

The E-N-D Framework: How Experienced, Normative, and Desired Psychological Ownership Influence Self-disclosure of Personal Data Online

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Abstract

Psychological ownership (PO), the feeling that something is “mine”, is increasingly used to explain how people manage their personal data online. While PO typically promotes valuing and protecting possessions, evidence in the privacy domain is inconsistent. Some studies show that stronger PO leads to more cautious data-sharing, yet others find that people routinely contradict their stated privacy concerns, for example by accepting vague terms or clicking “accept all cookies”. As a result, individuals disclose substantial identifiable and behavioural data. We argue that this gap reflects a PO paradox: feeling ownership of personal data does not reliably translate into protective behaviour. To explain why, we introduce the E-N-D framework, proposing that PO for personal data consists of three components: experienced, normative, and desired ownership. Incomplete PO, where only some components are activated, may fail to motivate consistent privacy-protective action.

Track: Consumer Behaviour