amount and type refers to information such as contact details, and communication processes refers to information about status updates and commenting on peers. The communication process within Facebook has become of great importance since the launch of the timeline in 2011. Through the timeline, a constant stream of information is available including all the status updates by peers. The launch of the timeline has reduced the role of the personal profile page (Wilson, Gosling & Graham, 2012).

Users are limited to the boundaries of the social networking platform (for example twitter only allowing 140 characters per tweet) (Boyd, 2007). However, users of social media feel that they are in control of the information that is shared on their online profiles. This is due to the fact that Facebook encourages its users to share information by creating easy-to-use tools such as status updates, photo and video sharing options, and tools such as location check-ins. These tools give the users a sense of agency, giving them the idea that they are in control of what they expose (Sundar, 2008).

This idea of control results in billions of people sharing their personal information on an online platform. The 1.62 billion monthly users all have their own individual profile page, filled with information about themselves. According to Boyd

(2007), SNS-accounts start with a personal home page with a description of the selected member. Next to the textual part, images and videos and lists of connections are also present on these home pages. This information is often posted by the member him/herself. However, the pages are often complemented by comments from other members within their bounded group of connections (Boyd, 2007). This is still the case today. Since Facebook users have their own unique identifiable pages, with information disclosed by the users themselves, by other users and by system-provided data, like the tools described by Sundar (2008) (Ellison & Boyd, 2013).

On these personal profiles, information such as gender, birthdates, hometown, school concentration and information regarding movies, music, clubs, books, relationship status, partner and political affiliation is often shared (Govani & Pashley, 2005). While some information disclosure is obligatory (first and last name, email) (Lewis, Kaufman & Christakis, 2008), most information is shared willingly.

But why do users share all this information willingly? This could lead back to the statement by Livingstone (2008) that social media has become a tool or mean to create and manage one's identity. During her research among teenagers in the USA, Boyd (2007) also found that people create their own identity online by exposing information. They did this in such a way that their friend and connections would perceive them as "cool". According to van Gool, van Ouytsel, Ponnet and Walrave (2015) the reason to be active on social media has a greater goal that just be perceived as "cool". They summarized that adolescents use social media for multiple developmental goals such as maintenance of friendships and romantic relationships, but also for identity construction (Ellison et al., 2011; Taddicken, 2014; Taddicken & Jers, 2011).

Over the years, social media platforms such as Facebook have become part of teenage culture (Marwick, 2011). It provides a platform where teenagers feel that it is easier to be themselves compared to the real offline world (Livingstone, 2008). In their culture, social networking sites have multiple roles, one of them being a social role. Through social media teenagers are able to understand their world, and their

relationship to society. Moreover, social media offers youngsters a platform where they can hang out and share cultural artifacts like links to funny videos, TV shows etcetera (Barnes, 2006). Overall, social media offers a platform where they can learn and create their own identity, and social conceptualization, which might be the reason why so many teenagers are active on social media.

Through the official statistics of the CBS we already know that in the Netherlands 5.6% of the boys spend over 5 hours a day on social media. This percentage is even higher with Dutch girls (13.8%) (Een op de zes jongeren zegt verslaafd te zijn, 2015). This large amount of time spent online could increase the amount of information disclosure on Facebook (Chang & Heo, 2014). In line with this, Young and Quan-Haase (2009) and Chang and Heo (2014) found that the amount of friends and connections users have on their social media account has a positive effect on the amount of information disclosure. Other factors that influence the willingness to disclose personal information on social media are enjoyment, curiosity and time distortion.

In line with the statement by Boyd (2007) claiming that youngsters create their own online identity in such a way that their peers think their “cool”, Christofides, Muise and Desmarais (2009) found that information disclosure was significantly predicted by the need for popularity. This popularity is often measured in the amount of friends someone has on their social media account, since it can be seen as a source of social capital (Christofides, Muise & Desmarais, 2009). All these antecedents have an impact on information disclosure. However, there is one factor that has a large impact on the entire social media behavior of users, trust.

### **2.3 Trust**

Many researchers have investigated reasons that might influence the amount of information disclosure on social media. Trust is a key word that pops up in a lot of scientific research related to information disclosure online. According to Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other

party” (p. 712) (As cited in Dwyer & Hiltz, 2007). In other words, trusting someone or something to handle your shared information in such a way that you feel comfortable with it. You are not going to tell the gossip queen of your high school your deepest secret, since you expect that party to use your information in such a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.

But since youngsters are sharing so much information online, do they completely trust the social media platform? Do they completely trust their lists of friends on their social media page? According to Metzger (2004), trust is a precondition for self-disclosure, meaning that the higher the level of trust, the lower the perceived risks are in terms of sharing personal information and vice versa.

## **2.4 Reluctance**

While previous sections have focused on the information disclosure by the users of social media, research has also found that users are sometimes reluctant in sharing personal information online. The type of information that is often kept from social media is contact information such as information about mail addresses, current home addresses, mobile phone numbers and home phone numbers (Govani & Pashley, 2005). This might be due to the fact that contact information provides the opportunity to be reached personally and individually (Govanni & Pashley, 2005). Govanni and Pashley (2005) state that users feel that they want to be reached by friends and connections through the social media platform and they feel that their home address is the right mean for contact.

Other information that is not often shared by users on social media is information about personal feelings and thoughts about their health. Diagnoses, medications and treatments are often kept from social media (Van der Velden & El Emam, 2012). While many research has focused on what information is disclosed on social media, less research focused on what is not shared on social media. From the information provided by Govanni and Pashley (2005) and Van der Velden and El Emam (2012) it seems that users are more hesitant in sharing information that is feels more personal and private compared to the superficial information such as taste in music.



This is in line with what Wang et al. (2011) found in their research. According to the, social media users often regretted sharing certain information on their social media accounts. The topics that later made the user regret the information disclosure were all sensitive topics. This includes information about alcohol/drug use, religion or politics, profanity or obscenity, family issues and comments with strong sentiment. Through this information we might conclude that users are more hesitant with sharing these types of information, and if they decide to share the information have a large change to regret that decision.

While little research specifically focused on what type of information is kept from the online platforms, many researches have focused on what might influence the reluctance of information disclosure. The most prominent antecedents were the risks involved with information disclosure, and privacy concerns. These two topics will be discussed below.

## **2.5 Risks**

Ever since social media have become incredibly popular among youngsters, many people have been concerned with the consequences of that much information disclosure on an online platform. As Ellison et al. (2011) stated: the extensive information disclosure by youngsters needs attention, since many risks are at sight.

One of the main concerns about information disclosure on social media is the enlarged chance for cyber-bullying (Veenstra, Vandebosch & Walrave, 2012) Livingstone (2008) also came to this conclusion, stating that online presence can lead to online bullying. In 2008, the Netherlands where somewhat spared from cyber bullying on a large scale, since only 4% of the users of social media experienced cyber bullying (Livingstone, 2008) However, this percentage has grown over the years. According to CBS, in 2014 15% of the female youngsters experienced cyber bullying, partly due to the fact that they were active on social media. The percentage of boys experiencing cyber bullying was significantly lower (7.9%) (Een op de zes meisjes, 2015). Often occurring ways of cyber bullying include slander and stalking.

This online stalking and slander are often paired with individuals who want to take advantage of young boys and girls. According to Barnes (2006) sexual

predators are attracted to the information disclosure by youngsters on social media. They locate their victims through social media. 15% of youngsters who use the Internet have reported an unwanted sexual solicitation online, from which 4% was through social media (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2008). More shocking was the percentage of youngsters who encountered a sexual harassment (33% online, 9% on social media) (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2008). These sexual solicitations and sexual harassments most often occurred through the use of direct messaging, but also through social networking sites.

Other risks discussed by scholars concern the fact that information revealed on social media might lead to future employers reject candidates because of the information they have found online (Christofides, Muise & Desmarais, 2009). Information disclosed on their social media account would in that way have a negative impact on their future college and job opportunities (Van Ouytsel, Walrave, & Ponnet, 2014). The future of youngsters could be adjusted by the type of information disclosed on their social media accounts since media reports show that there are many examples of students who got expelled or even charged for criminal behavior because of the information they had shared on their social media accounts. The fact that youngsters take such risky decisions in sharing certain information could be due to the fact that the decision making process of youngsters is more guided by short-term rewards than long-term perspectives (Albert & Steinberg, 2011; Taddicken & Jers, 2011). This would mean that youngsters rather think about all the likes and comments they will receive by posting certain information, rather than thinking about the future consequences of their disclosure.

While the main perception of youngsters is that they do not think about future consequences, research shows that people do regret disclosing certain information on their social media accounts, leading to psychological risks such as feeling uncomfortable and social risks such as creating conflict between youngsters and parents (Youn, 2005). Users often regret sharing information around sensitive topics, information that includes sentiment, lies and even secrets (Wang et al. 2011). Reason why users later regret their decisions could be that they “*(1) want to be perceived in favorable ways, (2) they do not think about their reason for posting or the consequences of their posts, (3) they misjudge the culture and norms within their*

*social circles, (4) they are in a “hot” state of high emotion when posting, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol, (5) their postings are seen by an unintended audience, (6) they do not foresee how their posts could be perceived by people within their intended audience, and (7) they misunderstand or misuse the Facebook platform”* (Wang et al. 2011, p. 1).

The risk of information disclosure has not been left unnoticed by parents. Boyd (2007) found that from her sample population, many parents were very concerned with the information disclosure of their children on social networking sites. Scholars believe that social media users should take better care of their privacy and information disclosure to reduce the risks as described above (Gross & Acquisti, 2005). But how do youngsters feel about their privacy? And how do they protect themselves from privacy violation?

## **2.6 Privacy**

Privacy issues are not something that became evident when the World Wide Web made its introduction. Since the beginning of human kind, privacy management has been a part of our daily lives. Privacy is something that is hard to grasp, it is a fluid term that is hard to determine concretely, since it means different things in different settings. However, privacy is a big part of our social life, whether this social life is in an offline environment, or an online environment. For this research, the assumptions of Petronio and Caughlin (2006) are taken into account. In her opinion, individuals own their own information. They are free to choose whether they share that information or not. Moreover, there is personal private information and collective private information. The difference between the two is that when there is collective private information, only some stakeholders own the piece of information. In terms of social media, it would mean that when you post something on your Facebook account, only your friends become stakeholders of that piece of information.

While Petronio and Caughlin (2006) mostly focused on this as the explanation for privacy, Van der Velden and El Emam (2013) distinguish many dimensions of privacy. The dimensions discussed in their literature are social, informational and psychological, territorial and privacy of a person. Social privacy can be understood as the control individuals want to have over the actual interaction with others

(influencing the frequency, length and content) (Van der Velden & El Emam, 2013). Informational privacy might be understood as the ability to control who gathers and reveals which information about oneself under which circumstances (Van der Velden & El Emam, 2013) Psychological privacy refers to the need to protect oneself from intrusions of personal thoughts, feelings and values. Moreover, psychological privacy is related to the freedom to decide whether you want to share information, and to whom (Van der Velden & El Emam, 2013). In terms of Petronio and Caughlin's (2006) concept this would refer to the process of making individuals stakeholders of personal information. Territorial privacy is related to the physical area surrounding a person, and last but not least, privacy of a person refers to the protection of an individual against unwanted interference.

For this research, the main focus will be on the informational privacy. When dealing with informational privacy on social media, there are limitations and rules that determine the amount of control you have over whether and how personal data can be entered. Moreover, the maintenance of privacy is sometimes limited by the latest technology. For example, the permanence of the information put on the Internet makes it hard to control who will have access to the information disclosed.

Due to the fact that teenagers disclose a large amount of personal information on social media sites, Marwick (2011) wanted to grasp the perception of youngsters on the concept privacy. During her research she found that youngsters all have their own interpretations of the concept privacy. Marwick's (2011) research revealed that youngsters describe their privacy in terms of space. Unfortunately, they stated that this need for physical privacy was often not fulfilled due to the fact that they live together with their families. This contradicts the perception of privacy of their parents. They perceived their home as a safe private place, while youngsters were missing their privacy in these homes (Marwick, 2011). Petronio (1994) also found in 1994 that youngsters felt like their parents violated their privacy with eavesdropping techniques such as listening to phone calls, opening mail and listening to private conversations (Petronio, 1994). During the time Petronio did her research, the online environment was not used as often as it is now. However, her examples of eavesdropping techniques could have evolved in modern techniques such as scrolling through the social media accounts of reading direct messaging texts.

A more general perception of privacy by youngsters was that they stated that privacy is the limitation of access of others to your own personal information. You lose your privacy when others gain access to that personal information (Marwick, 2011). While almost all youngsters showed appreciation for privacy, the degree to which youngsters appreciate privacy varied a lot (Marwick, 2011). This variation could be caused by local social norms in their environments (Marwick, 2011).

Privacy cannot be seen as something that stands alone, According to Petronio and Caughlin (2006), privacy is not a singular concept. It should be seen within a dialectal tension with information disclosure. This dialogue makes sense, since disclosing information about yourself is always interrelated with whether or not you want to expose information, or whether it should remain private. When someone exposes all information about themselves, not leaving anything behind, the notion of privacy would become useless. (Petronio & Caughlin 2006) This struggle between what we want to share with people and what we want to keep for ourselves is based on the fact that privacy choices are often very changeable (Petronio & Caughlin, 2006). According to Petronio & Caughlin (2006), privacy is dialectical in nature, since there always is a simultaneous push and pull between what people want to tell and what they do not want to tell.

This ongoing dialogue between privacy and information disclosure also appeared in research by Krasnova et al. (2009). They found that privacy concerns had a significant negative impact on the self-disclosure. Same for Young and Quan-Haase (2009) who found that concerns about Internet privacy had a negative relationship with information revelation. However, there is a discussion about the privacy paradox. While we claim we have big concerns about our privacy being violated, we do little to keep or protect our privacy (Kokolakis, 2015). Especially in the online world, we expose a lot of personal information, which opposes our privacy concerns related to the Internet. This is due to the fact that one essential element of the privacy paradox is that often privacy intentions do not lead to any protective behavior.

Norberg, Horne and Horne (2007) did an experiment to put this element to the test. In their research they asked students about their willingness to disclose specific

information. In a later stage of the experiment it showed that students did share the exact information to a 'marker researcher' they claimed not to expose when they were asked about their willingness. Research by Norberg et al. (2007) show that people share more information than they intend. While this conclusion seems quite straight forward, privacy behavior is often altered by the context. We should not expect individuals to behave the same way in every other context. However, the conclusion drawn by Norberg et al. (2007) could be related to social media. We claim we are concerned about our privacy, but our actions are not in line with those concerns.

But since we expose such a great deal of information on our social media accounts, why do we think our privacy is important? According to Rachels (1975) we have to begin thinking about privacy by making a "characterization of the special interests we have in being able to be free from certain kinds of intrusions" (Rachels, 1975, pp. 323). Moreover, Rachels (1975) believes privacy is important to us because of two main reasons. The first reason being that privacy is needed in competitive situations. Also, sometimes privacy is kept because certain elements of life or behavior are too embarrassing for others to know about. While these reasons are based on offline situations, they are also applicable for the information revelation on Facebook.

For example, Aquisti & Gross (2006) found that their participants expressed concerns about strangers being able to find out personal information about their sexual orientation, political views and partners names. From their findings we learn that in the online world, people care more about their privacy because they think about the risks that are involved with information disclosure. However, as explained in previous paragraphs, these privacy concerns do not result in protective behavior.

## **2.7 Privacy protection strategies**

According to Mark Zuckerberg, founder and creator of the social media platform Facebook, "people have really gotten comfortable not only sharing more information and different kinds, but more openly and with more people. That social norm is just something that has evolved over time" (Kirkpatrick, 2010). This claim by Zuckerberg created a big discussion about Facebook's attitude towards the privacy of their users,

since Zuckenberg stated this directly after the launch of the new privacy settings of Facebook, which allowed more people to have access to personal information including software developers (Hargittai, 2010).

Over the years, Facebook has changed its privacy settings regularly. This is also due to the fact that Facebook has grown from a campus based social network to one of the biggest social network on the planet. Facebook now has a privacy-settings page, where users are able to specify which pieces of profile data can be seen by whom (Fang & LeFevre, 2010). Moreover, Facebook offers the opportunity to create friends-lists where users can choose which lists can see which information. Despite this step towards privacy, studies have shown that people have severe difficulties to express and maintain these policies, due to the complexity of the policies (Church et al., 2009; Lipford et al., 2008; Strater & Lipford, 2008).

For this research, the privacy settings of Facebook in 2014 are used as a guideline to learn which settings youngsters use and which not. Personalizing the privacy settings page would mean that individuals are consciously creating a privacy protection strategy in order to keep control over who gains access to their personal information and who does not. For this research the following sections will be taken into account:

<b>Who can see my stuff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who can see your future posts?</li> <li>- <i>Use activity log</i>: Review all your posts and things you're tagged in</li> <li>- <i>Limit past posts</i>: Limit the audience for posts you've shared with friends of friends or public</li> </ul>
<b>Who can contact me?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who can send you friend requests?</li> <li>- Whose messages do I want filtered in my inbox?</li> </ul>
<b>Who can look me up?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who can look me up using the email address you provided?</li> <li>- Who can look me up using the phone numbers you provided?</li> <li>- Do you want other search engines to link to your timeline?</li> </ul>

Table 1. Privacy settings and tools of Facebook. (Privacy settings and tools, 2014)

Research upon using privacy settings as a privacy protection strategy shows some contradictions. Young and Quan-Haase (2009) found that university students protected themselves by changing the default privacy settings on their Facebook account. However, this contradicts Gross and Acquisti's (2005) statement. They found that the limiting privacy preferences on Facebook are hardly used. But more recent research from Livingstone (2008) and Marwick (2011) show that teenagers often make use of the technical features provided by social networking sites. They do however have mixed understandings and faith in these features.

While the standard privacy settings can create a protection strategy, it is very interesting to see if users create other strategies next to these standard settings. Previous research has dealt with this question before. One of these researches was by Young and Quan-Haase in 2009. In their research on the privacy protection strategies of university students on Facebook, they found that many different privacy protection strategies are used. Sending private email messages instead of Facebook posts on a friend's wall was the most used privacy protection strategy used by university students. Moreover, Young and Quan-Haase (2009) found that excluding personal information is another privacy protection strategy that is widely used. They also identify other important strategies that are not as used as much as the other three. These strategies are untagging themselves from pictures, deleting the Facebook posts that are written on their walls, and creating limited access to their profiles. Privacy protection strategies that are not used that much are providing fake information and blocking other users.

Another often-used privacy protection plan of teenagers in the USA is to separate social context per social tools. Hereby, teenagers used MySpace, Facebook, Twitter and private messaging for different social contexts (Marwick, 2011). Another rather drastic privacy strategy found by Marwick (2011) is that some youngsters dealt with their privacy by deleting all their posts everyday. By doing this, no information about the individual could be found on Facebook when he/she was not online. This privacy protection plan even went that far that the Facebook-account was only activated during the night, since adults would probably not search for the profile during those hours. Other strategy used to protect privacy was to delete every comment on Facebook once the youngster had read it. Also, their own comments



were deleted after a day, assuming the other party would have read them. Social privacy is often established by teenagers, by giving limited meaning to their messages on social media channels. (Marwick, 2011). Also, encoding messages is a widely used form of privacy protection of youngsters in the US. When encoding a message, youngsters made sure that only their best friend could understand the real meaning behind a message. Even though these messages are often misinterpreted, it is still a useful way to protect them in terms of social privacy, and can be seen as more useful than limiting access to the content itself.

Marwick (2011) found that youngsters in the US are acting in ways, which can also be seen in traditional engagement of public spaces. Youngsters want to share information about themselves, but want to be in control of that information. They want to be visible, but only to certain people. They also want to be recognized and validated, but again, only by certain people. This seems to be opposing each other, but traditional engagement of public spaces show the same behaviors. In their research, Marwick (2011) found that US teenagers are really trying to bring social norms to the equation by developing their own strategies for managing privacy in public spaces. Their strategies may not always be successful, and are sometimes even contradictory for their own privacy; but they are dealing with the problem and are not neglecting it. This is against the main perception. Parents are always concerned that their children have no idea what privacy is and that they do nothing to protect themselves from the large Internet environment. Previous research by Gross and Acquisti (2005), Livingstone (2008) Young and Quan-Haase (2009) and Marwick (2011) has provided a long list of privacy protection strategies used by youngsters and university students in the USA. This research will keep these strategies in mind and will see if the Dutch population of youngsters also uses these strategies.

### 3. Research design

The main objective of this research is to explore how Dutch youngsters manage themselves on Facebook, which information do they expose, and why do they voluntarily disclose this information? Moreover, this research wants to explore how these youngsters build privacy protection strategies, and where they learn about risks involved with information disclosure and privacy management. In order to answer the research questions as listed in the introduction; a clear research design is necessary. Since every research has its own purposes, each research will have its own research method.

The research method used for this specific research will be qualitative research. The reason for this choice is that this topic is very complex. It is not just about what youngsters put on their Facebook accounts, and which settings they use to protect themselves, it is also about the reasons for their choices. Why do they post certain information, why do they choose to leave other information private? What is privacy in their opinion? Why do they create certain protection strategies? These questions are equally valuable to the questions of what they post. While many types of qualitative research exist, this research conducted qualitative in depth interviews. Qualitative interviews can be defined as “ an interview whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena” (Kvale, 1983, pp. 174).

Through qualitative interviews, the interviewees will have much more space to describe their personal information and opinions. And that is exactly what this research need in order to answer the main research questions. If this research would focus solely on quantitative research many topics could be neglected, if they are not included in the questionnaire. Moreover, this research is aiming to answer the questions of what, where, when and how, which according to Babbie (2008) can be seen as explanatory research, which is suitable for a qualitative research method.

The exact research design will be explained in the sections below, starting by the research method, the units of analysis, the sampling method, and end with an explanation on how the qualitative data was processed and analyzed.

### 3.1 Research method

Based on the research question, sub research questions and the objective of this study, an appropriate research method was chosen. The research method used for this study was qualitative in depth interviews. In depth interviews offer a lot of advantages. First of all, in depth interviews provide much more detailed information about a certain topic compared to for example qualitative surveys, since survey questions are fix, and answers are limited (Weiss, 1995) Moreover, interviewees might feel more at ease during a relaxed conversation with an interviewer opposed to filling in a survey about their habits and thoughts. Since the goal of this research is to gain as much information as possible about this topic, and not being limited to the topic determined on forehand, the qualitative in depth interviews were the most suitable choice for this research.

The qualitative in depth interviews will be in a face-to-face situation. Face to face interviews have the advantage that they are characterized by their synchronous communication in time and place (Opdenakker, 2006). Main advantages of this characteristic are that social cues can be used as extra information. Social cues refer to the body language and intonation of an interviewee. Another advantage of face-to-face interviews is that it creates a situation where answers are given spontaneously without an extended reflection, due to the fact that there is no delay between the question and the answer (Opdenakker, 2006).

However, face-to-face interviews also have some disadvantages. One of them is that the interviewer can guide the interview through his/her behavior. In order to minimize this effect, an interview protocol is used when interviewing the subjects. Using this interview protocol creates the need to both listen and interpret the answers of the subjects, but at the same time requires a need to guide the interview in such a way that all questions are answered within the planned time span (Opdenakker, 2006)

The qualitative interviews of this study were semi-structured. Through a semi-structured interviewing method, the interviewees were all individually asked questions about their Facebook usage, personal information disclosure, and their privacy protection strategies. This information was gathered through on one hand

pre-determined questions and on the other hand questions that will be stated spontaneously throughout the interview, therefore the interviews are semi-structured. DiCocco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) agree to this as being semi-structured interviews. They state that semi-structured interviews “are generally organized around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewees (DiCocco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006, p. 315).

Semi-structured interviews give the interviewees the space to share their own thoughts, opinions and expertise's. But it also gives the interviewer the opportunity to ensure that the key questions will be answered. The questions of the semi-structured qualitative interviews were not very strict; the questions really depended on the interviewees. The reason for this was that the subjects of this study were minors, youngster between the ages of 13-18. One of the most important things during the interviews was making the interviewees feel at ease. They were not forced to answer questions and their needs, short attention spans and potential vulnerabilities were taken into account. According to Babbie (2008), qualitative interviews can be seen as an interaction between the researcher and the interviewee. Within this interaction, the researcher needs to make sure that all topics are covered. But this should not be done through a “set of questions that must be asked with particular words and in a particular order” (Babbie, 2008, pp. 335-336).

The semi-structured interviews offered the opportunity to gain comprehensive and in-depth data from the participants. This was partly due to the fact that the semi-structured interviews allow follow up questions on interesting topics (Thomas, 2011). Using the semi-structured interviewing format, the interviewer made a list of questions regarding to the information exposed by Dutch teenagers on Facebook, why they expose this information, and which privacy strategies they have developed and used. Appendix 1 and 2 show an overview of the interviewing questions and topics.

Despite the fact that this research is reported in English, the interviews with the Dutch youngsters were held in Dutch. The reason for this was that Dutch is the native language for these participants. Moreover, doing an interview at such a young

age in another language could lead to insecurity, and to the interviewees not exposing all their information because they do not speak English well enough to fully express themselves about the topics. By speaking in their native language, all of the interviewees felt at ease and were able to express themselves openly. During the interviews, detailed notes were made. Additionally, the interviews were audibly recorded, and later transcribed into text.

Like every research method, qualitative in depth interviews also has its limitations and pitfalls. The limitation of this research method is that the outcomes of this research cannot be generalized to the broader population. Therefore statements in the findings and conclusion section will only be about the 10 participants, and not about the whole population. Because this research is the first research upon this specific target group, it is not that much of a problem that the answers are not generalizable. The outcomes of this study could maybe serve as a stepping-stone for a much larger quantitative research that could research if these findings are applicable for the larger population.

### **3.2 Units of analysis**

The units of analysis for this research are youngsters. The focus is on the Dutch population. This research could have focused on a very large group of youngsters, however, due to the scope and time-limitations of this research, the focus is on Dutch youngsters. Dutch youngsters appear to be very active on social networking sites, and are therefore chosen to be the subject of this study.

The target group “Dutch youngsters” is a target group with blurry lines; what is a youngster? Because of that, for this research, the target group was limited to the following qualifications: The interviewees must always have a Dutch nationality. The interviewees should be between the age of 13 and 18. These age limits were chosen because the minimum age required for a Facebook profile is 13. Also, in the Netherlands you are considered an adult when reaching the age of 18. This research also focused on the Facebook use of the interviewees; therefore they had to be active members of the social media platform Facebook. Concluding, the interviewees must not be enrolled in a university or HBO-education. These interviewees would fall under the category Dutch students, whom are not included in this research.

For this research, eventually 10 in depth interviews were conducted. According to Polkinghorne (1989), researchers should aim to interview 5 – 25 participants. Due to the scope and time limitations of this study, 10 in depth interviews provided satisfactory, detailed information, which led to information that could answer the main research questions.

A list of the units of analysis can be found in appendix 4. Here some background information is provided to get a better overview of the participant. In this overview information like age, sex, school level, city, family situation, personality description, importance of family and friends, importance of own will, and the most important things in life is summarized.

### **3.3 Sampling method**

As discussed in earlier sections, qualitative semi-structured interviews will be conducted; moreover, this research focuses on Dutch youngsters. Because of this focus, not everyone in the Dutch population has equal chances of getting selected to participate. The interviewees for this research are chosen based on certain characteristics (Dutch nationality, age 13-18, active on Facebook). This non-probability sampling method used for this research will therefore be purposive/judgmental sampling. According to Babbie (2008), this sampling method allows the samples to be selected based on the knowledge of this population, their elements and the purpose of the study. For this study the focus was on the population of Dutch youngsters. While no assumptions can be made about the entire population, it still was most interesting to find an as diverse sample as possible, meaning diversity in age and gender in order to get a better insight into the group of youngsters.

For this study, 10 interviews were conducted. To recruit these participants, snowball sampling was used, meaning that participants were asked to suggest additional participants to do in depth interviews. According to Biernacki and Waldorf (1981) snowball sampling means creating a sample through referrals among people who share certain characteristics. Moreover, Biernacki and Waldorf (1981) claim that snowball sampling is “particularly applicable when the focus of study is on a sensitive issue, possibly concerning a relative private matter, and thus requires the knowledge

of insiders to locate people for study” (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981, pp. 141). Since this research is closely related to very private information of participants, snowball sampling seemed to be an appropriate sampling method for this research. Moreover, snowball sampling was used because the researcher wanted the participants to feel as comfortable as possible. When the participants were reached through personal connections (friends, family etc.) they would feel less forced to participate in this interview. When being asked for participation by superiors such as teachers and/or a school program, it might lead to feelings of participation against their will. The participants proposed by others, were then selected through criterion sampling, which involves choosing samples that meet the predetermined criterion of importance” (Patton, 1990). While gathering participants, the aim was to get at least one participant for each age within the age-limit (meaning at least one participant with the age of 13, of with the age of 14 and so forth). A somewhat equal sample would present a better overview of the selected sample, contrary to having 5 participants with the age of 13 and 5 participants with the age of 18.

The initial purposeful sampling was located through one channel. Some Dutch youngsters that met the requirements of the sample were already acquaintances of the researcher. Therefore, these youngsters were asked to propose some participants who met the criteria. These youngsters asked their classmates, teammates, friends, and family, and eventually a sample of 10 Dutch youngsters who met the criteria was selected.

Because the group of participants is under age, they were handled with great care. To ensure that they were not forced into doing anything they didn't want, each participant signed a consent contract. In this contract, it is stated that they are participating in this research voluntary. Therefore they had every right to not answer certain questions, or stop the interview whenever they want. They also had the right to say that they didn't want to participate even after the interview was conducted. This way they were ensured that this interview was not forced on them, but that they had every right to stop. In this contract, it was also stated that audio recording would be used for transcribing, but if they had any objections to that, than the tape would be stopped and deleted. Not only the youngsters signed this contract, also all parents signed the document, to make them feel safe about the intentions of the interview

and the outcomes of the interview. However, the parents were not present during the interview, since their presence might influence the answers of the interviewees. Eventually all participants seemed to agree with the statements in this document, and all explained that they understood what was stated in the document. The consent contract can be found in appendix 3. Due to privacy issues, the signed contracts are not included in this document, since none of the participants indicated that they want their identity to be exposed.

### **3.4 Data processing/analysis**

After the semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed into textual data, the transcriptions were analyzed through thematic analysis. According Braun and Clarke (2008), thematic analysis leads to rich and detailed information drawn from the textual data. A clear understanding of the research question is preferable; and for that, thematic analysis is a useful analysis strategy. While a thematic analysis is widely used, no clear agreement had been made on what thematic analysis is, and how one goes about doing it (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Tuckett, 2005). For this research, the researches by Marks (2004) and Braun and Clarke (2008) will be taken into account as valuable in defining thematic analyses.

Marks (2004) state that thematic analysis can be seen as a qualitative analytical method that can be used to analyze data in relation to identifiable themes. In his article, Marks (2004) also states that thematic analyses consist of two forms of coding. The first type of coding is deductive. Hereby, the predetermined theoretical ideas and themes are introduced. Secondly, inductive coding identifies themes as a result of the raw data from the transcripts.

Thematic analysis offers many benefits, the most important ones being flexibility and versatility (Braun & Clarke, 2008). Because of the benefits of this type of analysis and the detailed in-depth information it will provide, thematic analysis is considered as a useful analysis tool while creating understanding on the Facebook use of Dutch youngsters, and their privacy protection strategies. The primary form of coding used while analyzing was inductive coding. Inductive coding was implemented to gain access to new occurring themes within the raw data. While coding and analyzing the textual data, no analysis instruments were used.



To create a good overview of the themes, a questions/topics/themes scheme was developed. Here every sub research question, the topics derived from the data are listed, together with all the reactions of the interviewees on this theme. Moreover, the new themes that became visible during the interviews are also noted in this scheme, together with the reactions of the interviewees. This scheme provides a good overview of what has been said about what theme, since the raw transcribed data from the interviews was too chaotic to create a good overview.

During analyzing the data from the interviews the following themes occurred:

RQ	Sub RQ	Topics	Deductive themes	Inductive themes
1	1	Social networks  Personal information disclosure: <i>profile picture</i> <i>gender</i> <i>birth date</i> <i>hometown</i> <i>screen name</i> <i>School concentration</i> <i>interests in movies, books, clubs, music</i> <i>relationship status</i> <i>partner</i> <i>potential affiliations</i> <i>list of favorite things</i>  New themes: <i>family</i> <i>photos</i> <i>visited places</i> <i>Events</i>  Amount of disclosure  Gender and information disclosure	Online identity  Peers  Frequency	
1	2	Reluctance of information disclosure: <i>contact information</i> <i>relationships &amp; partner</i> <i>political preferences</i> <i>religious beliefs</i> <i>about you</i> <i>favorite quotes</i>	Online identity  Peers  Frequency	

<i>reviews</i>			
1	3	Third parties making digital dossiers Identity theft Offline/online stalking Cyber bullying	Risks
2	4	Standard privacy settings Trust and effectiveness of privacy settings Privacy protection strategies from literature: <i>private messaging</i> <i>untagging</i> <i>removing posts from timeline</i> <i>providing false information</i> <i>blocking someone</i> <i>secret messages</i> Privacy protection strategies by Dutch youngsters	Privacy
2	5	Sources for information about privacy Future lessons about privacy on Facebook	Trust Knowledge

*Table 2. Overview themes*

The themes that occurred during the in depth interviews will be discussed in detail during the chapter findings. In order to get a better insight on what these themes mean and what will be discussed during the next chapter, each theme will be briefly explained:

1. **Online identity:** The participants all revealed certain information on their personal profile pages and kept certain information from it. By doing this, they all created their own online identity. How they create this identity and how the participants see their own online identity will be discussed in the next chapter.
2. **Peers:** This theme also passed by during the theoretical Framework. Boyd (2007) already found that the argument of “everyone is on it” is the main reason youngsters put personal information on Facebook. Moreover, it has

become a part of teenage culture (Boyd, 2007). The respondents also gave this argument during this research. How they think about this group pressure will be discussed during this section of the thematic analysis.

3. **Frequency:** During the in depth interviews, it became clear that the participants all used Facebook in a different way and with different frequencies. However, no matter how often they used Facebook, each and every participant claimed not to be on Facebook that much. The concept of spending “much” time on Facebook was very different among the participants. This difference will be discussed later on.
4. **Risks:** This theme is somewhat connected to the privacy theme. During the interviews it became clear that the participants were reluctant in providing certain information because they were afraid of certain risks of revealing that information and ignoring their privacy boundaries. These perceived risks and the way the youngsters cope with these risks will be discussed
5. **Privacy:** As stated above, the participants of this study were also reluctant in providing certain information. The reason for this is that they wanted to keep that information private. During the interviews it became clear the privacy is a very living subject for the youngsters while they are on Facebook. What they perceive as private and how they cope with privacy strategies in the online environment will be discussed later on.
6. **Trust:** While many researchers claim that youngsters are not interested in online privacy, it was noticeable during the interviews for this research that all the participants were struggling with some sort of trust towards Facebook, third parties and their online friends. This issue of trust will also be discussed later on.
7. **Knowledge:** While the participants seemed to be very conscious about their personal privacy, the risks involved with information revelation and had many trust-issues, most of the participants did not use the privacy settings provided by Facebook. Moreover, almost all participants stated that they did not want to learn anything else about online privacy, the risks or potential privacy

strategies. The reason why they are struggling with their privacy and trust issues, but are reluctant to learn anything about it will be discussed in the last part of the thematic analysis.

In the data analysis and results, all interviewees were given pseudo names to maintain their wanted anonymity within this research. To create pseudo names, a name generator was used to create complete random pseudo names (the only criteria was a male name for a male participant and vice versa). Based on the name generator, the following pseudo names were established:

- Participant 1: Elsa
- Participant 2: Karina
- Participant 3: Kelly
- Participant 4: Mieke
- Participant 5: Desiree
- Participant 6: Max
- Participant 7: Manon
- Participant 8: Bastiaan
- Participant 9: Rob
- Participant 10: Charlotte

## **4. Findings**

The core purpose of this research is to find out what Dutch youngsters do to disclose personal information on Facebook. Moreover, this research focuses on the online privacy strategies that Dutch youngsters use in order to protect their privacy, since information disclosure online involves many risks (Veenstra, Vandebosch & Walrave, 2012; Livingstone, 2008; Barnes, 2006; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2008; Christofides, Muise & Desmarais, 2009; Van Ouytsel, Walrave, & Ponnet, 2014). In order to answer the main research questions, a better understanding of the sub-research questions is needed. While analyzing the data derived from the in depth interviews, some key themes appeared.

As described above, these themes are online identity, frequency, peers, privacy, risks, trust, and knowledge. By analyzing the themes derived from the interviews, the sub research questions can be answered. The themes online identity, peers and frequency will provide an answer to the sub research question 1. Next, the theme privacy will cover the needed finding to answer sub research question 2 and 4. The somewhat related themes risks and trust will provide an answer to the sub research question 3, and finally the theme knowledge will give an answer to the last sub research question 5. Therefore, after the themes are discussed, a small discussion will provide an answer to the sub research questions. After all these sub research questions are answered, the two main research questions can be discussed. This discussion will be in the conclusion and discussion section of this research.

### **4.1 Online identity**

The ten in depth interviews showed that the participants were very open about the information they share on their Facebook profile. Overall, each participant willingly showed his or her personal profile page, in which all personal information was located. This is in line with what Norberg (2007) also encountered. In his research, his students were extremely open when they were asked to provide personal information with a market researcher. For this interview, participants showed their online profile without hesitation. However, would they also have done

this in a situation where the person asking the question was not a researcher? If we rely on the findings by Norberg (2007) we can expect that the interviewees would be much more reluctant in sharing this personal information if they were in a different situation.

While scrolling through the profile pages of the participants, lots of information was shared. This is in line with what previous research concluded (Boyd, 2007; Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Govani & Pashley, 2005). Research concluded that youngsters often share information such as profile pictures, gender, birth date, hometown, screen name, school concentration, interests in movies, music, clubs, books, relationship status, partner, political affiliation and lists of their favorite things (Govani and Pashley, 2005). These types of information were also discussed with the interviewees. While literature limits the types of information to the above stated topics, the participants in this study showed that they also share information about their family, photos, visited places and events. How they share these types of information will be discussed in more detail below.

#### **4.1.1 Basic contact details**

As Lewis, Kaufman and Christakis (2008) already stated, some information disclosure on Facebook is mandatory. This includes the basic contact details from which a personal Facebook account is created. Here, we focus on information about profile pictures, gender, birthdates, and hometowns. This information is immediately requested when creating a Facebook profile.

##### *- Profile picture*

All participants of this study had set a profile picture for their personal Facebook profile. While eight out of the ten participants were easily recognizable on their profile picture, two of the participants used a photo in which they were not easily recognizable. Frankly, the two participants with a not recognizable profile picture did not have clear explanations why they selected a profile picture that was somewhat unclear.

When asked about the reason why they choose a particular photo as their profile picture, most participants responded very quickly by stating that they “just liked” the

picture. However, when thinking more in depth about their profile pictures, a lot of participants seemed to have put some thought in their profile pictures. All participants chose to set a picture where only their faces were exposed. When asking about why they made the decision to only put their face in their profile picture, many respondents replied that they felt that was most appropriate. The participants often seemed to think about the consequences of their profile picture. There were no pictures in bathing suits, or pictures of them with alcoholic beverages in their hands, only plain photos of only their faces. This might relate to the perceived risks of putting a future career on the line (Christofides, Muise & Desmarais, 2009; Van Ouytsel, Walrave, & Ponnet, 2014). Both Bastiaan and Desiree explained how they eventually choose their profile picture. Their statements illustrate the overall vibe there was among the participants about choosing a profile picture. Desiree explained that she specifically choose for a picture with only her face on it:

*“Yes, there is a reason for that [choosing a picture with only her face]. The full picture was me holding two cups of beer, and I think that is a bit too much information for Facebook”*

While reading previous literature we might assume that youngsters are not consciously thinking about the consequences of their information disclosure, since we expect the participants to make discussions based on the short term rewards instead of the long term consequences (Albert & Steinberg, 2011; Taddicken & Jers, 2011). However, the teenagers proved otherwise.

#### - *Gender, birth date, hometown and school concentration*

Information about gender, birthdates, hometown and school concentration was often shared. The reason for sharing information about these specific types of information was often unclear. The Dutch youngsters had a more or less laconic attitude towards the reasons why they exposed this information. The overall reason they exposed was that they ‘had to fill this in’ while making an account. As Elsa explains:

*“Yeah, I had to fill that [information about age] in otherwise I couldn’t join Facebook”*

While Lewis, Kaufman and Christakis (2008) claim that most information on social media is shared willingly, it is interesting to see that almost all teenagers felt that disclosing this personal information was mandatory. Even more, it would be interesting to find out to what extent youngsters feel obligated to expose this information on social media.

Based on literature we know that youngsters are often exposed to the risks of information disclosure online. One of them is stalking (Barnes, 2006; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2008). Therefore it is interesting to see that despite these risks, individuals still exposed information about their home addresses on Facebook. The perceived risks of information disclosure on Facebook by youngsters will be discussed in a later segment.

#### **4.1.2 Personal interests**

The in depth interviews with the participants show that they expose a great deal of personal interests. While some expose their personal interest by creating lists of favorite music, movies, books, most expose themselves by creating a lists of favorite things.

The participants exposed information about which show or movie they were currently watching. Karina showed that she exposed the movies and shows she watched on her Facebook timeline:

*“ I like movies, I often see movies you could have seen in my timeline, and sometimes these are movies I have seen, and if I liked them, I will like them on Facebook as well...and for instance with goede tijden slechte tijden [soap in the Netherlands] I will sometimes post something like I’m watching goede tijden slechte tijden or divorce”*



While Karina does not say it specifically, it was interesting to see that Karina only exposed information about movies and shows when they were shows that are known to be popular among her friends and schoolmates. This could relate to the fact that youngsters want to create an identity that is perceived as cool by peers, and to the need for popularity (Boyd, 2005; Christofides, Muise & Desmarais, 2009).

This assumption about the need to create a “cool” identity was somewhat strengthened by the statement by Desiree. She clearly explained that she uses her Facebook profile to create an online identity:

*“ All my likes are quite recent, in fact all my interest are recently filled in. this is because I just ehm, wanted to show everyone what kind of personality I have, and I believe that movie and music preferences tell a lot about someone’s personality... you can see that I have many different interests in music, and also for movies I filled in a lot of different ones.”*

Desiree was the only participant who stated this so clearly. Others did not explain themselves in such ways. However, each participant explained that they felt like they created their lists of favorite things all on their own, not influenced by what their peers think. However surprisingly, all participants had a list of ‘likes’ that was very similar to the lists created by their friends. The fact that they all have similar likes and interest might be due to the fact that youngsters often want to be tolerated by their peers, which all leads back to the statements by Boyd (2005) and Christofides, Muise and Desmarais (2009).

### 4.1.3 New topics

Previous research has until now focused on the topics as described above. However, Facebook is an ever-changing platform and new assets have been added over the years. During the interviews, the teenagers showed that they shared information about their families. A list showed how they were related to other Facebook users. While previous literature showed that youngsters feel more at ease on social networking sites because of the lack of interference by parents (Livingstone, 2008;

Boyd, 2007), this research shows that youngsters have accepted the fact that their families are also on Facebook, and they do not seem to mind.

Besides creating lists of relatives, the interviewees exposed a lot of information through photos, and lists of visited places and events. The events section of Facebook seems to become a new form of communication in which users can organize events and sent invitations. Moreover, the Dutch youngsters used these tools to show their peers where they have been. This again leads back to the fact that youngsters want to create an online identity that is perceived as cool by their peers. The fact that the participants only wanted to expose the positive aspects of their lives through photos and updates show that they wanted to create a better image of themselves on Facebook. This positive created image will represent their online identity.

## **4.2 Peers**

From the interviews with the Dutch youngsters we can see that they act and behave in such a way that they create an online identity. However, how much is this creation of an online identity affected by peer pressure? From the interviews it showed that every participant had done something on Facebook due to peer pressure. Even the decision to join Facebook was affected by peers. Almost all participants provided the same answer to the question why do you use Facebook? Each participant claimed they were on since everyone was on it. It is interesting to see that this sample shows the same result as Boyd (2007) found almost 10 years ago. This could be due to the fact that teenagers often want to fit in. they want to wear the same clothes, they want to blend in.

## **4.3 Frequency**

While all of the participants were active members of the social media channel Facebook, each participant had their own frequency of posting information. While each youngster stated that they looked at their Facebook timeline at least once a day, the frequencies of actually posting something on Facebook was very divers. When the participants were asked about the frequency in which they posts status updates on Facebook, and 9 out of 10 immediately replied that they were not that

active, and that they did not post things that often. This was a very interesting phenomenon, since their frequencies varied a lot. Some participants felt that once every 3 weeks was not often, while other participants saw their posts in every few months as not often, or even 3 times a year as not often. It seemed like the immediate answer of 'I don't post often' was more a socially correct answer, rather than an actual report on how often they post. Again, it seemed like the term of posting not often has blurry lines and means something different to every individual.

This could also relate back to the previous theme 'peers'. By stating that you are not that often on Facebook could be seen as 'cool' and socially acceptable. Although none of the participants stated that this was the case, their behavior seemed to indicate otherwise. One of the indicators for this was that most of the participants stated that they were not active on Facebook anymore, since it became a bit out of fashion. Most participants stated that they had shifted to other social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter. The fact that Facebook was losing its 'cool' status among the youngsters of this sample might indicate that stating that you are on the not so cool social media channel Facebook might make you seem like a not-cool person, something that no teenager wants.

### **Sub conclusion: Amount and type of personal information**

Overall, the participants are very generous in exposing their information about their profile pictures, gender, birthdates, school concentration and lists of favorite things. This goes in line with what previous literature states (Govani & Pashley, 2005). Moreover, the Dutch youngsters are also generous in exposing information about their family, photos, visited places and events. The reason these topics did not occur in previous literature could be due to the fact that these features could be added later by Facebook, and were not present during the time those researches were executed.

The specific types of information shared on Facebook were often about the positive aspects of their lives, thereby creating a positive online identity to blend in the online teenage culture. This is in line with what previous literature found (Livingstone, 2008; Gool, van Ouytsel, Ponnet & Walrave, 2015; Ellison et al., 2011; Taddicken, 2014; Taddicken & Jers, 2011).

The amount of content they put online is very great, but this is related to the amount of information on the profile information page on Facebook. Almost all participants claimed that they did not post a lot of posts on their Facebook-wall. This was the immediate first reaction of almost every participant. However, their perspective of what 'not a lot of posts' or 'not often' was very diverse. This might indicate that this answer is more a socially desirable answer instead of a real representation of the actual use.

#### 4.4 Risks

According to previous literature, there are many risks involved with privacy and information disclosure online. Privacy and information disclosure are concepts that intertwine. The more information gets exposed, less privacy someone has. In their research Gross and Acquisti (2005) found that their sample hardly used any of the privacy settings, and thereby exposed themselves to many risks. These risks included third parties making digital dossiers of their behaviors, identity theft, cyber and offline stalking and online bullying.

##### - *Third parties making digital dossiers of your behavior.*

The main risk the participants acknowledged was that when they exposed information about where they lived in combination with information about holidays, that people keep track of that information and that eventually, burglars will hack into their homes. This is related to third parties making digital dossiers of you behavior. According to the youngsters, this was their parents main concern. Only one participant saw the company Facebook as the third party who could take disadvantage of his information. He claimed that he is fully aware of the fact that his information is being kept by Facebook, but has no idea for what purposes they use his information. However, no other participants were concerned about this problem.

##### - *Identity theft*

While many of the participants were concerned about their privacy, none stated that they were afraid of identity theft. This topic did not appear in the conversations with the Dutch teenagers. This might relate to the fact that no participant had filled in a screen name, only their real name. In the USA, screen names are often exposed

(Young and Quan-Haase; 2009, Govani and Pashley, 2005), which might lead to more exploitation of Facebook profiles.

- *Offline and online stalking*

Almost all participants were afraid of offline stalking. To prevent this from happening they all refused to fill in their home addresses, sometimes even their hometown, their email address and phone number. They believed stalking was extremely dangerous when going on a holiday, because of the fear of burglary. Online stalking appeared to be less of a concern among the teenagers. Only one participant explained that he had removed one of his friends because he/she commented on every single thing on Facebook related to him. He felt uncomfortable by this and deleted that person from his friend list. The fact that the participants were not concerned with online stalking is in contrast with the percentage of youngsters being stalked and slandered on social media in the Netherlands.

- *Cyber bullying*

Cyber bullying is something that is happening on a daily base nowadays. A lot of teenagers are bullied through online channels because it is easy to do so anonymously. Some of the participants of this study also saw cyber bullying as a large risk of Facebook. They felt that the content you put on Facebook could definitely lead to cyber bullying. Therefore you should always be extra careful when deciding what to post and what not to post. None of the participants had to deal with cyber bullying themselves, but one of the participants knew people who were bullied through online channels. The fact that only one of the participants knew someone who was cyberbullied is again in contrast with the percentages of youngsters being bullied on the Internet.

- *Negative impact future careers*

Research shows that information disclosure on social media can have negative effect on future job and school opportunities (Christofides, Muise & Desmarais, 2009; Van Ouytsel, Walrave, & Ponnet, 2014). Even though we might expect teenagers not to think about these subjects, since they often tend to focus on short-term rewards rather than long-term perspectives (Albert & Steinberg, 2011; Taddicken & Jers,

2011), the participants of this study showed that they cared about this risk. They stated throughout the interview that they alter their profile pictures in order to represent themselves in a favorable way for future employers. Bastiaan described this in his quote on his profile picture:

*“I think I look good in my profile picture, and I wanted to make sure that I represent myself in a positive way. If you put a profile picture on their looking like a retard... than... well maybe you will get judged when doing job interviews. So when you're half naked on your profile picture, or if you have a beer bottle in your hand, you don't make a good first impression”*

Surprisingly, the teenagers mentioned no other 'new' risks of information disclosure and privacy during the interviews. What was surprising was the fact that almost half of the teenagers explained that they do not see any risks in the information disclosure and privacy of their own Facebook page. They all felt their privacy was protected, and the information they disclosed could not hurt them in any way. This is not in line with the privacy paradox mentioned by Kokolakis (2015).

### **Sub conclusion: Perceived risks**

Literature shows that there are risks involved with online information disclosure and online privacy. The main risks derived from literature (Young & Quan-Haase; 2009, Livingstone, 2008), were also perceived as risks by the teenagers of the Dutch sample (except identity theft). A surprisingly large percentage of the sample however felt that there were no risks involved with their information disclosure online. They felt that they already protected their privacy well enough, and that the information exposed is well thought off. This attitude is not in line with the privacy paradox as explained by Kokolakis (2015). The privacy paradox claims that we have large concerns about our privacy, but that we do little to protect it. However, the information derived from the youngsters rather suggests that the youngsters did not perceive many risks involved with their information disclosure. Does this lead to little privacy protection strategies?

## 4.5 Privacy

Ever since social media platforms became popular around the world, users have dealt with privacy issues. Facebook allows its users to alter the standard privacy settings on their personal profile (Fang & LeFevre, 2010). However, there is some contradiction on the fact whether the users of Facebook use these standard privacy settings (Young and Quan-Haase, 2009; Gross and Acquisti, 2005; Livingstone, 2008; Boyd and Marwick, 2011). To take this contradiction to the test, each participant was asked about the use of these standard settings on their profile.

Facebook provides its users a total of 8 settings in 3 categories that can protect the privacy of the users (see literature review, p.24). The first category is “who can see my stuff”. Here, the first setting regards who can see my future posts. This privacy setting appeared to be widely known among the Dutch teenagers. While this setting is set on public when creating an account, no participant maintained this setting. All participants changed the setting in order to create some privacy around their Facebook account. 7 out of 10 participants stated that they had filled in friends in this setting because they wanted to be in control of who sees their posts. They create their own Facebook friends list by inviting and accepting a certain group of people, and they therefore want their information to be only available to this certain group. Charlotte explains why she uses the setting friends, making a good overview of the overall feeling on this topic.

*“ Well, because I think like my friends are a group that I have chosen myself. And if you say friends of friends, they can choose their own friends, but I haven’t chosen those friends, so I rather not have them knowing about my posts”.*

Overall, the feeling seems to be that people want to maintain some control in who sees their messages. Everyone did change something about their settings. This is in line with what Livingstone (2008), Gross and Aquisti (2005) and Boyd and Marwick (2011) found.

Even though the setting ‘who can see my stuff’ is used, many of the privacy settings were left untouched, including, (1) reviewing all posts in which you are

tagged, (2) limit audience of public posts, (3) filtering people who can message you, (4) who can connect with me, (5 + 6) who can look me up using the provided email address/phone number and (7) do you want search engines to link to your profile. Most participants started to look quite confused when these settings were discussed. They did not really know what these settings meant, and they had never used it before. This seems to be in line with what Church et al. (2009), Lipford et al. (2008) and Strater & Lipford (2008) found. Due to the complexity of the settings, people hardly use them.

The youngsters seemed to have most problems with setting 5, 6 and 7. They were quite surprised by their own settings, since they believed they have set their mobile phone number and email address to 'only me', instead of being available to everyone. The youngest participants were most surprised by the settings. However, even though they were unpleasantly surprised by their settings most of them replied quite laconic when they reacted to setting 7. They stated that they would look at these settings again once they turn 18.

Previous literature already exposed what youngsters and students in the USA do, next to those standard settings to protect their privacy (Gross and Acquisti, 2005; Livingstone, 2008; Young and Quan-Haase, 2009; Boyd and Marwick, 2011). These strategies include sending private messages instead of posting publicly on walls, untagging themselves from pictures and status updates, removing posts from own wall, providing false information on their Facebook profile, blocking persons from their friend-list, and sending "secret" messages as Facebook updates. These strategies were discussed with the Dutch participants, on whether or not they used these strategies and if so how they used them. The strategies will be discussed below.

- *Sending private messages instead of posting on Facebook wall.*

While at first they did not come up with this as a privacy protection strategy, each participant agreed that they used this at some point. Most of the participants always used private messaging as their way of communicating with friends, and never posted anything on their friends' Facebook wall for the public to see. They always



used Whatsapp, sms or Facebook messenger to get in personal contact with their friends. They felt that this was much easier to communicate with your friends, since you can than have a long conversation right away, without everyone knowing about it. The only occasion when public messages were acceptable was during birthdays. Almost every participant pointed out that they only send public messages to someone if it's his/her birthday. This was an interesting finding, since they already have these private conversations, why don't they congratulate each other via those private channels? In their opinion this message was not so private. These finding are in line with the privacy strategy by Young and Quan-Haase (2009). The fact that they all send private messages via other channels could also be intertwined with the fact that different social media are used for different purposes (Boyd & Marwick, 2011). WhatsApp's main purpose is to send private messages. This is not the main purpose of Facebook. This could explain why people send little to no messages to their friends via the Facebook wall.

- *Untagging yourself from Facebook posts*

Untagging yourself from pictures and updates on Facebook appeared to be a popular strategy to protect one's privacy by teenagers and students in the USA (Young and Quan-Haase, 2009). The Dutch sample was also aware that this could be done to protect their privacy. However, almost all stated that they never got in a situation where he/she was unhappy with a picture or a status update. Therefore they had never actually untagged themselves from anything. They do however think it is a useful way to protect themselves, and if in the future a picture or update would be posted which they are unhappy about they would definitely untag themselves.

- *Removing posts from your wall (from others or yourself)*

Many respondents stated that they never removed anything from their wall (7 out of 10). They never really look back at what has been written on their page. However, three of the ten respondents did remove pictures and posts from the past. Kelly removed messages from strange people from her Facebook profile. She was the only one that had to deal with messages from strangers on her personal profile:

*“ I have removed messages from my timeline yes. [...] Because in the beginning I had my Facebook profile open for the public, so everyone could see my information. And then I got spontaneous messages from boys like ‘hi how are you’ and that kind of stuff, and I just deleted that”.*

Other respondents had more personal reasons to remove certain posts. For instance Bastiaan removed many pictures and posts from the past. He stated that he removed his entire twitter feed since he was posting when he was much younger and was quite ashamed of what he had posted on that account. In terms of Facebook, he removed many pictures:

*“ Really old pictures, that I ehh.. I mean I gone through puberty and I have changed a lot in my face and in my height, so I have removed the pictures where I didn’t look like myself”*

The fact that the participants have deleted information on their profiles is in line with what Wang et al. (2011) found. In their research they found that users often regret disclosing certain information, for example when their posts are seen by unintended audiences (Kelly) or if users want to be perceived in a favorable way (Bastiaan)

- *Providing false information on Facebook profile*

Each participant claimed that they did not have filled in any false information on their profile page. However, Both Elsa and Rob acknowledged that their birth date within their personal information was not the truth. Despite that they considered themselves as honest and did not feel like they had provided false information on Facebook. This could be because they didn’t thought of their changed birth date as false information. But it could also be the case that they did not feel they created this false information to protect their privacy, but rather for other more practical reasons.

- *Blocking someone from your Facebook friend list.*

Blocking some of your friends does not appear to be a visible privacy protection strategy for the Dutch youngsters. All of them stated that they have never blocked a

friend on Facebook. However, they did unfriend people instead of blocking them. Desiree explains how she deals with people she does not want in her Facebook profile. This seemed to be the overall feeling each participant had:

*“ Hmm, no I have never done that [blocking a person], but if the situation occurs I would just delete that person as my friend. [...] Because then you are, then I would let that person know that I don't want them as my friend for this and this reason when I see them in person”*

Instead of blocking persons on social media, the youngsters have found an alternative to get rid of these annoying figures in their online environment. This is not in line with what Young and Quan-Haase (2009) found in their research. However, the way the participants delete someone from their list could be seen as more or less the same protection, since you keep certain people from seeing your content.

#### - *Sending “secret” messages on Facebook.*

No one of the respondents claimed they had sent these secret messages. When something personal needed to be discussed they would just turn to their friends on WhatsApp or Facebook messenger. All of the male participant claimed that they had seen such messages by younger girls who in their eyes ‘needed attention’. However, most of the girls and especially the younger girls claimed that they have never seen such messages on their Facebook timeline.

Overall, the privacy protection strategies provided by previous literature seem to still be used by the Dutch youngsters. The most used privacy protection strategies appeared to be private messaging instead of public messaging and removing posts from their walls. Besides the privacy protection strategies as explained above, youngsters also used some other strategies, which did not appear in literature.

#### - *New strategies*

Before the participants of this study were asked about the above-discussed strategies, they were asked if they were doing other things besides the standard privacy settings on Facebook to protect their own privacy. While many respondents

were quite unsure about this question ('not that I can think of right now, do you have any examples?') some very interesting privacy strategies came up.

One of the most interesting strategies that came up during the interviews was the strategy by Desiree. Her way of protecting herself is by 'Googling' herself to see if anything pops up that she does not want to pop up. Hereby she tries to control whether or not all of her social media accounts are being protected from privacy threats. She said:

*"What I have been doing sometimes, or at least I used to in the past, was Google my own name to see [starts laughing] this maybe sounds super weird, but to see what pops up in the results. To see if I was as properly protected as I thought I was. This also counts for my twitter and other social media. [...] and after a while I apparently had made such settings that I was pleased with what popped up in the results, and than I believed everything was good enough [her privacy settings]"*

The strategy explained by Desiree conflicts with the idea of the privacy paradox. Previous research shows that we have large concerns about our privacy on social media, but that we do little to protect it. Desiree stepping outside her social media accounts and searching for her name in a search engine is against the expectations in literature (Kokolakis, 2015)

Other privacy protection strategies include the one illustrated by participant Karina. She really thinks of what she post before posting it, seeing that as her ultimate protection plan. This seemed to be an overarching theme among the participants. They all wanted to better prevent privacy dangers instead of protecting themselves from privacy risks. Each posts has been thought of, so there is no information out there that could lead to the dangers that are involved with privacy issues. Karina explained her point of views on this case, perfectly capturing the overall feeling:

*"I try to avoid giving my phone number and emailadress to strangers, and not to fill them in on any form on the Internet. I would also not post something like: 'I'm giving a*

*party at that location, or at that time', and that you are not there for just a few hours but for a longer time, because if people could read my posts they could trace me"*

In her strategy it is clear that her privacy strategy is mainly focused on her contact information. She does not want to be traced, and her private information like email address and phone number are being kept for herself. This is also related to the next privacy protection strategy by youngsters: almost all participants actively choose to hide their home address and home town. The reason they did not expose this information was the fear of burglary and stalking. Rob's explanation on why he chooses to hide this information nicely summarizes the overall feeling among the participants:

*" Well, the reason is imagine when you go on a holiday or something, and you need only one crazy person who is watching you and finds that out. And than they can see where I live. I rather keep that to myself and my friends... others don't need to know that"*

Overall, there was one protection strategy which was used most actively. This was the strategy to carefully choose their sets of connections/friends. The average number of Facebook friends for this sample was 388. However, the number of Facebook friends varied a lot and ranging from 109 Facebook friends (14 year old boy, Rob), to 1024 Facebook friends (17 year old boy, Bastiaan). The amount of connections appeared to grow in this sample as the teenagers grew older. Literature by Young and Quan-Haase (2009) concluded that the personal network size of an individual has a positive effect on the information revelation of that individual. However, within the Dutch sample, this statement is not entirely true. The younger participants of the sample, two girls with the age of 13 (Elsa & Karina) were really active on Facebook. They wanted to show their friends what they were doing, which music they liked, and what movies they have watched and to what events they were going. They were the ones with the most information disclosure, while others with much larger groups of Facebook friends were much more restrained in disclosing personal information on Facebook. Despite that, choosing their friends and

connections was the most used privacy protection strategy by youngsters in this sample.

### **Sub conclusion: Privacy protection strategies**

When dealing with social media, privacy has been a popular topic of discussion. During the interviews with Dutch youngsters, it was concluded that they hardly use the standard privacy settings by Facebook. They only make sure that their profile is not visible for the public, and that is about it. This is in line with what previous researchers had found with other samples Gross and Acquisti (2005), Livingstone (2008) Young and Quan-Haase (2009) and Boyd and Marwick (2011). Moreover, the interviewees seemed to be surprised with the amount of privacy settings and conclude that they have never seen these settings before, nor that they understand what these settings mean. This is exactly what Church et al. (2009), Lipford et al. (2008) and Strater & Lipford (2008) found in their research. In order for users to use the standard privacy settings of Facebook, a better understanding of these settings is clearly needed.

Besides the standard privacy settings by Facebook, there are a lot of things individuals can do to protect their privacy. Previous literature showed that sending private messages instead of posting publicly on walls, untagging themselves from pictures and status updates, removing posts from own wall, providing false information on their Facebook profile, blocking persons from their friend-list, and sending “secret” messages as Facebook updates are all privacy protection privacies used in the USA (Young & Quan-Haase, 2009). From these strategies, only the false information and secret messaging strategies were not used. Overall, these privacy settings appeared to also be visible in the Dutch social media environment. However, these strategies did not come to mind when the participants were asked if they could explain how they protect their privacy on Facebook. Since no one consciously uses these strategies it could be said that for this sample these strategies were used more of less unconscious. It would be much better if these privacy strategies became part of a conscious plan. This is something that needs a lot of attention but could offer so much potential.

Beside these privacy settings by Facebook and the privacy strategies retrieved from literature, the participants pointed out some really interesting new privacy protection strategies. Some think very carefully about every new Facebook post. Is it too private, who is going to see this? They are completely aware of the fact that all their friends can see their information, and that is exactly the reason why they decided to not let any stranger into their list of friends on Facebook.

Overall the strategies are really focused on the contact information, which seemed to be the main information that the participants did not want to share on Facebook. The most exciting and new strategy was pointed out by an 18-year-old girl. To ensure her settings on all her social media accounts, she googled her own name to see what pops up and what could be changed. This would be something that could be picked up by many other youngsters to become more aware of which information is out there on the Internet about you.

### **Sub conclusion: Reluctance of information disclosure**

Based on the privacy protection strategies by youngsters we can conclude that the youngsters are reluctant in exposing information about their contact details. Home addresses, mail addresses and phone-numbers are often not shared on social media due to the fact that they want to keep strangers and burglars as far away as possible. Moreover, youngsters did not disclose any information about religious beliefs, or political affiliation. While not sharing political affiliation might be due to the fact that the youngsters were not old enough to vote in the Netherlands, the fact that they did not share any religious beliefs might be related to the fact that we often regret disclosing sensitive information (Wang et al. 2011). Moreover, the about you and the favorite quote section was never filled in. The fact that this information is not shared is not in line with previous research (Govani & Pashley, 2005; Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Young & Quan-Haase, 2009).

## 4.6 Trust

The standard privacy settings of Facebook are hardly used, therefore the participants were asked how they felt about the privacy setting, and do they trust these settings? Do the settings offer enough privacy protection for them? Among the participants almost everyone trusted the privacy settings. Despite the fact that literature clearly shows that Facebook frequently changes its privacy settings and tools over time (Fang & LeFevre, 2010), two of the participants even believed that these settings cannot be changed by Facebook so they thought they were safe after setting these the first time. This seemed to be the overall feeling the youngsters had about these settings. However, Rob was the only one who was skeptic about these settings:

*“Hmm I don’t know [if he trusts the settings] because I often see in the news or in the papers that Facebook is keeping the information private from your friends and others, but not to themselves. Because Facebook can look into your information not matter what. [...] but I guess that such a large and successful company doesn’t do any stupid things with all that information. But I do know that they have all my information”.*

Rob was the only participant that thought of the fact that Facebook still has all the information no matter how you alter your settings. Later on he continues by stating that he believes that maybe this information is used to help the police solves issues in America and other kind of things. But overall, every participant felt that it was great that Facebook offered these settings and they completely trust them.

## 4.7 Knowledge

In her research, Boyd (2007) stated that she believes that teenagers should be left alone when dealing with privacy issues in an online environment. They will discover and learn along the way. But despite this advice, youngsters are being advised and informed about this topic from many different assets in life. Since there was not much information on where students and youngsters learn about the information on privacy issues and management, this whole section will exist of new inductively derived



themes. During the interviews it became clear that the main source of information on online privacy issues were the parents of the participants. Also, the participants gained knowledge through friends and the news.

When the participants were asked if they ever talk with anyone about privacy issues on Facebook, they often quickly replied with no. But when they were asked about where they learn about information concerning privacy on Facebook and the online world, they replied that they have talked with their parents about privacy issues. They were the ones who told them that they should be careful with what they post online. “Everything you put on the Internet will stay there forever”. The parents also made the children aware of the risks involved with the information disclosure. Mieke illustrates the mutual feelings among the participants by saying:

*“My mother wants that I don’t post anything on social media when were on a holiday. [...] Because there has been a lot of burglary lately”*

Apparently parents are the number one source for Dutch youngsters to learn information about privacy issues. However, this information is only limited to vague advises to not put everything online and to be careful (for instance when you’re on a holiday). But isn’t it a bit strange that digital immigrants teach the digital natives about privacy issues online? They are not the ones who grew up with all these new technologies, and are often the ones who do not know as much about what these risks of online privacy are. Charlotte also explained this by saying that she was the one who taught her mother about Facebook and about the privacy issues that are involved with using Facebook. She believes that the privacy issues on Facebook need to be clearer.

Next to the parents, friends and news seemed to be sources where the youngsters learn about privacy. Through their friends they learn which settings they use and what these settings are doing for them. And the news warns them for what could go incredibly wrong with the information you put online. During the interviews, the project X event in 2013 in Haaren came up multiple times. This was a Facebook event that got completely out of control (Cohen et al., 2013), and has warned these youngsters not to make same mistakes. Overall, privacy issues were not really an interesting topic for the respondents. The participants stated that they talked with

their parents about privacy when they created a Facebook account but they haven't talked much about it ever since. Also when talking with friends, it only appears a few times a year that they talk about privacy online. Because of this little amount of information shared amongst parents and youngsters and between youngsters and their peers, they were asked what they would still like to know about privacy on Facebook.

As discussed in previous sections, many respondents were confused and surprised by the privacy settings you can change on your Facebook profile. They did not know all of the settings and were very confused about the meaning of them. Despite this fact, almost every respondent explained that they did not want to learn more about privacy issues and settings because they believe that they know everything already. This is a very interesting situation since this contradicts their confusion with the settings. Does this mean that youngsters are not interested in keeping their information private?

Some of the participants however felt the need to learn more about privacy on Facebook. Rob (14 year old boy) already explained that he knows that his 'private information' is not private to the Facebook Corporation itself. Therefore he wanted to learn the following about privacy:

*" I am very curious about what they are going to do with it [Facebook with all the personal information] because I think they will stop existing at some point, not soon I think but I am curious what they are going to do. [...] Yes I think they are going to use it for the police, to trace people much quicker. [...] That's the only thing I can think of".*

While his concerns were more on the whole junk of personal information of every user, the other participants were more curious about more practical stuff. They wanted to learn more about the privacy setting, since they were super vague to them. Both Karina and Charlotte (girls age 13 and 16) expressed the need for this information. Charlotte illustrates their mutual needs by saying that:

*" Well I think I would like to have it more clear about what the exact things are that stand there [in the privacy settings] what do they mean. And if they say I want my*

*photos only to be visible to my friends, which photos do they refer to? The photos in which you are tagged? All that kind of stuff. [...] it should be stated much more clearly, especially for those who are not good, my mother is not good with computers. So what are posts, what do they mean, things you send to others etc.”*

Overall, it seemed like the majority of the participants was not really interested in what they could learn about privacy issues, they believed they already knew everything. However, those who did express the need to learn something more came up with some very interesting topics that could be taken into account when providing information about this topic to youngsters.

### **Sub conclusion: Educational sources for privacy**

While many participants were surprised by the privacy setting-capabilities of Facebook, little participants wanted to learn anything new about privacy strategies, or about risks involved with information disclosure. This might be due to the fact that most youngsters are in their puberty, a time where the decision making process is guided by short-term rewards rather than long-term perspectives (Albert & Steinberg, 2011; Taddicken & Jers, 2011).

When youngsters did learn about privacy issues on social media, they often heard it from their parents, peers or via news reports. Surprisingly nobody mentioned school as a place where they learned about privacy issues.

## **5. Conclusion and limitations**

Previous chapters have provided an answer to the sub research questions. With all of that information, the two main research questions can be answered. The main research questions will be discussed separately. Due to the scope and time limit, there are some limitations to this research. These will be discussed after the two main research questions. Lastly, more research is needed on this topic. This will be discussed in the final section of this chapter, within future research.

### **5.1 Information disclosure and privacy management**

The main objective of this research was to find out what Dutch youngsters do in order to disclose their personal information on Facebook, and how they manage this information. Based on previous literature (Boyd; 2007, Govani & Pashley; 2005, Gross & Acquisti; 2005, Young & Quan-Haase; 2009), it could be expected that the participants would be very generous in providing personal information on Facebook. Ten in depth interviews with Dutch youngsters between the age of 13 and 18 showed that this expectation became reality. The Dutch sample was very generous in providing information online. They used Facebook to see what their friends were doing, and posted updates about their lives if it was something positive, and when individuals believed it would be interesting for their friends to read.

Even though every single participant claimed that they did not post much on Facebook, the frequencies in which status updates were posted differed very much. While some participants thought posting every 3 weeks was not much, others believed that every few months could be seen as not sharing much. This finding was not yet discovered in previous research (Boyd, 2007; Govani & Pashley, 2005; Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Young & Quan-Haase, 2009). It would be interesting to go much deeper into this topic. Why do they believe they don't post often? Is this due to age, culture, and gender or is not posting often a socially desirable answer?

Each participant was very generous in exposing personal information on their profile page on Facebook. The Dutch sample showed that they were very generous in providing a profile photo and other photos. However, some explained that they always keep in mind that these pictures need to 'appropriate' for Facebook. It was

interesting to get a better insight on why people choose certain pictures as their profile picture. From literature it became clear that people were widely sharing profile pictures, and this was also expected for the Dutch sample. However, it was very interesting to see why these pictures were chosen, and to see that every participant had chosen a picture where only their faces and shoulders were noticeable, not their whole bodies. This seemed to be a conscious choice. It would be very interesting to see if these values are the same in the USA. Do they also feel like their profile pictures should be free of alcohol consumption, nudity and should preferably be a picture of their faces instead of entire bodies. This information is still not clear in the research so far (Boyd, 2007; Govani & Pashley, 2005; Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Young & Quan-Haase, 2009)

Also information about gender, birthdates, school concentration, lists of favorite things, family, lists visited places and events were generously shared by the participants. While most of these things appeared in previous research (Boyd, 2007; Govani & Pashley, 2005; Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Young & Quan-Haase, 2009), sharing your family, visited places and events were new categories in this research. This is probably due to the fact that these functions did not exist in 2005-2009. The online environment is continually changing, as is Facebook. This is something that should always be kept in mind. Because the subject of interest is always changing and shifting, it is important to keep doing research upon this topic to keep the knowledge up to date.

Other information was less often shared. This includes information about hometowns and lists of interests in music, movies, books and clubs. While these categories were very popular in previous research, it seemed that these categories were not that popular by Dutch youngsters. They were not so eager in sharing information about their hometown, afraid of the negative consequences such as being traced.

In line with previous research (Boyd, 2007; Govani & Pashley, 2005; Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Young & Quan-Haase, 2009), the Dutch youngsters had a lot of trouble exposing personal contact information. They wanted to avoid being traced in the offline world by unwanted people. They were also afraid to be contacted by

people they didn't want to. But surprisingly the Dutch teenagers also refused to expose information about their relationships, partners, religious beliefs and political affiliation. These categories were very popular in previous research (Boyd, 2007; Govani & Pashley, 2005; Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Young & Quan-Haase, 2009), while in the Netherlands the youngsters perceived this type of information as too personal and private. This information is only shared with a smaller group of closer friends, communicated through offline channels and more private online channels.

Because the 10 participants of this study provided so much information, they had to take action to protect their privacy. One of the most striking finding was that despite the many privacy settings that can be installed, these settings were barely taken into account by the youngsters. They only limited their future posts to their friends, and the rest of the settings were left untouched. This was also something that was already found in the USA (Gross and Acquisti, 2005). The fact that this research similarly shows that these settings are not used by youngsters in the Netherlands in 2014, illustrates that there is a huge lack in the knowledge and use of the privacy settings on Facebook. Future research should go more in depth on why people do not use these settings, while they are easily changeable. Despite the minimum use of these privacy protection settings, the youngsters appeared to have other ways in which they protected their privacy. But even though the youngsters explained they did not fully understand the meanings of the standard privacy settings of Facebook, they all claimed they did not want to learn anything new about these settings, or even about the risks involved with privacy and information disclosure. This cautious attitude towards learning about these issues shows that the privacy paradox is also apparent in de Dutch sample.

Examples in ways youngsters protect themselves are by sending private messages, instead of public ones. Removing posts was also a way of controlling the information disclosed on social media. While these strategies were also acknowledged by previous research (Young & Quan-Haase, 2009), this research showed that Dutch youngsters protect themselves by never disclosing any contact information, and by 'googling' themselves. Moreover, wisely choosing connections and friends for their Facebook profile, combined with 'thinking before you post' seemed to be the most used privacy protection strategies.

Overall, the Dutch sample appeared to be very active on Facebook, and to be very generous in exposing personal information. Almost everything was exposed on their social media profile (excluding contact information, relationships, political affiliation, religious beliefs, about you and favorite quote section, and the reviews). But all this exposure of information also leads to many innovative ways in which they protected their privacy. While the standard privacy settings were hardly used, the Dutch youngsters came up with multiple ideas to protect their privacy. Eventually, individuals had multiple privacy strategies to protect themselves. Moreover, everyone believed that their privacy was protected by the way they behaved on Facebook, and saw no threats in their online information disclosure.

## **5.2 Privacy management strategies**

As discussed above, the sample of teenagers have their ways in which they protect their privacy. The reason why they are concerned about their privacy is related to their perceived risks of online privacy and information disclosure. While previous literature explained that there are many risks involved with information disclosure such as third parties making digital dossiers of your behavior, identity theft, stalking and cyber bullying, slander and influencing future career (Gross and Acquisti, 2005; Van Ouytsel, Walrave, & Ponnet, 2014), the participants appeared to only fear burglary, offline stalking and negative impact on future career.

The perceived risks by the youngsters made them think about their own privacy, and they tried to protect themselves through the strategies mentioned above. These privacy strategies were not only influenced by these fears of risks, they are also influenced by the perception of privacy. Previous research focused on personal contact information as the only information perceived as too private for Facebook (Govani & Pashley, 2005; Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Young & Quan-Haase, 2009). However, derived from the interviews, the teenagers showed that they perceive more assets are too private such as relationships, partners, political affiliation, religious beliefs, 'about you' and the 'favorite quote' section. Based on both their fears of the risks, and their perception of which information is private, and which information is open for the public, the online privacy strategies were created.

### 5.3 Discussion

A solid theoretical framework is always a good way to start a research. Previous research on the use of social media in terms of privacy issues have proven a good base to guide the direction of this study. Boyd (2007, 2011) together with Caughlin & Afifi (2004), Crannor (2000), Govani & Pashley (2005), Gross & Acquisti (2005) and Young & Quan-Haase (2009) provided a platform in which information disclosure and privacy management strategies of American youngsters and students were explained. Using this as a starting point for the in depth interviews with the Dutch youngsters, it was very interesting to go more in depth into the existing body of knowledge and expand it with more in depth insights.

While the theoretical framework provided much insight, it was often focused solely on the amount and type of information disclosed, or solely focused on privacy issues (Boyd, 2007; Boyd, 2011; Caughlin & Afifi, 2004; Crannor, 2000; Govani & Pashley, 2005; Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Young & Quan-Haase, 2009) . This research tried to go further than the superficial information on what people post and what they do not post, by combining the two together in a more qualitative in depth research. We now know what kind of information Dutch youngsters put on their Facebook profile and which information they keep private, but moreover we gained better understanding in why and how the youngsters choose to expose or keep certain information. Moreover, this study complements this insight with information on what teenagers do to protect themselves from privacy issues online, why they do so and where they learn about privacy and its risks. Overall, this study provides a better insight on the privacy paradox. Participants showed that they were very generous in sharing personal information however they did little in their privacy settings to protect their personal information. Even more, the participants tended to believe that they knew everything they needed to know about privacy and its risks.

The insight on the online information disclosure and the privacy management of Dutch teenagers has given the existing body of knowledge more in depth insights on the Dutch. Moreover, this research might be interesting for parents and even teachers to read. As explained by the participants, they sometimes talk about privacy issues with their parents. But do the parents know what their child is putting on their



Facebook profile? And do the parents understand which privacy settings can be altered in order to protect personal information? Since not every parent is on Facebook, it is unlikely that parents are completely up-to-date on this topic and are therefore somewhat unable to give the best advice to their children.

It would be even more interesting for elementary or high school teachers to get better insight on the topic of this research. While the educational system would provide an excellent platform for learning about social media, online information disclosure, privacy and the risks involved, no participant in this study explained that they gained insight on privacy issues and risks from school. Filling in this gap by providing students education about this topic might reduce the privacy paradox that is now so vivid (Kokalis, 2015; Norberg et al., 2007).

#### **5.4 Limitations**

This research was done in a time frame of a few months. Due to the time limit and the limited scope, there are some limitations to this research. First of all, this research was done among a very small group of participants. Two girls of 13, one boy of 14, two girls of 15, a boy and a girl of 16, one boy of 17 and two girls of 18. This limits this research. Because of this small amount of participants, no real claims about the overall Dutch population of youngsters can be made. Only claims about this particular sample can be made. Moreover, 7 out of 10 participants were female. Only 3 participants were male. This also limits this research. A more equally divided sample would better the results. It would have been more useful to have both a boy and a girl for each age.

Moreover, this research shows that teenagers expose a lot of information online, do little about their privacy settings and still believe they know everything about privacy risks they need to know. However, this only confirms that the privacy paradox still exists, also in the Netherlands. However, this research gives no deeper insights on why this paradox exists. The participants were not asked to elaborate on this.

Even so, the questions used during the in depth interviews were created based on the theoretical framework. However, these questions have not been tested

before, so we do not know for sure that these questions are the best questions to ask in order to gain knowledge about this topic. It would therefore be interesting to see what the outcomes of this research would be if the questions would have been a copy of existing well established research.

As explained in the introduction, online information disclosure and privacy management on Facebook is quite challenging to research. The online environment is constantly changing, so research is quickly outdated. This research has been conducted in 2014, when Facebook was the biggest social networking site used by teenagers. However, nowadays in 2016 there is a shift in this popularity of Facebook to other social media platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat etcetera, meaning that this research from 2014 might already be outdated.

Despite its limitations, this research offers a nice building platform for those who want to research information disclosure and privacy protection of Facebook in the Netherlands. This research shows many differences in Facebook use, information disclosure and privacy protection strategies. This research offers a nice insight of a small sample of the Dutch population of youngsters. Much future research is needed to get a complete picture and in order to make any claims about the whole population. The recommendations for future research will be discussed in the next section.

## **5.5 Future research**

As already explained, this research is a starting point for future research. This research is limited to a very small group of participants, which were not equally divided between the sexes. So the first practical step for future research is to create a larger sample of participants, equally divided among age and sex.

This research showed some really interesting results that are interesting for future research. This research provides insight on what Dutch teenagers want to expose, and what they don't want to expose on Facebook. A more quantitative research based on tested questions upon these selected themes could provide a better insight on the whole population of Dutch youngsters. This could be done in such a way as Boyd (2007) has done with youngsters from the USA. Her research

has been quoted a lot in relevant literature and could provide a good basis for future research upon the Dutch.

When a better insight on the entire Dutch population is created, it would be interesting to see if the Dutch population shows different results compared to the results in previous research upon American youngsters. Going even further, it would be interesting to have a better insight on what effect culture has on information revelation, and on privacy management. Little research has focused on comparing the online behavior of different cultures and this might be interesting to learn in the future. However, more research is needed in order to compare cultures to each other.

This research was conducted in 2014 and focused on Facebook. It would be interesting for future research to update this research by researching youngsters in 2016, and in the coming years. Moreover, while this research focuses on Facebook, it would be very interesting to see what information youngsters expose on other social media platforms such as Instagram, but especially the new and somewhat unknown social media platform Snapchat. Since every social media platform has its own unique characteristics and purposes it would be interesting to see how youngsters behave on these social media platforms and how they manage their privacy. Is this completely different from their behavior on Facebook? Or is the information disclosure and privacy management on Facebook generalizable to all social media platforms?

Lastly, this research showed that many of the participants were confused and not aware of the many privacy settings that are offered by Facebook. Despite that, they seem to be not interested in learning more about the issues and risks of privacy online, claiming they already know everything. It would be very interesting to investigate further on this strange phenomenon. Not protecting yourself from privacy threats might lead to serious dangers. Therefore this gap between knowledge and wanting to learn new information should be researched more in future research, and should be addressed by teachers, parents and other superior figures in the lives of youngsters.

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## Appendix 1

### Interview schedule (Dutch)

#### 1. Overeenkomst

- Neem het toestemming document duidelijk met de respondent door. Iedere sectie moet worden besproken, en vraag achteraf **of alles duidelijk is**.

#### 2. Personalia vragen, benodigde onderwerpen

- *Naam*
- *Leeftijd*
- *Geslacht*
- *Hobby's*
- *school*
- *niveau*
- *stad waarin opgegroeid*
- *familie waarin opgegroeid*
- *omschrijving persoonlijkheid*
- *belang van familie*
- *belang van vrienden*
- *belang van eigen wil*
- *wat vind jij belangrijk in het leven*

#### 3. Facebook gebruik:

- Waarom gebruik jij Facebook?
- Wat is voor jou het doel van Facebook?
- Heb je andere social media accounts?
- Voor welke redenen gebruik je die andere social media accounts?
- Hoe vaak post jij iets op Facebook?
- Welke informatie post jij op Facebook? Reden: **Waarom wel, waarom niet?**
  - *profielfoto – duidelijk, onduidelijk*
  - *omslagfoto*
  - *werk en opleiding*

- relatie
- familie
- over jou sectie
- favoriete uitspraken?
- woonplaatsen
- geboorte datum
- geboorte jaar
- geslacht
- burgerlijke staat
- seksualiteit
- talen
- geloofsovertuiging
- politieke voorkeur
- mobile telefoonnummer
- adres
- email adres
- levensgebeurtenissen
- TV series
- films
- muziek
- boeken
- sport
- foto's – hoeveel? En waarvan?
- apps en games
- aantal vrienden
- bezochte plaatsen
- vind ik leuk (Aantal)
- evenementen
- groepen
- recensies
- Instagram

- Is er voor jou een duidelijke scheidslijn tussen wat je wel wilt posten op Facebook en wat je niet wilt plaatsen? Zou je me daar wat meer over willen vertellen?
- Als je een post plaatst op je Facebook profiel, wat zijn dan redenen voor jou om dat te posten?
- Wat zijn de onderwerpen die jij het liefst deelt met mensen
- Als er iets positiefs gebeurt in je leven , zou je dit dan op Facebook willen zetten? Kan je mij hier wat over vertellen?
- Als er wat minder leuks gebeurt in je leven , zou je dit dan op Facebook willen zetten? Kan je mij hier wat over vertellen?

#### **4. Privacy**

- Welke privacy instellingen heb jij ingesteld?
1. Wie kan mijn inhoud zien?
    - *Wie kan mijn volgende berichten zien: vrienden/openbaar/alleen ik*
    - *Alle berichten waarin je getagd bent bekijken*
    - *Het publiek beperken van berichten die je hebt gedeeld met vrienden van vrienden of openbaar*
  2. Wie kan contact met me opnemen?
    - *Vriendschap verzoeken*
    - *Postvak in filteren met*
  3. Wie kan me opzoeken?
    - *wie kan me opzoeken met het opgegeven mail adres?*
    - *Wie kan me opzoeken met het opgegeven telefoonnummer?*
    - *Wil je dat er in andere zoekmachines een link wordt weergegeven naar je profiel?*
- Zijn er nog andere dingen die jij doet om je privacy te beschermen?
  - Welke van de onderstaande dingen doe jij om je privacy te beschermen? Zou je me daar nog wat meer over willen vertellen?
    - *Prive berichten sturen in plaats van berichten op de tijdlijn van een vriend plaatsen.*
    - *Jezelf untaggen uit foto's*

- *Wall posts van jezelf of anderen op jouw tijdlijn verwijderen?*
- *Valse informatie op je profiel zetten?*
- *Blokkeren van personen in je vriendenlijst?*
- *Geheime berichten op je tijdlijn plaatsen die voor hechte vrienden duidelijke zijn maar niet voor de gehele facebook groep?*
- Hoe denk jij zelf over de standaard privacy instellingen van Facebook?
- Zou je met kunnen vertellen wat jij vind dat het woord privacy betekend?
- Hoe denk jij over je privacy op Facebook? Kun je me daar iets over vertellen?
- Wat zie jij als risico's van je privacy op Facebook?
- Wat zie jij als risico's van je eigen Facebook post?
- Denk je wel eens aan de toekomst wanneer je informatie deelt op Facebook? Kan je me daar wat over vertellen?
- Praat je er wel eens met mensen om je heen over privacy op Facebook? Met wie?
- Hoe kom je aan informatie over privacy issues op Facebook? Kun je me daar wat over vertellen? *Familie, school, vrienden, online, kranten?*
- Wat voor informatie zou jij nog willen hebben over privacy op Facebook, en de risico's daarvan?
- Vind jij dat er genoeg aandacht word besteed aan de privacy problemen op Facebook? Zou je me daar wat meer over kunnen vertellen

We zijn aan het einde gekomen van mijn interview. Zijn er nog dingen die jij nog zou willen bespreken? Die niet aan de orde zijn gekomen? **Heb jij nog vragen?**

## Appendix 2

### Interview schedule (English)

#### 1. Consent document

- Explain the complete consent document. Discuss each section of the document, and make sure that the participant fully understands his/her rights. Ask in the end if **everything is clear to them**.

#### 2. Personal information questions, with needed subjects:

- *Name*
- *Age*
- *Sex*
- *Hobbies*
- *School*
- *Education level*
- *City, where they live and grew up in*
- *Family*
- *Explanation of personality*
- *Importance of family in life*
- *Importance of friends in life*
- *Importance of own will in life*
- *What are the most important things for you in life?*

#### 3. Facebook use:

- Why do you use Facebook?
- What is the purpose of Facebook for you?
- Do you have any other social media accounts?
- What are the reasons for you to use those social media platforms?
- In what frequency do you post on Facebook?
- Which information is present on your Facebook profile? **Reason for each section: Why, or why not filled in?**
  - *Profile picture (clear/unclear)*

- *cover photo*
- *job and education*
- *relationship*
- *family*
- *about you section*
- *favorite quotes*
- *city of residence*
- *city of birth*
- *date of birth*
- *year of birth*
- *sex*
- *marital status*
- *sexuality*
- *languages*
- *religious beliefs*
- *political preferences*
- *mobile phone number*
- *address*
- *email-address*
- *life events*
- *TV series*
- *movies*
- *music*
- *books*
- *sport*
- *pictures/photos— how many, and from what?*
- *Apps and games*
- *amount of FB-friends*
- *places you visited*
- *number of likes*
- *events*
- *groups*
- *reviews*

- *Instagram account*

- Can you tell me something about the dividing line of what you do want to post on Facebook, and what information you don't want to post on Facebook?
- If you are going to post something on Facebook, what are the reasons for you to post that information?
- What are the subjects you prefer to post about on Facebook?
- If something positive occurs in your life, would you post it on Facebook? Could you explain something about that process?
- If something negative occurs in your life, would you post it on Facebook? Could you explain something about that process?

#### **4. Privacy**

- Which privacy adjustments do you use on Facebook?
  1. Who can see my stuff?
    - *Who is able to see my future posts?*
    - *Review your post and things you're tagged in?*
    - *Limit the audience for posts you've shared with friends of friends or publicly?*
  2. Who can contact me?
    - *Friend requests*
    - *Whose messages do I want to filter in my inbox?*
  3. Who can look me up?
    - *Who can look you up with the email address you provided?*
    - *Who can look you up with the phone number you provided*
    - *Do you want other search engines to link your timeline?*
- Are there other things you do to protect your privacy on Facebook? Could you tell me about them?

- Which of the following privacy strategies do you use? Could you tell me more about them?
  - *Sending private messages instead of posting on Facebook wall.*
  - *Untagging yourself from Facebook posts*
  - *Removing posts from your wall (from others or yourself)*
  - *providing false information on Facebook profile*
  - *Blocking someone from your Facebook friend list.*
  - *Sending “secret” messages on Facebook. Close friends understand, but large FB-group does not.*
- How do you feel about the privacy settings and tools of Facebook?
- Do trust the privacy settings on Facebook?
- Could you tell me what you believe privacy means?
- How do you feel about your privacy on Facebook?
- What do you perceive as risks of your privacy on Facebook?
- What do you perceive as risks of your own Facebook posts?
- When posting on Facebook, do you ever think about what these posts might do for you in the future? Could you explain to me how you think when posting?
- Do you ever talk with the people around you about Facebook privacy? With whom?
- Where do you learn about privacy issues on Facebook? Could you tell me something about that? *Family, school, friends, online, newspapers?*
- Is there any information you would want to learn about privacy on Facebook, and the risks involved with that?
- Do you believe enough attention is devoted to privacy issues on Facebook within your environment? Could you tell me something about that?



## Appendix 3

### **Toestemmingsverzoek voor participatie in onderzoek**

*Voor vragen over het onderzoek kunt u contact opnemen met Suzanne Comba, Jufferstraat 6C, Rotterdam (0618549526).*

#### **Omschrijving onderzoek:**

U bent gevraagd te participeren in een onderzoek voor mijn scriptie. Het onderzoek gaat over het Facebook-gebruik van jongeren, en zal proberen te ontdekken wat jongeren op Facebook plaatsen, waarom ze dit doen en hoe zij zichzelf beschermen in hun privacy.

Het accepteren van de deelname in dit onderzoek betekent dat u akkoord gaat met een persoonlijk interview. De vragen in dit interview zullen zich richten op het Facebook-gebruik van de geïnterviewde.

Tijdens het interview zal er een audio recorder aanwezig zijn om het interview op te nemen, om later goed terug te kunnen luisteren. Mocht u hier bezwaar tegen hebben, kan dit altijd worden overlegd.

#### **Risico's en voordelen:**

- Om eventuele risico's van dit interview te minimaliseren, zal er geen persoonlijke informatie worden gebruikt die kan leiden tot de identificatie van de geïnterviewde. Dit zal worden gedaan door het gebruik van pseudoniemen.
- Omdat het interview zal worden gedaan met een individu onder de 18 jaar, zal dit document ook ondertekend moeten worden door een ouder of voogd. Zij zullen naast het individu zelf ook ten alle tijden het recht hebben om de deelname stop te zetten.

#### **Tijd voor het interview:**

De deelname tijdens het interview zal ongeveer 45 minuten duren. Gedurende deze tijd heeft u alle recht om te stoppen wanneer u wilt.

#### **Betaling:**

Wij zullen de participanten niet compenseren met een financiële beloning.

**Rechten van de deelnemer:**

Wanneer u heeft besloten deel te nemen aan het interview voor dit onderzoek, heeft u dat geheel vrijblijvend en vrijwillig gedaan. Hierdoor heeft u ten alle tijden het recht om de deelname stop te zetten. Ook heeft de getekende ouder of voogd het recht dit te doen. Tijdens het interview heeft u ook het recht om vragen niet te beantwoorden wanneer u dit om welke reden dan ook niet wilt. Tenzij door u anders aangegeven, zal uw anonimiteit en privacy gewaarborgd blijven tijdens het gehele onderzoek.

**Contacten en vragen:**

Als u nog andere vragen heeft over uw rechten als deelnemer, of wanneer u klachten heeft tijdens of na het interview, kunt u altijd contact opnemen met mijn scriptie begeleidster Yuping Mao van de Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam.

**Signeren van document:**

Wanneer u uw handtekening zet onder dit document, zal uw handtekening de enige documentatie van uw identiteit zijn. Wanneer u hier ook bewaar tegen heeft, is het niet verplicht om dit document te tekenen. In plaats daarvan volstaat een mondeling akkoord tussen deelnemer, ouder/voogd en onderzoeker ook.

*Ik geef toestemming tot deelname aan het interview*

**Deelnemer:**

Naam Handtekening Datum

**Voogd:**

Naam Handtekening Datum

*Ik geef toestemming voor een geluidsopname tijdens het interview*

**Deelnemer:**

Naam Handtekening Datum

**Voogd:**

Naam Handtekening Datum

*Ik wil graag dat mijn identiteit wel gebruikt word tijdens het onderzoek*

**Deelnemer:**

Naam Handtekening Datum

**Voogd:**

Naam Handtekening Datum

## Appendix 4

### Overview of participants

Participant	Personal information summary
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Age:</b> 13</li> <li>- <b>Sex:</b> female</li> <li>- <b>Hobbies:</b> scouting, hockey, social media</li> <li>- <b>School:</b> 1 year of high school</li> <li>- <b>Education level:</b> VMBO-T/HAVO</li> <li>- <b>City:</b> Born and raised in Kaatsheuvel</li> <li>- <b>Family:</b> Two parents, Older Brother</li> <li>- <b>Personality:</b> somewhat shy, but very lively when around friends.</li> <li>- <b>Importance of Family in life:</b> normal</li> <li>- <b>Importance of friends in life:</b> not discussed</li> <li>- <b>Importance of own will in life:</b> not discussed</li> <li>- <b>Most important things in life:</b> discussed</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Age:</b> 13</li> <li>- <b>Sex:</b> female</li> <li>- <b>Hobbies:</b> Hockey, horse riding, dancing.</li> <li>- <b>School:</b> First year of high school</li> <li>- <b>Education level:</b> VMBO-T/HAVO</li> <li>- <b>City:</b> Born in Tilburg, raised in Kaatsheuvel</li> <li>- <b>Family:</b> Two parents, still together, 1 younger sister</li> <li>- <b>Personality:</b> somewhat shy, and stubborn. More lively around friends</li> <li>- <b>Importance of Family in life:</b> not discussed</li> <li>- <b>Importance of friends in life:</b> not discussed</li> <li>- <b>Importance of own will in life:</b> not discussed</li> <li>- <b>Most important things in life:</b> not discussed</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Age:</b> 18</li> <li>- <b>Sex:</b> female</li> <li>- <b>Hobbies:</b> Hockey</li> <li>- <b>School:</b> First year of MBO</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Education level:</b> MBO</li> <li>- <b>City:</b> Born in Gouda, raised in Waddinxveen</li> <li>- <b>Personality:</b> very pigheaded and opinionated, stubborn, very entrepreneurial, and sometimes a bit vicious</li> <li>- <b>Importance of Family in life:</b> not discussed</li> <li>- <b>Importance of friends in life:</b> not discussed</li> <li>- <b>Importance of own will in life:</b> not discussed</li> <li>- <b>Most important things in life:</b> not discussed</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Age:</b> 14</li> <li>- <b>Sex:</b> Female</li> <li>- <b>Hobbies:</b> Hockey, golf, surfing</li> <li>- <b>School:</b> third year of high school</li> <li>- <b>Education level:</b> VWO</li> <li>- <b>City:</b> Waddinxveen</li> <li>- <b>Personality:</b> mix of shy and outgoing, and a mix of entrepreneurial and layed-back personality</li> <li>- <b>Importance of Family in life:</b> very important, they are always there for you.</li> <li>- <b>Importance of friends in life:</b> also important, you tell them everything</li> <li>- <b>Importance of own will in life:</b> important, but I rather do something for someone else. I think you're helping yourself by helping others</li> <li>- <b>Most important things in life:</b> Education</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Age:</b> 18</li> <li>- <b>Sex:</b> Female</li> <li>- <b>School:</b> fifth year of high school</li> <li>- <b>Education level:</b> Gymnasium</li> <li>- <b>City:</b> Gouda</li> <li>- <b>Family:</b> two parents, divorced when participant was a child. Twin brother and sister.</li> <li>- <b>Personality:</b> very honest, social, and lazy</li> <li>- <b>Importance of Family in life:</b> somewhat important, you have different relationship with every member</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Importance of friends in life:</b> important to have besides your Family. Friendship is very complicated</li> <li>- <b>Importance of own will in life:</b> very important, one of the most important things in life. Tries to inspire others to do what they want as well. Only way to become happy</li> <li>- <b>Most important things in life:</b> to do what you personally want, despite what others think. And you need to know that you can make your own happiness.</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Age:</b> 16</li> <li>- <b>Sex:</b> Male</li> <li>- <b>Hobbies:</b> badminton</li> <li>- <b>School:</b> fourth year of high school</li> <li>- <b>Education level:</b> HAVO</li> <li>- <b>City:</b> Born in Boskoop, raised in Waddinxveen</li> <li>- <b>Family:</b> Two parents, still together, one younger sister.</li> <li>- <b>Personality:</b> very cheerful, layed back and not very ambitious</li> <li>- <b>Importance of Family in life:</b> important, but Education and work are also important</li> <li>- <b>Importance of friends in life:</b> not as important as Family.</li> <li>- <b>Importance of own will in life:</b> not discussed</li> <li>- <b>Most important things in life:</b> to be happy with my life, to be satisfied with the way things are. No problems in your personal life and the ability to sport.</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Age:</b> 15</li> <li>- <b>Sex:</b> Female</li> <li>- <b>Hobbies:</b> Badminton</li> <li>- <b>School:</b> Third year of high school</li> <li>- <b>Education level:</b> VWO</li> <li>- <b>City:</b> Born in Boskoop, raised in Waddinxveen</li> <li>- <b>Family:</b> Two parents, one older brother</li> <li>- <b>Personality:</b> Calm and quiet, social, pleasant.</li> <li>- <b>Importance of Family in life:</b> very important, they mean a lot to her</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Importance of friends in life:</b> also important</li> <li>- <b>Importance of own will in life:</b> important, do things you love, dare to say no sometimes, not let others guide you</li> <li>- <b>Most important things for you in life:</b> to have fun, to be happy by being positive en staying true to yourself.</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Age:</b> 17</li> <li>- <b>Sex:</b> Male</li> <li>- <b>Hobbies:</b> Soccer and tennis</li> <li>- <b>School:</b> first year of MBO</li> <li>- <b>Education level:</b> MBO</li> <li>- <b>City:</b> Born in Gouda, raised in Waddinxveen</li> <li>- <b>Family:</b> two parents, still together, older brother and sister</li> <li>- <b>Personality:</b> Vein, sportive, lazy, and always cheerful.</li> <li>- <b>Importance of Family in life:</b> Almost everything, you can rely on them</li> <li>- <b>Importance of friends in life:</b> less important than Family, but still important</li> <li>- <b>Importance of own will in life:</b> important, but I put my own opinions aside to remain peace in groups.</li> <li>- <b>Most important things in life:</b> to reach the for you reachable goals as far as possible, in terms of career. Love, and a Family with a wife and kids.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Age:</b> 14</li> <li>- <b>Sex:</b> Male</li> <li>- <b>Hobbies:</b> cycling, boxing</li> <li>- <b>School:</b> second year of high school</li> <li>- <b>Education level:</b> HAVO</li> <li>- <b>City:</b> Waddinxveen</li> <li>- <b>Family:</b> very pleasant Family</li> <li>- <b>Explanation of personality:</b> sometimes very lively when I'm enthusiastic about something. Other times more quiet. Relaxed</li> <li>- <b>Importance of Family in life:</b> very important they give you pure love.</li> <li>- <b>Importance of friends in life:</b> Also important because you need more</li> </ul>

	<p><i>in life than just your parents.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Importance of own will in life:</b> <i>very important, in the end you make your own decisions.</i></li> <li>- <b>Most important things in life:</b> <i>Staying true to yourself, and don't adapt for others.</i></li> </ul>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Age:</b> <i>16</i></li> <li>- <b>Sex:</b> <i>Female</i></li> <li>- <b>Hobbies:</b> <i>Hockey</i></li> <li>- <b>School:</b> <i>fifth year of high school</i></li> <li>- <b>Education level:</b> <i>VWO</i></li> <li>- <b>City:</b> <i>Born in Gouda, raised in Boskoop.</i></li> <li>- <b>Family:</b> <i>Two parents still together, one younger sister</i></li> <li>- <b>Personality:</b> <i>very active and caring. Always busy to think about other to help them</i></li> <li>- <b>Importance of Family in life:</b> <i>Very important, you can always rely on them.</i></li> <li>- <b>Importance of friends in life:</b> <i>very important, you share your whole life with them</i></li> <li>- <b>Importance of own will in life:</b> <i>important, but not when it negatively influences others. But always stick to your own standards and values.</i></li> <li>- <b>Most important things in life:</b> <i>Education, career, but not to forget to have fun.</i></li> </ul>