

## Measuring Privacy Attitudes

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8th Conference of the European Survey Research Association, Zagreb, Croatia, 15th-19th July 2019

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## Understanding resistance to participate in passive smartphone data collection in mobile-web surveys

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## METHODS

### 1. Field experiment alongside a general population survey:

- Swiss Electoral Studies 'Selects' to assess hypothetical and actual willingness to download a survey app and predictors of willingness

### 2. User experience research:

- Focus Groups: Age groups: 18-30; 31-60; 61 years and over; exploring smartphone use and privacy concerns

- **Ethical approval from:** EPFL Human Research Ethics Committee (014-2019) – resulted in request to add additional questions relating to privacy concerns and comprehension of privacy statements

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## SELECTS-CIVIQUE MEASURES

### • Attitudes:

1. **Attitudes towards the Internet:** facilitates communication, threat to privacy, should be free to express yourself online, ease of judging truthfulness of information online
2. **Privacy concerns:** how worried that websites & apps collect personal information; concerns that data will go to 3<sup>rd</sup> parties, data will be used to send targeted ads, identity might be stolen
3. **Perceptions of data sensitivity ('easiness about researchers having access to'):** admin/register data, health, religious beliefs, political opinions, criminal records, sexual behaviour, tax records, how smartphone is used

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## SELECTS-CIVIQUE MEASURES

- **Behaviours:** Frequency of internet use, devices used, activities on smartphone, whether reads privacy/ data confidentiality statements and if not, reasons why not (length/ complexity)
- **Behavioural intentions:** Willingness to participate in research on smartphone (complete a questionnaire, download an app, take photos of political posters, share GPS location, step count, linked devices/ bluetooth)
- **Characteristics:** Demographics, smartphone skills, plus measures from Selects (political opinions/ behaviours)

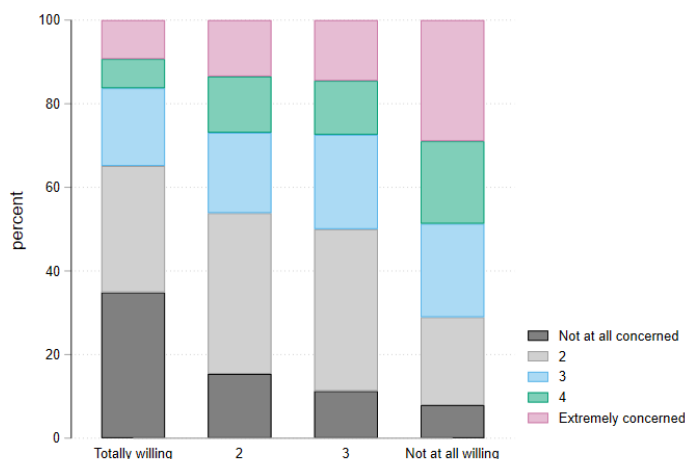
**Sources:** Understanding Society, Special Eurobarometer 359 (2011), German Internet Panel, some others, some original



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## CONCERNS/ WILLINGNESS



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## FOCUS GROUPS

- **Study name:** Smartphone Use and Data Privacy Concerns
- **Methods:** 3 'mini groups' (8 people), trained moderator (MIS Trend), 2 observers
- **Duration:** 1.5 hours
- **Topic Guide:**
  1. Smartphone use – habits, skills, positive and negative aspects
  2. Knowledge about privacy and risks (privacy policies and laws)
  3. Concerns about privacy-related issues online
  4. Information sharing, social and institutional privacy concerns
  5. Introduction to the **Civique** application
  6. Resistance – perceived barriers to participating in research using Civique (burden, passive data, consent)
  7. Overcoming barriers to participation (incentives)



Focus groups - inSIGHTS

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## FOCUS GROUPS - INSIGHTS

- **Adaptation to a new data environment**
  - High level of general awareness of and resignation to online data collection and privacy compromises
  - *"You know that you are followed"*
  - *"Once I got a smartphone, I realised it was a lost cause – the data were gone"*
  - *"It's obligatory – you have go with the flow. I don't have a choice – I've adapted to my environment."*
- **But:**
  - Selective awareness with respect to different online behaviours – e.g. recognition of data transfer when using Google, Facebook, or shopping apps (Migros), but not when using other sites/ platforms
  - Claims that no private data divulged, but would not want to lose phone



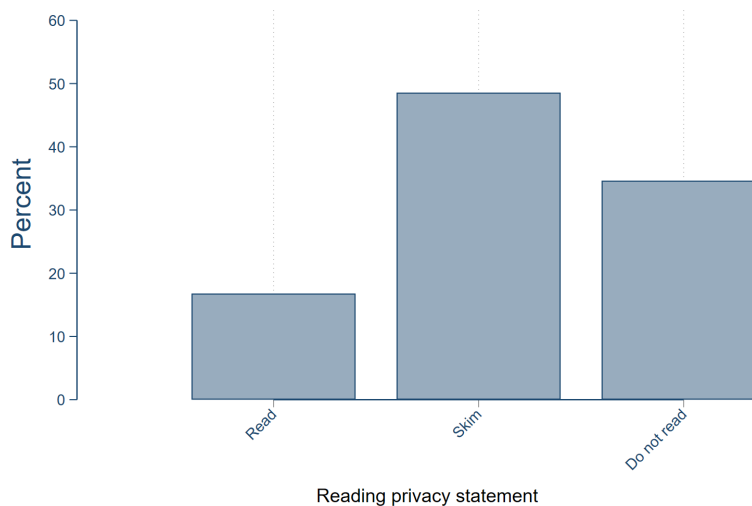
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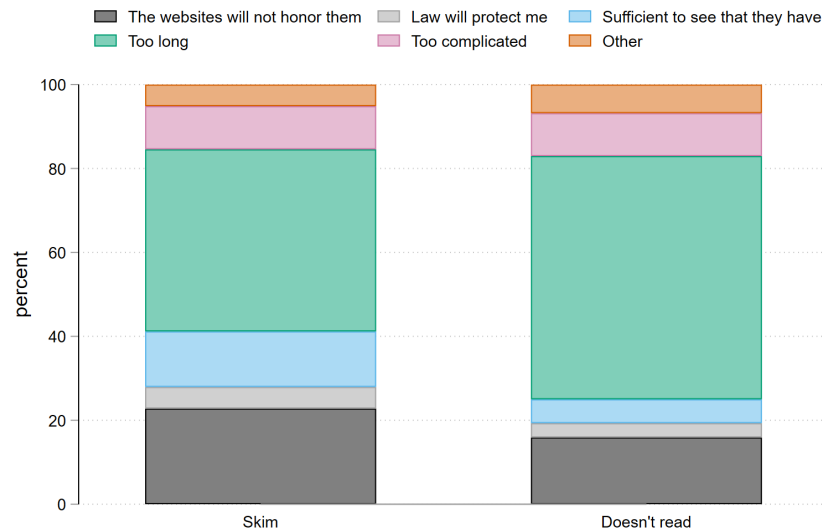
## FOCUS GROUPS - INSIGHTS

- **Privacy Paradox**
  - Privacy concerns poor predictor of behaviours
  - Rarely reading data privacy statements in full – too long, too complex
  - *“If they wanted us to understand them, they would do something”*
  - Benefits of using a phone/ apps outweigh costs

## READING PRIVACY POLICY



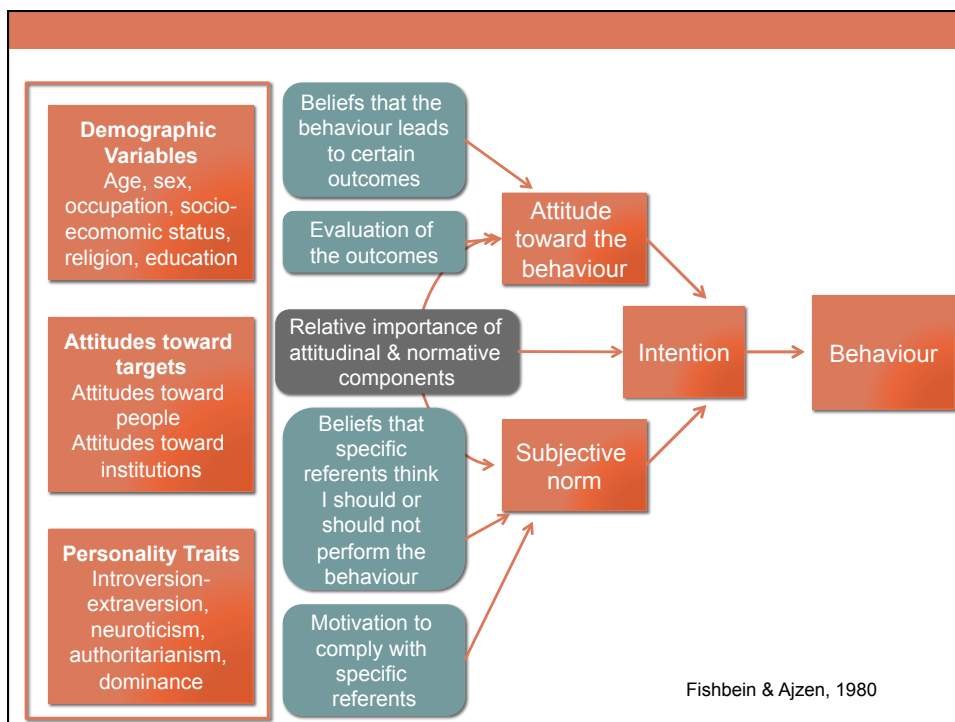
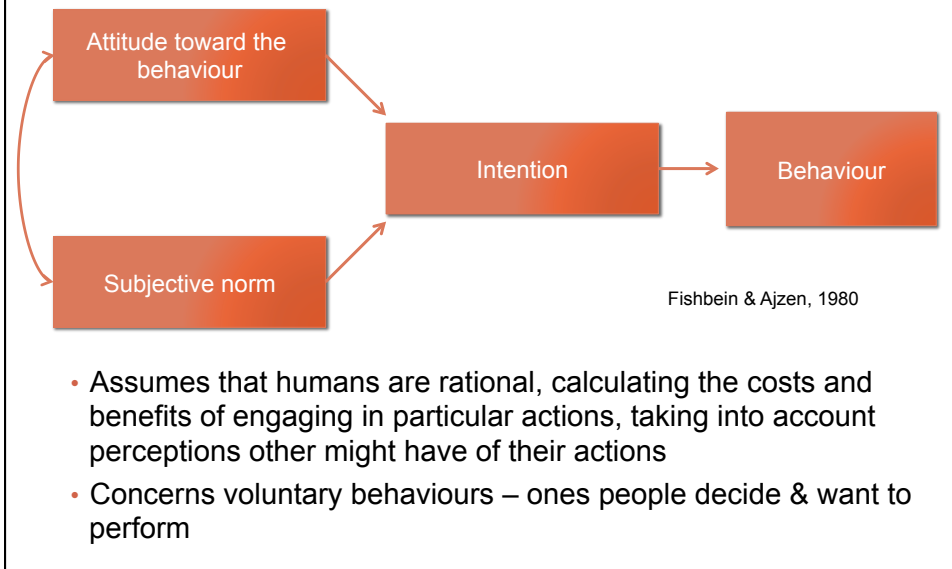
## REASONS FOR NOT READING

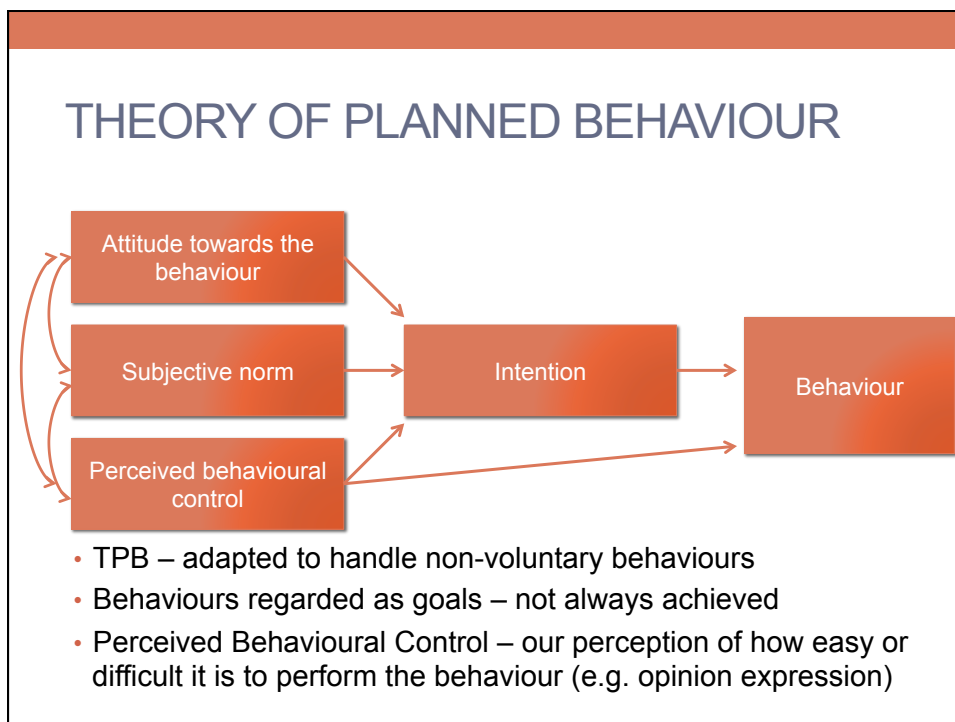
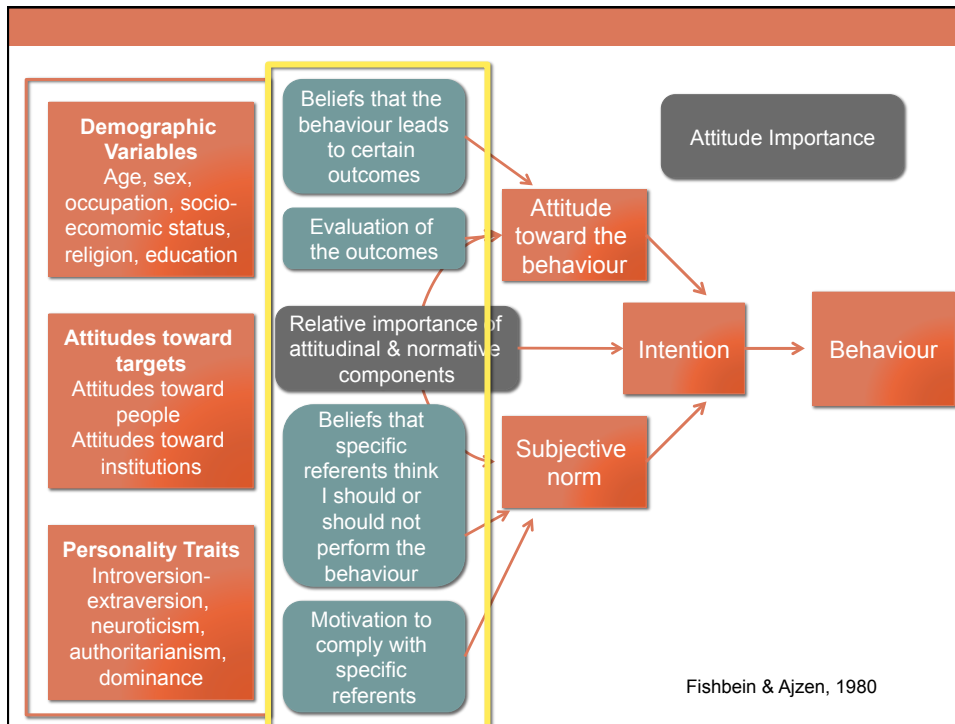


## FOCUS GROUPS - INSIGHTS

- **Double paradox for surveys?**
  - Privacy concerns don't predict data sharing in other contexts, so why should they in surveys?
  - Incentives (or all kinds) are key – explaining purpose and data usage, transparent sponsorship, sharing results, monetary incentive
  - How to gain consent without going into too much detail?

## THEORY OF REASONED ACTION







## IMPLICATIONS

- Need for specificity about behaviour to be promoted
- Need to consider attitude strength (knowledge, importance, etc.)