

Article Review: Minoritized Ethnic People's Security and Privacy Concerns and Responses
Towards Essential Online Services

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By Aunam Quayoum, Mark Wong, Sebati Ghosh & Siamak F. Shahandashti (2025)

1. Connection to Social Science Principles

This study draws on social science theories of **standpoint theory** and **trust in institutions** to explore how marginalized ethnic groups perceive and engage with digital services. These frameworks emphasize the lived experiences of structurally disadvantaged groups central to sociology and critical race theory.

2. Research Questions / Hypotheses

The researchers asked: What are the security and privacy concerns minoritized ethnic people have when using essential online services (health, housing, energy)? How do these concerns influence their behaviors and trust? They hypothesized that prior experiences of discrimination shape these attitudes and decisions.

3. Research Methods

A **qualitative, thematic interview** study was conducted using semi-structured interviews with 44 participants from minoritized ethnic backgrounds in the UK. This method aligns with **community-based participatory research** (CBPR) principles by centering the voices of the affected group rather than external assumptions.

4. Types of Data and Analysis

Researchers analyzed interview transcripts thematically to identify recurring concerns, behaviors, and trust issues. They reported themes like **privacy fears, selective disclosure**

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practices, and **institutional distrust**, linking them to discrimination and surveillance experiences.

5. Connection to Class Concepts

This study exemplifies several social science concepts we've learned, such as:

- **Trust and risk perception**—how marginalized users assess online safety.
- **Cultural/standpoint perspectives**—how lived experience shapes behavior.
- **Digital inequality and access barriers**—exploring a digital divide not just in access but in meaningful control over personal data.

It also touches on **social engineering** concerns: if individuals from minoritized groups disclose data inconsistently, it affects how threat modeling and awareness must adapt.

6. Relation to Marginalized Groups

The study directly focuses on marginalized populations—ethnic minorities in the UK—and explores how structural inequalities (e.g., institutional racism or fear of penalization) influence both their trust in online platforms and their behavioral responses. It also offers design recommendations to make online services more inclusive, privacy-preserving, and culturally responsive.

7. Contributions to Society

By highlighting how security and privacy concerns differ across groups, this research pushes for **inclusive design principles** in cybersecurity. It reveals that one-size-fits-all digital

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services can deepen inequalities. Its insights can inform policymakers, developers, and social service organizations to rethink how they engage marginalized users, ultimately strengthening trust and inclusion in digital infrastructure.

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Citations

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