



# Why privacy matters to digital inequality

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**privacy**

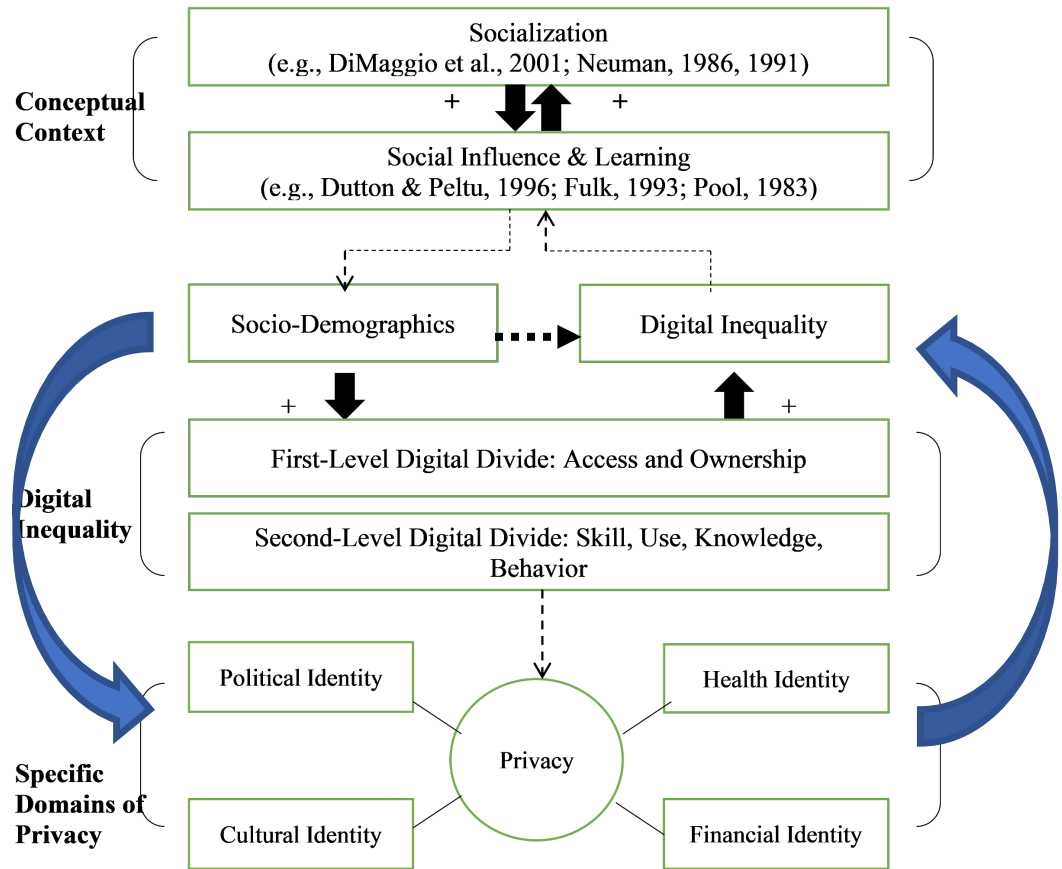


**inequality**

Privacy as Social Construct

That is, Influence - and Influenced by –  
Socialization – Social Disparities

- Privacy as a social construct
- Privacy as social consequence and cause



**Figure 1. Privacy as a social construct.**

*Note.* The + sign denotes a positive directional influence.

# Privacy concepts and approaches

- Approaches
- **interpersonal** self-disclosing and coping
- the **concern** about data **exposure** in digital advertising
- the perceived **safety/trust** on product-service adoption
- the **surveillance** threat in acceptance of e-government
- the cost-benefit **calculation** of revealing personal data or being anonymous

# Privacy concepts and approaches

- Approaches
- **a positivist approach**, in which empirical data collection and analysis are treated as purely objective endeavors independent of societal value and goals
- **a normative approach**, in which scientific purposes cannot be seen as outside of social influence and problems thus, operating only within established social values and order

# Privacy concepts and approaches

- Approaches
- purely positivistic stand with no social concern – quan
- impressionist interpretation of institutional surveillance power = quali

# Privacy concepts and approaches

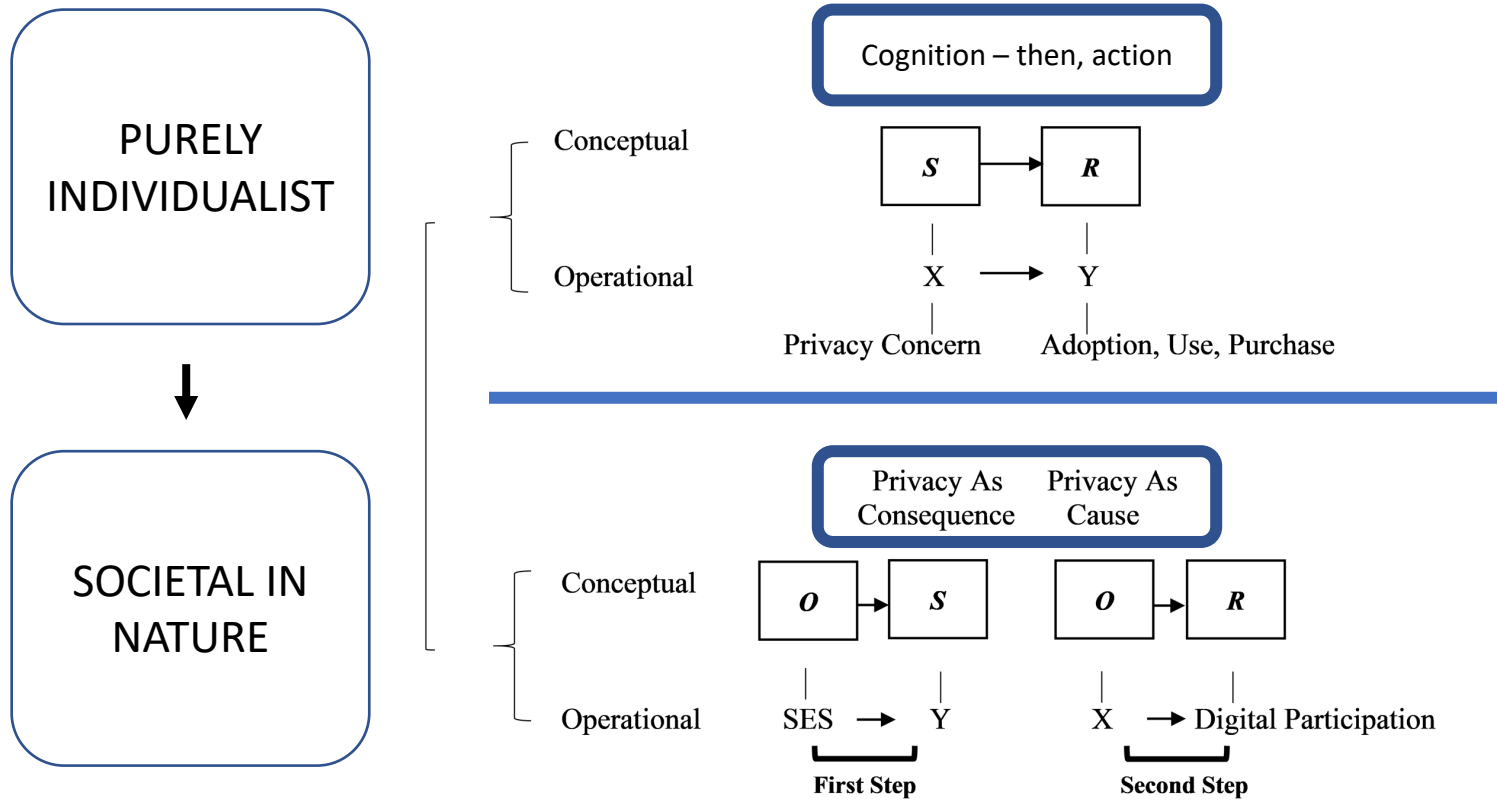
- Drastically different views/conclusions about
- Why privacy matters at all



- **Combination of positivist + normative perspectives**



# Privacy as social consequence and cause



**Figure 2. Privacy as a cause and a consequence**

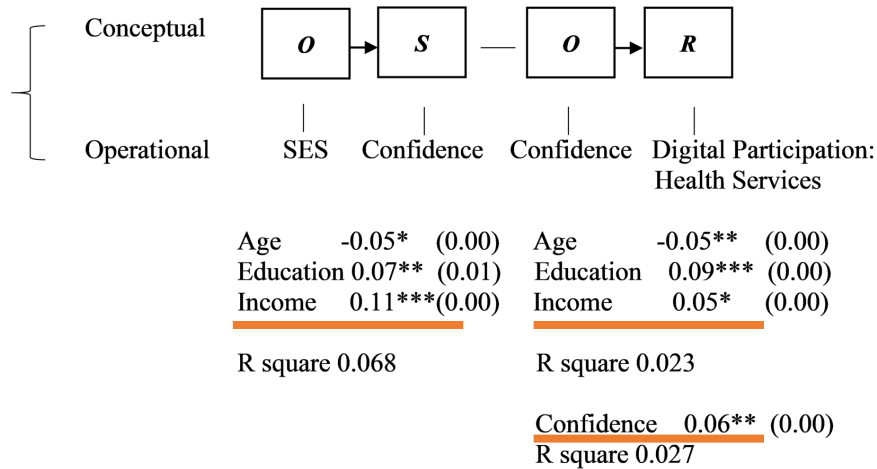
# Model testing and empirical evidence

- secondary data from Health Information National Trends Survey (**HINTS**, 2014)
- representative sample of adults (18 years or older) in the United States (**n = 3,677**)
- female = 59%; nonwhites = 25%, income = 5.32, a 9-point scale, age = 53.48, education = 4.94, a 7-point scale

# Model testing and empirical evidence

- measures
- **confidence in privacy**, or one's perceived ability to manage personal information (Caine & Hanania, 2013)
- two items that asked respondents to rate their perceived level of confidence in privacy related to health data on a scale from 1 (not confident) to 3 (confident), and two items were combined into an index ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ,  $\alpha = 0.74$ )
- **digital participation in health service**. The logic is that the perceived ability to control privacy will result in difference in the type or degree of health-related participation, by excluding those with lower confidence.
- digital participation with health service was measured with six items, of which I created an additive index ( $M = 1.16$ ,  $SD = 0.55$ ).

# Model testing and empirical evidence



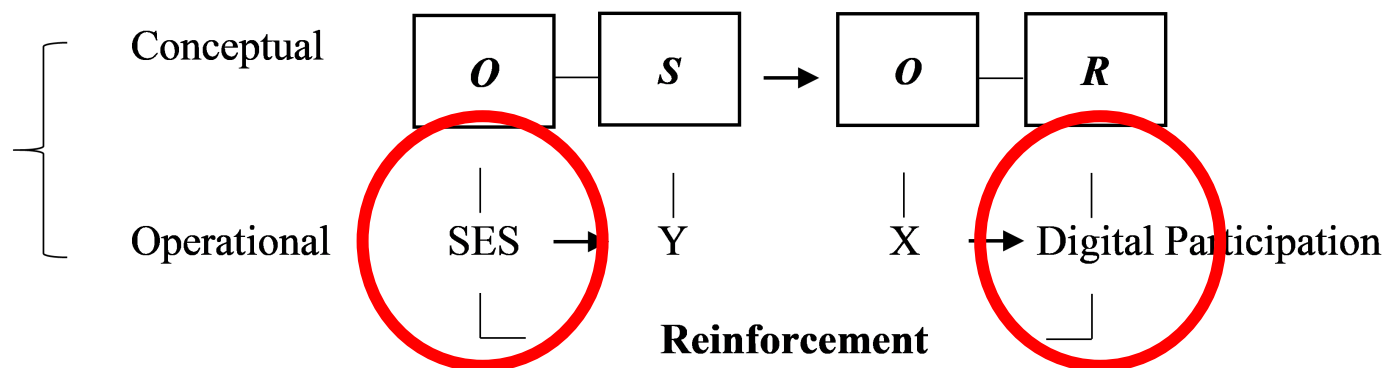
*Notes.* Only significant results are shown, and gender and nonwhites were also included, but not significant

Entry in parentheses are standard errors

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

**Figure 3. Health privacy as a cause and a consequence**

# So why do we have to care .... ?



**Figure 4. Privacy as a cause and as a consequence of social inequality**

# So why do we have to care .... ?

- Privacy reinforces its societal inequality because being able to exercise **privacy differs by one's social standing, therefore, its impact differs**, enabling people to participate disproportionately in digital activities
- **Privacy remains to be one of the most critical mechanisms of deepening-reinforcing inequalities**, as one's personal data cannot be detached from the use of digital devices.
- Privacy has been ..... in old debates

# Privacy as a social construct

- the shaping of privacy and its effects remains deeply **endogenous within socialization** (Dutton & Peltu, 1996; Neuman, 1986, 1991; Park, 2021; Pool, 1983).

# Going forth ... in privacy future debates

- to move beyond a **psychological mechanism**
- by which individual decisions are reduced to being reactionary to privacy concern, as if a hyperdermic needle (S) is injected into a person for behavioral change (R)
- to examine **precise socializing process of an acquisition** or social **learning** of privacy skills and knowledge (see Neuman, 1986, 1991), which may put individuals in a better position for privacy control.