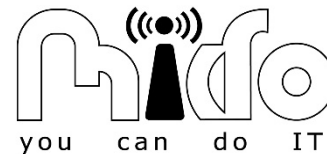


# Digital identity, privacy and security: user perspectives from Myanmar

Presented by Gayani Hurulle  
Myanmar Digital Rights Forum  
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# Internet users sampled through quantitative and qualitative methods

## Qualitative

- Focus group discussions and in depth interviews in Yangon, Mandalay and Kachin
- 95 respondents
- August-September 2017

## Quantitative

- Online survey sourced from Kantar TNS Connected life panel
- 403 respondents
- October-November 2017

## **Reluctance to engage in political discussions observed, often for the sake of retaining friendships**

*“[Political discussions] are not related to me. Yes, politics is everyone’s concern. However, I do not get involved in businesses that are not mine. The main thing is for my family to be peaceful and to have a good life.”*

Male, 35, SEC D, Mandalay (R10.3)

*“I have many friends who are [of] nationalities different [to] mine. When I meet up with them at the tea shop, they say “damn KIAs”. When they say like that, I tell them they are right... If I argue, it will get worse. I don’t know what their intentions are. I want to retain these friendships”*

Male, 41, SEC A, Myitkyina, Pro-KIA (IDI3)

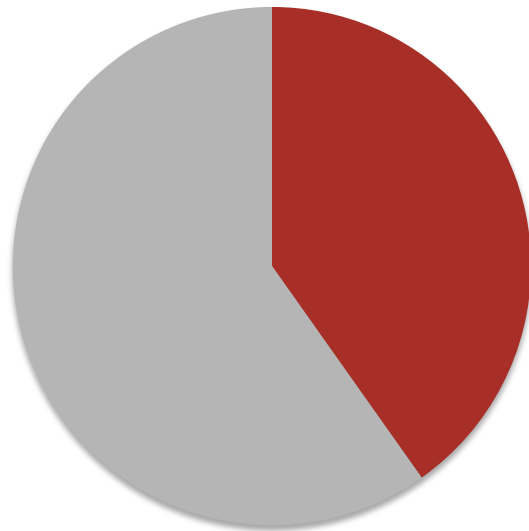
# Is the Internet a platform for voicing thoughts without fear?

*“At the tea shop, there are so many different people and different ethnic groups. In this current situation we cannot say everything we want openly, even though it is free now. However, online, we talk to each other about anything we want without needing to be afraid.”*

Male, 35, SEC B, Myitkyina (R5.4)

# 40% used an anonymous account, often used to engage in political discourse

Use of an anonymous account  
(% of respondents)



■ Yes ■ No

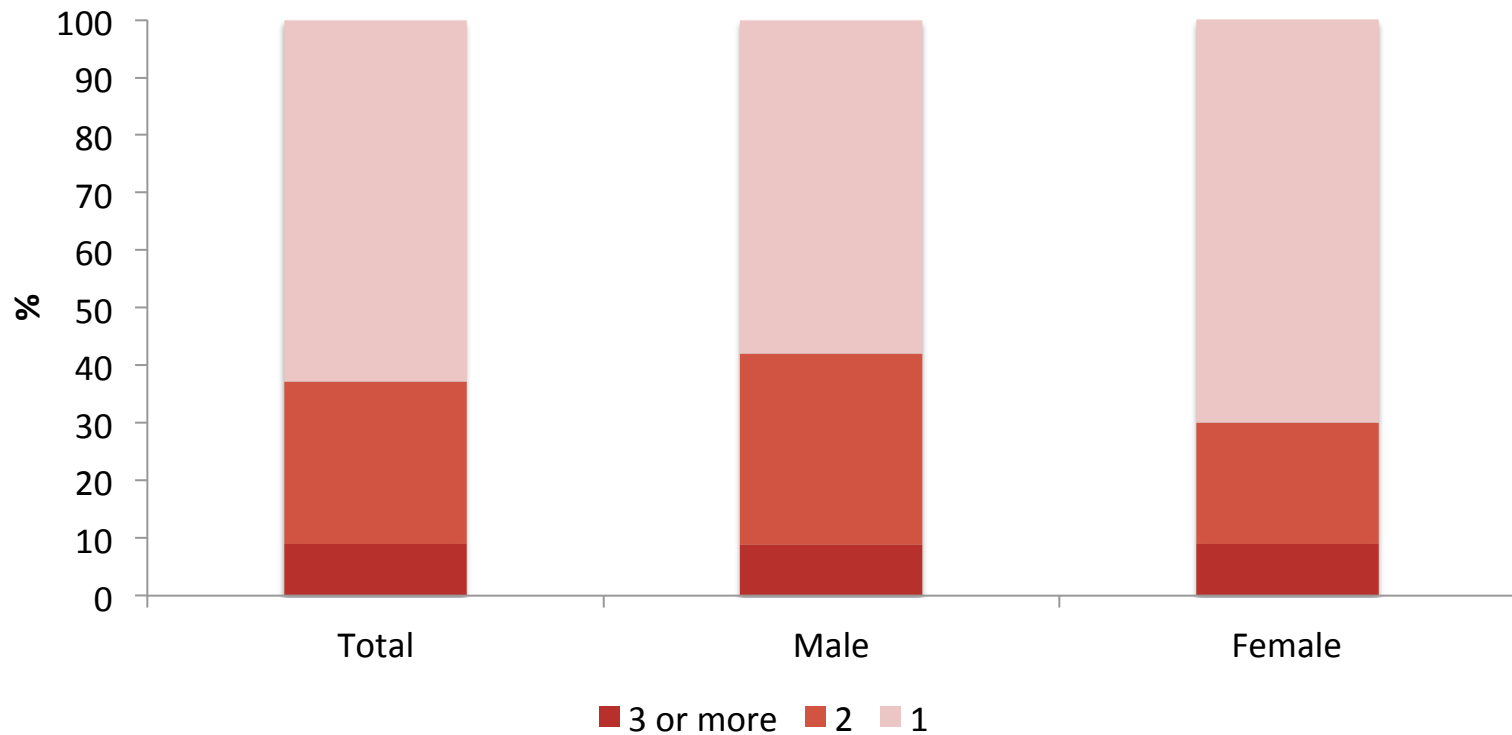
Base: n=403

*“Without showing my identity, I can engage in preventing misconceptions, or state my opinions on local and international news without getting my name hurt... I can take the news without letting my identity be revealed. So, I use nicknames or other funny names with profile pictures like cartoon characters.”*

Female, 38, SEC D, Yangon (R15.1)

# 37% used more than one Facebook account

Number of Facebook accounts belonging to an individual (% of respondents)



Base: n=403, Male: n=236, Female: n=167

## **Ethnic underpinnings associated with use of multiple accounts**

*“One time, people in the comments section [of one of my posts] got into an argument. After that, I decided to use two accounts for different purposes. One is with my Kachin name [for] my relatives and friends from the same ethnicity. The other one is with my Burmese name and it is for activities where there could be negative impact if I used my Kachin name. [This is] for political or other controversial views. Since then, I [haven’t had] any problem.”*

Female, 25, SEC B, Yangon (R2.1)

## **Some young women refrained from uploading their photographs due to concerns of the pictures being misused**

*“I didn’t use my real photo because the people with different opinions in politics can target me and threaten me. I also afraid of Photoshop and the people who can put pressure me.”*

Female, 26, Social influencer, Yangon (IDI5)

*“I think rather than taking actions after things happen, it is better to take precautions.”*

Female, 26, SEC B, Yangon (R2.5)



## Access to justice systems limited to a few with connections?

*“Some girls Photoshopped a picture of mine on a different page. First they denied [doing it], but after my brothers got involved, they admitted [to] doing it, but still refused to take down my picture.*

*I tried to report those girls to the police, but their parents were government workers who have authority. So, the policemen stood up for them and encouraged me to just forgive them. What else I could do? I decided to let it go”*

Female, 25, SEC B, Yangon (R2.2)

## Uploading family, partial photographs seen as means of preventing misuse

*“I upload family pictures on Facebook. These days, people say that posting your pictures is risky. So, I stopped uploading those.”*

Female, 32, SEC C, Mandalay (R9.4)

*“[I rarely upload] full body image pictures— maybe just my head or only the upper part of my body... I have heard that it is easier to photoshop full body images“*

Female, 25, SEC B, Yangon (R2.4)

# For more information

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Full report to follow!