IF IT IS FREE,
YOU ARE THE PRODUCT
An empirical study of users’ reasoning towards Facebook’s business model and ethics
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ABSTRACT

This Master thesis studies the reasoning of users towards the monetization of their data as part of social networking sites’ (SNS) business model and takes into consideration the ethical dimension of businesses. As the Cambridge Analytica Scandal highlighted, people are concerned about how SNS use their data, especially when third parties are involved. To study our topic, we investigated it into three sub-purposes: first of all, we aimed to get a deeper understanding about how people use and perceive Facebook. Then, we searched information about how people think and reason regarding the current offer about having a free registration while this involves giving SNS private data. This system may raise corporate ethical questions from a consumer perspective. Finally, for the third sub-purpose, we looked at the users’ attitudes and behaviors towards Facebook’s data monetization.

This study was conducted using a qualitative method. We opted for three focus groups gathering four to five people each to understand how people interact to each other’s responses and arguments about the six core questions we asked them, letting concerns and argues take place. By conducting focus groups, we were able to get a deeper understanding about people’s reasoning regarding the data monetization of their own private data but also how they might react if an alternative to Facebook would emerge. To analyze what has been said during the three focus groups, we used a thematic network analysis and generating four main themes: users’ perception and use of Facebook, users’ understanding about data monetization, users’ attitude about this aspect of Facebook’s business model and finally users’ behavior. We found a behavior-intention gap. People are actually aware of the data monetization of their own private data but that scandals do not affect their behavior as they keep using Facebook. However, they started to minimize their use of Facebook way before the scandal because of the data monetization. They consider the corporate ethical consideration as an important insight while using a SNS and could leave the social networking site for another one, if the network effect was not so powerful.

Keywords
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Since the emergence of the Internet, many scholars focused on the business models of online services. Business models always existed to define trading behaviors (Teece, 2010) but with the introduction of the Internet mid-1990s, it has led to changes. This can be seen with the impressive raise of articles published on the matter after 1995 (Zott et al., 2011). From a description to an architecture (Zott et al., 2011), all the various definitions converge to state that a business model “creates and delivers value” (Johnson et al., 2010). The particularity of the Internet is that it has led to shrinking costs of computing and communication, thus allowing the development of new ways to create and deliver value (Amit & Zott, 2001). Consequently, the general research stream on business model devoted a particular attention to e-business models, defined as the understanding of “doing business electronically” (Zott et al., 2011, p.1023).

The e-business models continuously evolved and were shaped by the tremendous change in the use of the internet over the years. The web evolved from a 1.0 to a 2.0 version. At the beginning, the web 1.0 consisted only for Internet users to read articles and in a way, they were mostly passive. They had no opportunity to create or co-create content (Shivalingaiah & Naik, 2008). Whereas the one for the web 2.0 includes way more collaboration, co-creation and more interaction among internet users and all the people present online (Shivalingaiah & Naik, 2008). The web 2.0 encourages more social interaction among people on the internet and social networking sites (SNS) emerged. These “services allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list” (boyd & Ellison, 2007, p.211). Even though SNS and social media are often considered as interchangeable, they are not. While SNS is one type of social media (Mayfield, 2008, p.6), all social media cannot be considered as SNS. Indeed, social media are defined by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) as online applications based on web 2.0 on which people exchange content, it can be a blog, a forum or a professional network. In short, social media are platforms where people can share content, but in contrary to SNS, the main goal is not to foster or build relationship with the other users. One example is the forum, the primary goal here is to ask for advice to a community but not to strengthen relationship with its members, at least, not at first use. SNS are now central in people’s day-to-day life. Also, more than 90% of students are using social networks (Siddiqui & Singh, 2016) and social media have effects in general on education, as they represent communication tools we use to keep in touch with friends, to create groups and work on school assignments, to share content (Siddiqui & Singh, 2016). The content shared on those SNS is called user-generated-content, or UGC. It is everything that a user can share, from pictures to texts, but also is online actions, as liking or sharing posts for instance (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p.62).

This shift lead to create new types of services and consequently new types of e-business models (Vuori, 2011; Wirtz et al., 2010). The scholars attributed to SNS a connection-oriented business model. Features such as total or partial free, ease of access or a channel for instant communication are common points to all of the most important and biggest ones, based on the number of registered people, are Facebook, LinkedIn, Youtube, Twitter and Instagram (Kallas, 2018). A special concern has been the monetization of e-business (Zott et al., 2010). Those connection-oriented business models have a value proposition that consists in providing the necessary features to let people participate and
communicate (Wirtz et al., 2010). But, as a digital content service, SNS business models shifted from “free” to “fee” business models (Pauwels & Weiss, 2008). Indeed, the corresponding revenue stream of such SNS is based on “online advertising, subscription, time-based billing, volume-based billing” (Wirtz et al., 2010). Advertisements are invading more people’s life every year, as 30 years ago people saw around 3,000 ads while nowadays this number reaches about 5,000 ads (Johnson, 2014). To illustrate this, in 2017, 98% of Facebook’s quarterly revenue come from advertising (Ingram, 2017). However, the registration is still free for the user. Why?

Because what Facebook monetizes is in a way the attention of its users. This has been demonstrated by the attention economy literature (Kessous, 2015). The use of SNS also lead changes among the business sector, as now, customers and companies are easily exchanging content and communicating with each other, and way faster than before (Siddiqui & Singh, 2016). Therefore, they are also actors on this market and not anymore simple users of the service (Agichtein et al., 2008). They co-create (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). But, to capture the attention of the user at the maximum, company decided to integrate UGC in their marketing strategy, thus creating targeted campaign through the SNS. The same UGC willingly created by users is gathered by companies to target users in return. SNS allow companies and third parties in general to launch digital marketing campaign by exploiting Facebook’s users content and data. Facebook relies on monetizing the data in exchange for a free registration. But it appears that Facebook’s users did not consciously give their data to be targeted in return. Those targeted campaign are seen as pervasive communication and problematic for them.

The revenue stream of SNS raises ethical issues. The consumer thought that these sites were offering a free registration and a free service. However, if “the service is free, you are the product” (Rushkoff, cited in Solon, 2011). As the Cambridge Analytica scandal highlighted it this year, people seem to have issues regarding monetizing their private data by the platform itself (Granville, 2018). This scandal arouses in March 2018 and was triggered by the discovery that Cambridge Analytica, an agency, misused Facebook’s users’ data to possibly influence their behavior and vote intention for the American presidential election that elected Trump. Facebook’s users reacted to the revenue stream of the platform which monetizes its user’s private data and shares it to third parties. Consequently to this scandal, the movement “#DeleteFacebook” surfaced. It is a movement supporting the idea of deleting his/her Facebook account because of this another scandal and the use of private data by Facebook to make money (Fowler, 2018). According to a survey conducted in France after the Cambridge Analytica Scandal, 25% of the interviewees have the intention of deleting the application and his or her Facebook account (Ifop, 2018). And this proportion reached 17% in the United States (Milanesi, 2018), the home country of Facebook and social media in general. Moreover, the development of regulation such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Hern, 2018), which requires all online service provider to obtain user consent for the use of their data, will result in a 7% decline in Facebook’s revenue in Europe, according to Goldman Sachs. Facebook appears as a dominant actor in digital advertising. But Clemons (2009) analyzed that advertising was not an effective way to monetize online services. He highlighted the fact that many potential online business models were not based on advertising and that Internet advertising revenue were declining. All those arguments question not only the sustainability of Facebook’s business model, especially when we focus on the consumer view, but also the ethicality of such business model for the first time. Van Marrewijk (2003) demonstrated the link between Corporate
Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility, thus showing that for a business to be sustainable, it needs also to be ethic.

Business models remain one of the core framework a company needs to design in order to organize all its activities, costs and revenues. As explained above, SNS’ business models lie on trading users’ data to earn profit. As expressed by Norberg et al. (2007), the behavior that “people are willing to trade personal information for perceived benefits is no surprise”. This is called the privacy paradox (Kokolakis, 2015; Norberg et al., 2007; Utz & Krämer, 2009). But nowadays, with the Cambridge Analytica scandal, consumer seem to consider Facebook’s practices as unethical and the perceived benefits could be less valuable than the cost of trading their personal data. The SNS needs to remodel a part of its business models if it does not want to see more people leaving. This seems to be possible since offering a free registration but without trading private data is the basis of the SNS Vero’s offer. Vero is a “true social” media (Karcz, 2018) which can be considered as an alternative to Facebook because it does not use targeted advertising as a source of revenue and enhanced data privacy (Karcz, 2018). To rethink SNS business models, it is then important to understand what their consumers want. Especially since SNS are dependent on those users. As an illustration, Hull (2015) showed that one of Facebook’s feature has already been suppressed due to consumers resistance, the Beacon scandal. Beacon is an advertising tool from 2007 that each time a Facebook’s user was visiting a third-party website, this activity would appear on their friends’ news feed (The Telegraph, 2009). The ethical issue with Beacon was that Facebook could track its users’ online activities, even if the users were not connected on the platform (The Telegraph, 2009). Thus, users were not aware of such practices (The Telegraph, 2009). Following the users’ reactions on this scandal, the tool was suppressed (Hull, 2015).

Our interest will be to detect if SNS’ users are still ready to give their personal data to access a free service or do they perceive a risk in using Facebook, more important than the benefits of using the platform. A lot of study showed an unwillingness to pay or sell their data (Benndorf & Normann, 2017, Leon et al., 2015; McDonald & Cranor, 2010). If they are not ready to pay to protect their data or sell them, what alternative do they consider and what behavior will they adopt to react to a situation they do not like and consider as unethical?

So far, and to our knowledge, researchers previously tried to analyze the perceptions of SNS’ users towards privacy threat, targeted marketing and access of data to third parties (Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Evans, 2009; Hull, 2015; Leon et al., 2015, p.6; McDonald & Cranor, 2010; Ur et al., 2012), but the data monetization, which consists in selling data of users to third parties, as a source of Facebook’s revenue and part of their business model has never really been examined through the lens of the consumer. The problem here is a grey zone, since those data are not willingly given to the third parties by the user but by Facebook itself. Yet, given the dependence between SNS and its user, it seems essential to analyze this phenomenon within this industry, especially since the business models are in the last years more and more co-created with the customer (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Another reason is that, with the Facebook Cambridge Analytica scandal in 2018, ethical issues of SNS’ business models are observed. To our knowledge, this is also one of the first studies to deal with consumer’s perception of business model also from the perspective of business ethics. To date, even if business model literature touched upon the ethical perspective of business model (Joyce & Paquin, 2016), no
literature explicitly considered what ethical business model might mean and how this ethic lens could be applied to SNS business model, especially revenue stream.

1.2. Research Question & Purpose

To fill this gap, we decided to investigate this topic through the lens of the consumer. Hence the following research question:

How do SNS’ users reason about their data monetization by the platform as part of its business model?

To address our research question, we decided to focus only on Facebook since it is one of the biggest SNS (Kallas, 2018). Regarding the business model side of our research question, it is usually composed by three parts. Those parts are the value proposition, the value creation and the value capture (Bocken et al., 2014; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2002; Wirtz et al., 2016). Whilst this thesis, we will refer to the three of the, the value proposition which is the product or service offered to the customer, the value creation which is the way the company create and think the product for its customers and the value capture which refers to the way the company, here Facebook, earn money (Johnson et al., 2017). Regarding the consumer side of our research question, and here Facebook’s users, we will focus on personal consumer and not companies. We will focus our study on the Y generation, which corresponds to people aged between 18 to 37 years old (Stanimir, 2015, p.24) and is also the core population using SNS in general (Noyes, 2018), such as Facebook. More specifically, we will target students between 18 to 28 years old because it has been shown that four students out of five spent more than an hour on social media per day (Bilgin & Taş, 2018).

The purpose of our study is to increase the understanding and knowledge about users’ perception of the revenue stream in SNS business model. By “reasoning” in our research question we mean the users’ perception and understanding of the situation first; and then, their reaction towards this situation (attitude for or against, followed by the behavior they would adopt). In order to achieve this purpose, we drawn three sub-purposes that will guide us and bring the relevant knowledge.

1. First, we must understand how people use and perceive Facebook. Having this sub-purpose in mind will lead us to understand the kind of data users are spontaneously willing to share on Facebook.

2. The second sub-purpose will be more specific about part of Facebook’s business model as we seek to increase our understanding about how people think about the general principle of having a free registration in exchange of an infringement of their private data, which could be considered as an unethical corporate behavior from a consumer perspective. This part includes their understanding but also their attitudes towards Facebook’s data monetization (for or against).

3. Finally, the fact that now they are aware of Facebook’s revenue stream, and more precisely the data monetization, we want to know if they are going to change their behavior regarding their use of SNS, more precisely regarding their will to share data online and continue to use SNS. Moreover, we will try to understand if being aware of this part of the business model is a reason for changing their current SNS, in our study Facebook, for another.
2. METHODOLOGY

This chapter aims to present our philosophical framework, including our ontological and epistemological assumptions. We will discuss afterwards our research approach and research strategy we decided to follow based on our framework. Finally, we explain our choice of theory and source of criticism.

2.1. Preconceptions & Choice of Subject

As two business students enrolled in a double degree in Strategic Business Development and Internationalization, and having studied business models, we decided to investigate the topic of monetization of SNS users’ private data by the platform itself. And more precisely, about the perceptions that users have about the trade of their data in order to access a free service. Because of the recent events regarding Facebook and the Cambridge Analytica scandal (Granville, 2018), which occurred in March 2018, we decided to investigate an issue that takes a great role in our day-to-day life and in our modern societies in general. Even though there is no relevant literature about social media addiction as the definition of addiction is not clear, people get more and more addicted to social media (Bilgin & Taş, 2018). We are focusing on the Y Generation, and more specifically on people aged between 18 to 28 years old, as previously mentioned in the introduction. Moreover, as both Facebook users, we obviously wanted to get a deeper understanding of this issue that directly concerns our private life and may have repercussion on it. Indeed, by using our private data without letting us know, we may have been targeted by marketing campaign and therefore influenced in our purchase choices without knowing it.

According to the several opinions we will gather, the conclusions we might draw for companies on one part of the business model might change tremendously or not. For instance, if people do agree that private data should not be a source of revenues for SNS, then an entire part of the business model currently applied will be in contradiction with people’s will and might seriously damage the image of the social platform. This would consequently strengthen movements that supports the idea of deleting these precise platforms, such as the ones that started against Facebook in March 2018, as Techpinions measured it (Milanesi, 2018). According to Milanesi (2018) and the technology research group Techpinions, over 1000 Americans, 17% of the interviewees declared having deleted the Facebook app from their phone over privacy concerns (Milanesi, 2018). However, if they do agree to give some of their data in exchange of keeping a free access to the social platform, then only few arrangements will be necessary, and the focus will be put more on which data consumers may give up for free.

Therefore, this thesis constitutes an opportunity for us to investigate the topic of Facebook’s user’s perceptions. It is interesting for us to get a deeper understanding of the business model that lies behind the SNS. And so, contribute to the current theory and bring new knowledge about it.

2.2. Research Philosophy

2.2.1. Ontology

The ontological assumption is about the necessity of “understanding the nature of reality or being” (Saunders et al., 2009, p.510). As we are investigating social media, more specifically SNS and users’ perceptions, the concept of social nature and entities must be
added to the first definition of ontological assumption we quoted. Bryman & Bell (2011) do so by saying that ontology is concerned with social entities. And we want to understand users’ perceptions which is in line with “social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.20). By doing so, they bring a more accurate definition of the ontological assumption. They also confirm with relevance the assumption our thesis belongs to. Our thesis embraces then here a constructivist position. It reflects indeed our will to develop more knowledge about social entities and about people’s view regarding a current phenomenon that concerns them directly. The reality is then not external to them but constructed by them. Consequently, we recognize that people’s analysis corresponds to a social reality that is subjective because it is socially constructed (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.47).

2.2.2. Epistemology
Epistemology is concerned with what we accept as valid knowledge (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.47). We are in here researchers, but as mentioned before, we are also both Facebook users and so, directly related to the study (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.46). We will collect data directly from SNS’ users as they are at the core essence of our thesis. The perceptions of Facebook’s users come directly from social actors. As our topic will be shaped by people’s perceptions (Creswell, 2008, p.195), the knowledge will be partly subjective as it will be put under the spotlight by people themselves, and the details of specifics will play a great role in our analysis and conclusion. By working this way with all the knowledge used for our topic, we embrace an interpretivist position. This will let us present rich and high validity data, in accordance with the theoretical articles we used as framework (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.50). It is really important to understand the different sensibilities and nuances people might explain about the same issue.

2.3. Research Approach
While conducting previous researches about online social media and SNS users’ perceptions about SNS’ business model or revenue stream, we realized that there were research articles and literature about SNS and online business models, but very few about the exact topic we are investigating. Our study seeks to bring new perspectives for SNS companies in order to let them make changes regarding their business model and be more in accordance with their consumers’ will. We aim to gain knowledge that has not been covered by the literature so far. And this is what we are trying to bring new and contribute to the current theory. Consequently, the deductivism approach, which consists in developing a theoretical structure and then testing it based on rejected or confirmed hypotheses, will not be followed (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.7). We will actually bring new knowledge and bring theoretical contributions to the existing literature based on the observation of the empirical reality and “induced from particular instances” (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.7). The latter corresponds to the inductivist approach and fits the best our study.

2.4. Research Strategy
In view of the ontological and epistemological assumptions as well as the inductivist approach, a qualitative data collection will be the one to follow here in order to understand SNS users’ perceptions according to their own words and own view about it (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.130). This data collection will let us get a better understanding on how people are actually thinking about the use of their private data as a qualitative collection method under an interpretivist approach leads to a high level of understanding and details
(Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.52). By conducting a qualitative study, we will get a better understanding of the reasons which people have while answering our questions. That is one of the main advantage compared to a quantitative study, which cannot provide descriptive and contextual details (Bryman et al., 2011, p.311). Meaning that values or behavior for instance won’t be understood. While these are core elements to understand the topic and answering our research question. And will be collected thanks to the flexibility of the structure inherent of a qualitative study, as this data collection method lets the researchers ask general questions that belong to the specific theme or topic we are investigating and not specific ones (Bryman et al., 2011, p.311). Thus, we are able to adapt ourselves according to the answers we collect. And be more specific about an interesting point an interviewee might have raised.

### 2.5. Choice of theory and source of criticism

#### 2.5.1. Choice of theory

The inductivist approach used in this study will focus on the observation of empirical findings, nonetheless, as explained by Saunders et al. (2009, p.61), it does not disregard the use of prior literature. According to the authors, our critical review will show the findings and concepts previously developed and demonstrate our familiarity with our research topic. Indeed, the literature review usually captures prior research, theories or models established by researchers in the field (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.75). This allows the researchers to fully understand what has previously been studied and helps them to identify a gap in the field being studied (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.75) related here to SNS business models and consumer perception. The critical review also helped us to redefine and refine our research questions and purposes (Saunders et al., 2009, p.62).

When conducting the literature review, keywords have been defined (Saunders, 2009, p.90). Those key terms have been the base of our research, taken together or separately: Facebook, business model, SNS, relationship, firm, data, monetization, revenue stream, SNS, social media, consumer, perception, behavior, response, business, ethics, ethical, unethical, corporate behavior, scandal, image, marketplace. We will now explain more in detail how we selected the most relevant theories for our literature review.

We decided to investigate first the business model. This helped us to specify SNS business models. At the same time, we also defined the relations between the business model and the consumer, to demonstrate that this desire to study the consumer’s perception of business model is a late trend among researchers, thus legitimizing our subject. We also focused on Facebook’s business model.

Then, keeping in mind that we wanted to analyze the consumer perception of SNS business model, our goal was to get a closer look at the literature that already existed on consumer perception of business model. We did not found literature exactly on this subject. So, we looked more specifically at the SNS or Facebook and at research that would associate Facebook or SNS and consumer perception. We found articles on it and attitudes towards advertising on social networking cases with some focus on Facebook. As the advertising is part of Facebook business model and data monetization, this was a beginning, but no other articles were of use. We also found articles about privacy like fake profiles, gossip or harassment. One article grabbed our attention. Debatin et al. (2009) evoked the Beacon scandal in an article about privacy. Thus, we defined a new keyword which was “privacy”. Researchers wrote about privacy issues, but none really investigated the consumer perception of business model or Facebook’s data monetization.
So, we decided to broaden our research and limit ourselves to consumer perception of business, with the argument that the business model is a way for company to do business. Here, literature such as corporate image, corporate reputation and perceived value of the firm or product were found and with it the consumer perception of products of firm as satisfaction, trust, loyalty or engagement. We had a choice to make here. Indeed, the main literature was part of the marketing area and imputed the firm to be defined as a brand, yet, our focus on business model does not allow us to go for this definition because it will reduce the business at one of its activity and our view is more overall. So, we looked for a subject that could gather those keywords. Knowing this, we took the decision to go for business ethics literature and only discuss the consumer perception of ethical corporate behavior. First, because it is the closest related to business model. Then, it is a more specific scope to examine that is also linked with the business model with the development of sustainable business model. And also, because business models have never or rarely been linked with ethics. Finally, because we are here studying an empirical phenomenon that is a scandal, and by definition, deals with ethical business behavior. Important to note that this corporate behavior is not a marketing one but a business one that includes marketing as activity of the business.

So, we decided to look at the business ethics literature. First, we were interested by the broad definition, then we try to limit to the consumer perception of business ethics, called consumer ethics. Finally, we tried to combine SNS business models and consumer perception, with a special focus on business ethics. We found literature on the business ethics at a time where the consumer perception is a lot expressed on the social media, but not on the business ethics of social network as such.

For the purpose of this study, when talking about business model, we will mainly refer to the revenue stream, unless stated otherwise, since as shown by our framework this component raised a scandal and ethical issues. Nonetheless, we do not ignore the other elements that we consider as important and complementary to the whole business model and could be subject of further research as the relationship with the suppliers or between the employee and the company.

2.5.2. Literature search and source of criticism
Scientific articles thus found came from various database such as EBSCO, provided by Umeå University, Google Scholar but also, Proquest, ScienceDirect, EmeraldInsight, JSTOR, Wiley Online Library, SAGE journals. The biggest part of our scientific articles comes from peer-reviewed journals like Journal of Business Ethics, Journal of Management. To control the quality of the journals, the ranking of academic journals in various business disciplines created by Fondation Nationale pour l’Enseignement de la Gestion des Entreprises (FNEGE) was used. To find the most relevant literature for the thesis subject, bibliographies in relevant articles have been carefully analyzed and some used as additional references. In addition to those scientific articles, other published materials such as textbooks recommended by our teachers or conference speeches were used. We tried to find original sources every time and limit as much as possible secondary referencing as it is the someone else’s interpretation. As we based our research on a recent highlighted event, few research articles have been written on it. Therefore, we quoted newspaper articles to have a contextual framework for our study.
Regarding the reliability of our sources, those recent newspapers articles are not as reliable as scientific papers, but we did not use them for the theory and chose specifically world-known newspapers such as The New York Times, The Washington Post or the Daily Telegraph. For the rest, during the all literature review, the reliability of the mentioned authors has been cautiously examined and their authority questioned (Saunders et al., 2009). To do so, we looked carefully the number of times an article was cited, in what type of journal (which consists in looking precisely who is the publisher) and how many articles the author published on the research matter to understand who the author is. One indicator is when the article is gone through peer-review, as previously mentioned with the database. We, sometimes, focused on the literature posterior to 2014 to see if recent privacy scandals on SNS could have emanated among the literature. This newness could pose a challenge regarding the source reliability. But each time we explored the recognized expertise of the source, as the expertise of the authors themselves on the topic.
3. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the relevant theoretical concepts used in this research study. This chosen literature forms the origin for our conceptual framework. Thereby, themes like the business model of SNS, Facebook and consumer attitudes towards unethical corporate behavior are covered.

3.1. Business models

3.1.1. The main definition

Business model literature is divided according to Wirtz et al. (2016, p.11) in three different areas: concept or terminology, business model structure and business model management process. As we try to get a deeper understanding of a business model by consumer, we will not investigate this latter which focuses on the implementation and design of business model within the company. There is no standard business model definition or components framework (Zott, 2011). Nonetheless, different approaches exist within business model literature: the essentialist, the functional and the performative views. The essentialist view defines business model as a description of the company to understand what the different components of a business are. The model that has been the more popularized and recognized by its peers over the years is the business model canvas created by Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010) which decomposed the business in nine different elements called building blocks (Figure 1).

According to Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010), the key resources correspond to the necessary resources needed to create value for the customer. They are tangible (employee, physical) or intangible (financial, intellectual). The key activities or operations executed within the firm, the core activities. The one that are done outside the firm’s boundaries, are part of the partner network building block. This is every type of partnership and relationship created between the firm and another company. It can be a buyer or a supplier, but also, sometimes, competitors. Those three components are part of the firm’s infrastructure and specific to the company. Then, Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010) mentioned four following components in relation with the offer to the customer. The value proposition, first, is what the business offers on the market as a product or service to meet the needs of its customers. This offer is designed for a specific type of people, the
customers. The way the value proposition is delivered to those customers is called the channels (from stores to online advertisements). The goal for the company is to maintain a good customer relationship with their customers. Finally, Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010) presented a finance aspect to this business model canvas. The company needs to figure out the way it will earn incomes from its customers, the revenue stream, and what kind of expenses it will have (fixed costs or variable costs), the cost structure. A more simplified definition of business models considers not nine blocks but only three. Scholars agree on the overall definition of BM based on the three basic following interdependent attributes: value proposition, value creation and value capture (Bocken et al., 2014; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2002; Wirtz et al., 2016) presented in Figure 2. Rappa (2001) even limits business model to a generation of revenue since he defined it “as the method of doing business by which the company can sustain itself - that is, generate revenue”. In the same line than those authors, we will focus in this thesis on those three. Value proposition can be seen as what is offered to the various parties involved (customers or partners), value creation is the way the product or service is developed within the company, whereas value capture focuses on the cost-structure and the revenue stream of the business (Johnson et al., 2017).

![Figure 2. Conceptual business model framework (Bocken et al., 2014)](image)

We focused here on the essentialist view, but it is not the only view. Business model can also be seen through the functions of a business and answer “how does the firm do business”. This is called the functionalist view. Instead of looking at what is a company, this approach tries to understand what concretely do business models (Blank, 2012). The latter view, pragmatic or performative (Doganova & Eyquem-Renault, 2009) considers business models as dynamic representations. Performative, by definition, means that the action of using the name constitutes the action of the performance itself. Thus, business models appear as narrative tool that describes the action of doing business. But for reason of clarity and simplification of our subject, we decided to follow the first view.

### 3.1.2. Business models and internet users

The digitally world did not change the framework, but it lead to many reconfigurations of the business model, putting the spotlights on value capture and value creation. Firstly, with the invention of the Internet, the different possibilities of value capture, or payment model, arouses more and more the interest of scholars (Chesbrough & Rosenbloom, 2002, p.534). Since the Internet has led to shrinking costs of computing and communication, the cost of information decreased (Teece, 2010). This allowed the development of new ways to create and deliver value. As an example, Anderson (2008) demonstrated that the web managed to bring close to zero the marginal costs of technology that individual consumes thus leading to the creation of free business models. As emphasized by Wirtz et al. (2010, p.278), companies benefit from the active users in different ways. The more user is attracted, the more value user added to the platform. This is called the network effect (Economide, 1996) and is based on the fact that the more a consumer will buy a
good, the more the other users will buy the same good and this triggers a domino effect. Secondly, this network effect of added value shows that, with the digitalization, the customer certainly became a source of revenue but at the same time he also became a source of firm’s value creation (Priem et al., 2013). Usually mainly focused on the value capture, researchers also focused on the consumer and its value creation (Priem et al., 2013; Zott et al., 2011) as part of the demand-side research (Priem et al., 2017). This is a shift from a producer-centric to a more consumer-centric business model (Teece, 2010). The customer acquisition becomes then a key in the business model strategy. This network effect prioritized value-creation strategy for customer over the value-capture one (Amit & Han, 2017). Moreover, since the reduction of information asymmetry and the raise in transparency between the different partners were allowed by the Internet, another stream of literature even goes further. Scholars in analyzing the potential to include user in the value creation process introduced the concept of value co-creation. As expressed by Amit & Han (2017) the digitization led firms to access resources outside their boundaries in using the resources of their partners. Thereby, the authors emphasized on the need for those company to co-create with their partners. The value creation involves now a broader range of partners, including their customers (Amit & Zott, 2012; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). The consumer becomes even an instigator of the business model innovation process. Prahalad & Ramaswamy (2004) explained the shift toward a co-creation value process and deeply believed that the future of competition is based on “an individual-centered co-creation of value between consumers and companies”. The literature seems to suggest the importance for companies to take into consideration the consumer point of view to change the business model.

3.1.3. Web 2.0 and SNS’ business model

We can assume that this impulse towards a consumer-centric view of business model was also due to the arrival of web 2.0 and social network sites. They changed “the rules of the ‘create and capture value’ game” (Wirtz et al., 2010, p.272) and transformed the consumer’s very nature from consumer to producer (Cova et al., 2011; Enders et al., 2008).

The web 2.0 has empowered the consumers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The concept of web 2.0 was introduced by O’Reilly (2005) and defined as a platform where content is modified by the user itself. Hence, the applications specific to the web 2.0 facilitate collaboration among users and allow them to interact with each other. The web 2.0 changed the way people use the Internet especially with the development of social network sites. These “services allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list” (boyd & Ellison, 2007). The most well-known SNS is Facebook which was created in 2004. As emphasized by Ellison et al. (2007, p. 1144), SNS generated an offline to online trend and relationship, meaning that you would add people you met online to talk to them online, and thus served “geographically-bound” communities, mainly on university campus. It allows to connect with former or new relations. SNS is also one type of social media among micro-blogging, forums, podcasts, blogs and so on (Mayfield, 2008, p.6). Mayfield (2008) defined the social media by five distinct characteristics: participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness. For the author this means that everybody can take part by commenting or sharing information, it is a free access resources to find all type of information. Users can find people with the same interests and create communities and whereas traditional media, it encourages the two-way-conversation. As an online media,
SNS changed also the way people, and especially Millennials, consume journalism or radio (Kilian et al., 2012). Those platforms informed about news that could also be found in traditional media.

Web 2.0 thus leads to new types of services and respectively new types of e-business models (Vuori, 2011; Wirtz et al., 2010). A special categorization concerned connecting/networking applications. SNS are therefore part of this categorization. They have different business models and, as it is our focus, various possibilities to make money. Wirtz et al. (2010) is the only one to include the revenue stream within its categorization. Their connected-oriented business generate revenue through online advertising, subscription, time-based billing or volume-based billing but also indirect revenue sources. Likewise, Enders et al. (2018) interested themselves to the value created for the customer by SNS and how this value was converted in a sustainable revenue stream. Those authors listed three different type of model. The advertising model, the subscription model and the transaction model are summarized in the Figure 3. The first model which is based on advertisements appears to be the most ubiquitous one among the SNS and is the one currently used by Facebook. The subscription model consists in charging a subscription fee to access the service (partially or totally). LinkedIn developed a business model called Freemium and situated between those two first models. Finally, the transaction model is the reception of a fee in exchange from a transaction. What is interesting in Enders et al.’s (2018) model is that the revenue depends on the users, their willingness to pay and their trust as described in Figure 3.

![Figure 3: Revenue model of SNS (Enders et al., 2018, p.206)](attachment:figure3.png)

3.1.4. The data monetization proceeded by Facebook

Users share more and more information online about themselves and spend more time online, especially on SNS, Facebook included. This phenomenon was conceptualized and discussed by Wirtz et al. (2010). It is described as the user-added value concept and more precisely the user-generated content phenomena (Wirtz et al., 2010, p.278). Users of the web 2.0 became content producer. This user-generated content, or UGC, is defined as any form of content produced by users themselves and available on online platforms. It can
take the form of texts, images, Likes, posts or shares (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p.62). The UGC did not appear with the web 2.0 as emphasized by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) but became an economic actor thanks to the web 2.0. The content on the Internet was previously provider-generated. The advent of the web 2.0 operated a shift towards user-generated content in the early 2005. The economy attention literature analyzed this business of UGC as a two-sided market configuration (Kessous, 2015, p.78). One one side, the creation of UGC by social media user is presented by Kessous (2015) as the participatory attention economy. On the other side, the market attention economy is defined as the collect of UGC by brand to target the more accurately possible the user and to get the more attention. The competition between businesses thus results in the modalities to capture attention, and to capture value that the user created since the attention and the data are the new value. As shown by Kessous (2015), the SNS business model relies on the fact that users get free access to services but in this case, their content is financed by advertising.

But the data gathered by the SNS became a source of revenue for SNS, especially for advertising models such as Facebook. As explained by Esteve (2017), Facebook processes and classifies the private data of its users to provide branded companies the most efficient tools to target customers. According to the author, two types of advertising exist on Facebook: contextual advertising, which is the simple placement of commercial ads within the content of a web page, but also remarketing advertising, which shows ads for product previously viewed (Esteve, 2017, p.40). This latter is part of a big focus of the marketing literature which is the online behavioral advertising (OBA) and consists in monitoring user’s online behavior and using their data to target them with specific ads. Smith et al. (2011) showed that SNS were tools to collect “the data in order to illustrate a person’s life” which is called Life Logging. Likewise, Curran et al. (2011) demonstrated that SNS, like Facebook, are better than other advertising ways because they store information on their users. They can assure the businesses that if they pay, their advertising will reach specific targeted user.

This way of trading attention to third parties, so they can create targeted advertising, is linked with the trade of data operated between Facebook and third parties. This is defined as the data monetization. Personal data becomes, as shown by Esteve (2017), a source of economic value for one of the current biggest SNS, Facebook. It is also its main source of revenue as we explained it in our schema (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Explanation of Facebook’s data monetization
This data monetization could pose an ethical challenge within SNS business models because it is based on users’ private data, and thus, their privacy. But even if some scholars tried to understand the sustainability of business model (Joyce & Paquin, 2016, p.2) which can include an ethical aspect, ethics within business model literature has not directly been addressed. This is why we will use some parts of the ethic research area to structure the rest of our literature review.

3.2. Business ethics

3.2.1. Definition

The study of ethics within the market became more important over years (Papaoikonomou et al., 2011, p.197; Vitell, 2003). We are aware that other stakeholders are can affect the ethic within the market, as Chen & Baddam (2015) showed the importance of supplier selection for instance, but given our research, we will focus only on the relationship between customer and company.

3.2.2. Relationship between business ethics and consumer

Our focus is then to look at the consumer-firm relationship within the market ethic. Consumers are an essential stakeholder for companies since without them, organization will not survive (Crane & Matten, 2016). Thus, we will focus here on the ethical relationship between business and consumer. It is also crucial because as soon as there is an ethical violation, it goes public since the consumer stands outside of the company (which is not the case with the supplier for example) (Crane & Matten, 2016). When considering this consumer-business relationship in business ethics, there are two sides to consider (Figure 5).

![Figure 5. The study of ethics in the market place (Papaoikonomou et al., 2011)](image)

The two-sided relationship is based on trust, even if they are usually trying to act in their own interest, thus, unethical behavior by one of the party disrupts the relation (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

The business side is called business ethics. This means that the company needs to behave ethically according to ethical values and rules (Crane & Matten, 2016). It is defined as the research area that focuses on the relationship between firms and society and analyzes right or wrong behaviors of companies towards the society and its stakeholders. In our case, towards the consumer. Nonetheless, we consider that business have an ethical obligation towards the society that goes beyond following the laws, as Kilcullen & Kooistra (1999). We will not talk here about Corporate Social Responsibility, even if business ethics can also be regarded as the ethical perspective of CSR (Perrini et al., 2006) with the respect of ethical principles, codes of conduct and transparency. Within business ethics different facets emerge. Some researchers try to understand what could trigger unethical behavior and try to understand and define the reason behind ethical or unethical
behavior in the company organization like self-interest and decision-making processes (Brass et al., 1998). Those are ethical problems that concern the firm only. The ethical problems that mainly emerged in relationship with the consumer concern the marketing field (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001) as explained in Figure 5. More precisely, what seems problematic are marketing management and marketing mix (Crane & Matten, 2016). For example, deceptive and unpleasant advertising are seen unethical as the disclosure of information by marketing (Beaucamp & Bowie, 2004).

Concerning the consumer side, there are two streams of research that need to be considered. While the consumer ethics area studies the consumers perceptions and reactions towards unethical behaviors (from peers or company), ethical consumer behavior stands for the influence of social and environmental concerns within their decision process (Papaoikonomou et al., 2011, p.198). Since we want to explore in this study the perception of consumer, we will focus on consumer ethics. This later is about understanding the consumer perception and reaction towards unethical behavior. This means we need to observe what kind of behavior they have in a first place and try to understand why and what are their ethical value in a second place. We are aware that to consider a situation as unethical, consumers need to agree on their definition of ethics. But even if a consumer ethics scale has been designed by Vitell & Muncy (1992), Freestone & Mitchell (2004) explained that the Internet represents a new unethical behavior environment and that the four ethical dimensions defined by Vitell & Muncy (1992) cannot be applied there. To our knowledge, no other scholar has created a scale specific to the e-services or SNS. However, while asking questions to our respondents we were able to our respondent’s definition and degree of ethicality. Therefore, the purpose of this study here is not to create a scale to assess ethic online but to see the reactions of different people that may have different degree of ethicality and to observe similar or opposed reactions.

3.2.3. Consumer's response to unethical behavior

It is important in this part to specify the distinction between behavior, attitude and intention. Attitude is part of intention’s predictor, when intentions is one of the most important behavior’s predictors (Westaby, 2005, p. 2). So, attitude is like asking “what do you think or feel?”, the intention is “what are you going to do” and the behavior is “what did you do?”.

Studies usually showed that there is a real ethical concern among consumers (Fullerton et al., 1996; Vitell & Muncy, 1992). However, despite a general concern, the consumer responses to unethical corporate behavior seem to vary. Lindenmeier et al. (2012) state that there is an emotional response, an outrage, that can lead to boycott in some cases. Unethical corporate behavior can also influence the consumer perception of the product value (Creyer & Ross, 1996). Yet, usually the perception of the product is also linked with a brand engagement manifested by loyalty/reputation/satisfaction (Yang & Peterson, 2004; Wang, 2010). So, the unethical corporate behavior seems to have bad consequences for the firm in the consumer eyes. But, Guckian et al. (2018) by looking at Volkswagen Group scandal showed that they were some cases where the perception by the consumer of an unethical corporate behavior has little effect on the company. This scandal arouses because the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) discovered that Volkswagen placed a software that would change the cars performance when being test for carbon dioxide emissions (Hotten, 2015). For example, when scandals occur, some consumers assume that the corporate culture is “rotten” and will not engage with the brand again, whereas
some only consider that “only few bad apples” caused the scandal, thus have intentions to engage in the future. This is consistent with Boulstridge & Carrigan (2000) who confronted consumers to unethical corporate behaviors such as the Nestlé scandal. What has been demonstrated is that, even if the consumer knew about the unethical activity of the firm, some still continue to buy the products. A lot of them also did not give any consideration to CSR when buying products. This showed that consumers buy for personal reasons and not societal reasons, valuing things such as benefit, quality and prices. Overall, consumers lack on information about corporate behavior (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000). We summarized those consumers’ responses in Table 1.

But those responses seem paradoxical. As previously mentioned, consumers care about ethics, so why would they continue to buy product from firm that have unethical practices? There is here a paradox. This is a gap between the intention and the actual behavior of consumer (Caruana et al., 2016). The reason for such gap could be explained by the fact that for a consumer to feel engaged by issues, it needs to concern him directly (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). Fullerton et al. (1996) also try to explain why by establishing dimensions such as age, education and income, it influences the behavior. Another fact is that, consumers do not consider the same situation as unethical (Fullerton et al., 1996; Vitell & Muncy, 1992). Despite those different levels of unethical situation, Fullerton et al. (1996) come to the conclusion that the acceptance of an unethical behavior is situational and depend on social and economic factors, more than the reflection of a fixed attitude.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Purpose of the study</th>
<th>Type of unethical corporate behavior</th>
<th>Customer response and main findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lindenmeier et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Look how unethical corporate conduct affects consumer emotions. The authors focus on the boycotting behavior</td>
<td>All type</td>
<td>Unethical corporate conduct results in consumer outrage, negative emotional reaction that can lead in certain situation to boycott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creyer &amp; Ross (1996)</td>
<td>See how unethical behavior can influence the perceived value of a firm's products</td>
<td>Hypothetical company B conducts misleading advertising in stating that its breakfast cereals reduce the risk to develop heart disease when it has never been proved</td>
<td>Those corporate unethical conduct are usually not likely unpunished, even if the response is not as extreme as a boycott of the product. The consumers decrease in general the price they are willing to pay for the product. This is consistent with Creyer (1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guckian et al. (2018)</td>
<td>Discover how corporate wrongdoing affects consumers' willingness to engage with companies after a scandal</td>
<td>As part of Volkswagen diesel emissions scandal</td>
<td>Consumer will engage further with the brand if they believe that the wrongdoing where linked with few people of the firm. Otherwise, if they think unethical behavior is part of the culture, they will not. Trust and anger appeared as important feelings that firm should take into consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schmatz &amp; Orth (2012)</td>
<td>Analyze the relationship between brand attachment and the consumer response to firm's ethical missteps</td>
<td>Moderate unethical behavior (not extreme)</td>
<td>Strongly attached consumers do respond as negatively as weakly attached consumers when the behavior is extremely negative. However, close consumer-brand relationship protects in general the firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulstridge &amp; Carrigan (2000)</td>
<td>The investigation of consumer attitudes and behavior towards corporate reputation (linked with ethical behavior)</td>
<td>All type</td>
<td>People are not aware of companies' behavior. Regarding their overall response, the consensus is that consumer would have difficulties to boycott a firm of which they like the product. In general, the corporate behavior does not affect the purchasing decision of consumer in this study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Literature summary, consumer’s response to unethical corporate behavior.
3.3. Ethical issues of SNS business model and their users’ responses

Our gap showed that even if literature exists on consumer response to online behavioral advertising (OBA), which is one consequence of SNS trade of data and poses certain ethical issues, we did not find any literature on our specific topic which is the consumer perception of SNS trade of data as such. Thus, we will look at this existing literature and understand what the reactions of consumers are. In this section, we are going to show that scholars have demonstrated that the use of online behavioral advertising by SNS is problematic and harm the privacy right of the users. Thus, the first part will be about the OBA literature and the consumer response towards this practice. We will see that it is linked with a privacy infringement from a consumer perspective. Therefore, the second part will present the consumer response when their privacy is infringed.

3.3.1. Ethical issues of behavioral marketing, direct consequence of their data trade

Online behavioral advertising (OBA), also called online behavioral ad targeting can track users across websites to get users’ interests and preferences (Toubiana et al., 2010). OBA is overall seen as a source of privacy harm by the researchers and consumers (Leon et al., 2015; McDonald & Cranor, 2010). Consumers are globally unwilling to share content with advertisers except if it is used in a positive way or if it is really relevant for them (Leon et al., 2015, p.6; Ur et al., 2012). This supposes that consumers know the way their data are used, which is not the case (Evans, 2009, p. 54). That highlights consumers’ misunderstanding towards behavioral advertising (Ur et al., 2012). Leon et al. (2015) also found an unwillingness for some users to pay for their privacy because it is seen as an extortion. Consumer-generated ads usually create a mixed feeling response.

When looking at the literature that focuses on SNS, most of the customer attitudes’ studies conducted focuses on the perceptions of the brands that communicate on Facebook and not the perceptions of the platform itself. Online engagement of users with brands on Facebook is a big topic of discussion in the interactive advertising literature (Tsai & Men, 2013). Although, one part of the literature deals with the consumer’s response to targeted advertising on SNS. The findings show how the personalization of advertising has positive effect on consumer response (De Keyzer et al., 2015; Tucker, 2014), as marketing response, but not the understanding and reasoning of the consumer on OBA. Thus, the implications of such researches were managerial-oriented and helped advertisers to stimulate user’s engagement and better target their interests. They were not oriented towards customer interest. It is only recently that the researcher interested themselves in the consumer reactions, as in reasoning, towards targeted advertising online. Few, like McDonald & Cranor (2010), analyzed the internet user’s understanding of OBA. With their quantitative study, McDonald & Cranor (2010) interestingly came to the conclusion that there is a “a gap between people’s willingness to pay to protect their privacy and their willingness to accept discounts in exchange for private information”.

This echoes the privacy paradox. This study was not particularly made for SNS but for online services, thereby, the privacy paradox seems to appear for any kind of e-services. Despite the gap, respondents would prefer random ads to tailored ads. Only few would pay to avoid ads. According to the others, marketer would anyway access their data, thus they do not see any point in paying. The majority also think that privacy is a right they do not need to pay for.
3.3.2. Consumer’s response to privacy infringement on SNS

As presented by Turculet (2014), ethical issues on SNS concern the information privacy defined by Moore (2008) as the control someone is holding on its personal data, thoughts but also behavior when using the internet. The online privacy literature is very wide when applied to SNS. A lot of threats are present on social media such as disclosure of personal information, unwanted contact, gossip or harassment and even stalking, use of personal data by third parties or simply identity theft (boyd & Ellison, 2007). But since this study focuses on the business model and business ethics part, the online privacy literature will not be reviewed in its totality and we will give a particular focus on the online privacy infringement made by companies.

Consumer privacy is defined by Culnan (1993) when people can control the disclosure of information about their lives. The author adds that, when this control is lost or unwillingly reduced, this is considered as an invasion of privacy. The authors investigated the consumer attitudes toward secondary data use, which is in the center of our subject. In view of this definition, the use of private data by Facebook for advertising and marketing purposes has been shown by scholars as an invasion of consumer privacy. A lot of studies observed that consumers have been highly concerned about their privacy (Acquisti & Grossklags, 2005; Norberg et al., 2007). In 2010 a Facebook’s security glitch appeared as the result of the accidental release of users’ personal information supposed to be private (Chang & Heo, 2014). More than a simple invasion, one of the biggest concerns in the eyes of the consumers is the misuse of their information and the threat of third parties that are not part of their networks but still can access the data (Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Debatin et al., 2009). Acquisti & Gross (2006) explain that respondents are not really concerned by the type of information they share since they believe to have a certain control on it. However, what concerns them is that they cannot control the use of their data when it is detained by a third party. This is consistent with the findings of Krombholz et al. (2012). Authors established that the data-sharing model of the Web 2.0 services was different from traditional Web applications, thus, users were often unaware who they were giving information to. More generally, consumers are confused on the use of their data online (Acquisti et al., 2016). “In digital economies, consumers' ability to make informed decisions about their privacy is severely hindered because consumers are often in a position of imperfect or asymmetric information regarding when their data is collected, for what purposes, and with what consequences” (Acquisti et al., 2016, p.477). Hull (2015) went even further and stated that, in the case where there is an information asymmetry situation on SNS and Facebook, the consumer does not consent to something he is aware of, thus it is not possible to talk about a full consent because there is a misunderstood of the use of their data.

As shown by many scholars, the consequence of those privacy concerns among Facebook users lead to different behaviors. First, reluctant to reveal personal information on the site, some of the users also closed their Facebook accounts to boycott the way the platform uses their data as a trade good. As explained by Hull (2015), it is also possible that there is a nonverbal resistance to disclose private information, especially on Facebook, with the use of AdBlock and the deletion of cookies for instance. Privacy settings, privacy awareness and trust are in the center of SNS literature (boyd & Ellison, 2008; Debatin et al., 2009; Ellison et al., 2007). Benndorf & Normann (2017) discovered within their sample that only few of the SNS users were really concerned. Marreiros et al. (2017) highlighted that people were not unaware but inattentive and concluded that if privacy issues were more widely present in the public debate, online users will be more careful regarding the kind of information they decide to disclose.
But an interesting question is usually raised when talking about SNS privacy. Do people who have a Facebook account have any claim to privacy when willingly posting and thus revealing information about themselves? Indeed, despite privacy concerns, users still adopt an opposite behavior in disclosing personal data on their profiles. This privacy paradox has been largely described by scholars in SNS literature (Kokolakis, 2015; Norberg et al., 2007; Utz & Krämer, 2009). This is symptomatic of the tension between perceived privacy risks and expected benefits (Debatin et al., 2009). This tension is the privacy calculus theory that explains how individuals make a trade between the cost of disclosing personal information and the benefits in return, such as the free access to services (Krasnova et al., 2012). Culnan & Armstrong (1999) showed that this phenomenon was essentially based on trust, and on a company’s policy judged fair by the consumers. It can also be the desire for social interaction by SNS’ users that exceeds their concerns about privacy and disclosure of personal data (Debatin et al., 2009). This privacy paradox can also be seen as the result of the information asymmetry (Acquisti & Grossklags, 2005; Hull, 2015). This paradox explains why people trade private data. But researchers also try to understand the willingness to sell private data. Benndorf & Normann (2017) discovered in leading a controlled laboratory experiment that there is a notable difference between user’s willingness to sell their data, and specifically Facebook data. According to the authors, some could sell their data up to 19€ whereas few showed an absolute refusal in selling their personal data. Their experiment was the first to explore any willingness to sell from a SNS (Benndorf & Normann, 2017, p.17). Scholers also looked at the different types of data users would be willing to share for free (Prince, 2018). This is consistent with the desire of Baden et al. (2009) to design an online social network with user-defined privacy instead of platform-defined privacy as it is the case on Facebook, thus meaning that the user themselves could define their privacy criteria and will not need to tick an already implemented box, with default proposal.

3.3.3. **Consumer’s attitude towards Facebook data monetization**

The latest Cambridge Analytica scandal (2018) shows clearly the ethical issues that Facebook’s revenue stream presents from a consumer perspective. Thus, our study by analyzing the consumer perception of Facebook’s revenue stream is analyzing at the same time the consumer perception of an unethical corporate behavior. As we described, scholars tried to understand the attitudes and perceptions of SNS’ users towards the targeted and behavioral marketing, on the one hand, and towards the use of private data, on the other hand. Both being consequences of Facebook’s data monetization, it shows that our topic has been touched upon but not directly treated. This gap is summarized in Table 2.
3.4. Summary of theoretical framework

In terms of business model, we are focusing on the value capture and value proposition and we presented the data monetization of SNS which consists in earning money from user’s private data.

Then, we presented the literature on consumers’ responses towards unethical corporate behavior. Usually, while facing an unethical corporate behavior, people tend to opt for different behaviors from boycott to disregard. It is less important for them when they do not feel concern.

Finally, from the consumer perspective, we showed the ethical issues of SNS’ OBA which deals mainly with the infringement of privacy. As OBA is part of Facebook’s data monetization, we could possibly assume that the data monetization of Facebook lead to ethical issues, from the user perspective. And the Cambridge Analytica Scandal validated that the data monetization, main revenue stream of Facebook, could be seen as an unethical practice by the users.

Our study by analyzing the consumer perception of Facebook’s business model, and more specifically revenue stream, is at the same time analyzing the consumer perception of a possible unethical corporate behavior. This explain why those two literature areas, business model and business ethics, are explored within the literature review. We saw that the current literature lacks knowledge on e-business ethics, business model ethics and consumers’ perception of Facebook’s revenue stream. Therefore, we aim to fill this gap.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hull (2015)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McDonald &amp; Cranor (2010)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquisti et al. (2016)</td>
<td>●</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuinan &amp; Armstrong</td>
<td>●</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boyd &amp; Ellison (2007)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debatin et al. (2009)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Current literature on SNS’ customer attitude towards data monetization consequences


4. PRACTICAL METHODOLOGY

In this part, we describe our data collection for our qualitative study. Then, the data analysis we decided to use will be described. We close this chapter with our quality criteria of the study.

4.1. Data Collection

4.1.1. Data Collection Method

To collect our data, we decided to conduct three focus groups composed of four to five people each. Focus groups are a method that consists in a group interview with four to eight people, letting the researchers observe how people respond to each other and what are the several points of view on a specific issue (Bryman et al., 2011, p.310). We choose this data collection method for two main reasons. First of all, focus group allows us, the researchers, to let people discuss about the issue we defined and potentially lead them to tackle the topic under an innovative perspective. Focus groups are a method that is used “in the context of participatory and action research, with the intent to empower and to foster social change” (Puchta & Potter, 2004, p.7). And this corresponds exactly to the goals we aim to reach by the end of the study. Therefore, it will help us bringing new points of view and rich feedbacks, especially as we want to give recommendations to companies (Bryman et al., 2011, p.311). We decided to use focus group with a questioning route. The most important reason which justified this choice lies in the fact that we are investigating perceptions, consequently, opinions and view. By talking about an issue through focus groups, the interviewees may want to add something to one of the others’ responses while arguing about a topic, even if at the first place, he or she did not want to say something (Bryman et al., 2011, p.311). Each interviewee will have his or her own way of thinking and the opportunity to confront it with other participants. Even if we had six questions to ask regarding a specific topic, we wanted to let people express their perceptions about the use of their private data in order to access a free service, more importantly without influencing them in a direction or in another as Bryman et al. (2011) explained. Furthermore, this permits free expressed thoughts as it can lead the discussion to innovative perspectives we haven’t thought so far or bring new ideas useful for the recommendations we want to address to companies. Thus, this will let us collect data based on every participant’s opinion but also based on a confrontation between all of the participants, enriching all arguments and opinions about the themes we choose. Secondly, focus groups offer us the opportunity to analyze how people are building their mind about an issue. In other words, we will investigate a social phenomenon by studying how people interact with each other’s on a topic that concerns them all (Bryman et al., 2011, p.312). The interaction among them will reflect what SNS users may think and we will get more in-depth material to work on and make the most relevant analysis of it.

An alternative we considered was to lead semi-structured interviews. However, such a type of data collection method may have serious assets, such as letting the interviewee structures his or her answers as he or she wants. Yet, this would not have let us understand how people react while listening to another argument or point of view because they would have been influenced by the interviewer (Newton, 2010, p.5). And this remains a very important input needed for the purpose of our study.
4.1.2. Interview Guide

In order to conduct focus groups, there are two possibilities: either we follow the Topic Guide or the Questioning Route (Morgan & Krueger, 1998, p.9). The topic guide “is a list of topics or issues to be pursued in the focus group”. Actually, it consists in just a group of sentences and questions that must play the role of governing principle, such as “impression of customer service or describe poor service” (Morgan & Krueger, 1998, p.9). The questioning route is more the complete questions that must be asked, being more accurate by asking the exact same questions to the several focus groups, letting us analyze their ideas based on the same questions and understanding of the questions. It minimizes the differences “that could alter the intent” (Morgan & Krueger, 1998, p.9). In order to conduct our focus groups, we drew on our three sub-purposes which will help us collecting data and going through all the aspects of the research question.

The first sub-purpose consists in understanding how people actually use Facebook and know more about how they share data online. Therefore, the open questions we will asked will referred to the frequency people use Facebook, what are the main things people are sharing and publishing on the social networking site. We will also be able to analyze at this point of the focus group if they are aware of Facebook’s privacy policy.

After that, for our second sub-purpose, we will interview people more specifically about a part of Facebook’s business model. The objective is to get a deeper understanding about how people reason about the general principle of having a free registration in exchange of their private data, do they reason for or against it. We will ask them questions regarding the trade of private data and push the conversation if needed on the scandal that weakened Facebook during last March or on unethical behavior of firms.

For our third and final sub-purpose, after having questioning them about Facebook’s revenue model and having in mind that now they know more about the process of it, we want to understand if this will affect their behavior regarding the share of private data online and if their opinion about Facebook has changed. By asking them an open question about that, we will try to understand whether the business model Facebook has implemented so far can be a reason for customers to leave the social networking site for another one or not. Such responses and opinions’ confrontations will help us designing recommendations for the current theoretical framework, but also for SNS companies that may face citizens’ actions such Facebook with the movement on digital media #DeleteFacebook.

Thereby, four themes are present in our focus group guideline: the use and perception of Facebook, the understanding of Facebook’s business model, their feeling on the data monetization and ethical issues of the business model and finally, their response to Facebook’s behavior and their possible change of behavior.

In this view, we drew six questions (see Appendix n°1), combining opening questions as well as introductory and key questions. The opening questions was drawn more in the optic of getting slowly the participants to make them think about the issue (Morgan & Krueger, 1998, p.22) and do not afraid them. Our transition questions were more here to guide them gently towards the topic of data monetization, to talk about every aspect before and not let them speak about one issue only. Therefore, in parallel to these, we drew “push questions” in case of the interviewees needed some more support to go deeper in their thoughts and argues.
4.1.3. Selection of respondents and conducting the focus groups

We used two different methods to gather students from a purposive sampling and students from a snowball sampling. A convenience sampling consists in seeking people based on criteria the researchers already defined earlier, as linked to the study or the research question (Center for Innovation in Research and Training). For our study, and based on Facebook’s users profile, we selected students between 18 to 28 years old, without nationality distinction, and this corresponds to the criteria we had to respect. There are three main reasons which explain our choice.

First of all, students use Facebook on a daily basis (Debatin et al., 2009, p.96), and we are both students in this age rank directly concerned with the issue of our data monetization.

Secondly, it has been studied that the core population of Facebook includes people from 18 to 37 years old from nationalities all over the world (Statistica, 2018). The Y generation, that is to say people aged between 18 to 37 years old (Stanimir, 2015, p.24) is the core population using Facebook and social media in general (Noyes, 2018). The use of the latter SNS within Business School for instance became almost obligatory, as we experienced this daily. We both use it every day for private and professional matters. It is a channel used to conduct group works, to stay in touch with our family and friends, but is also used to get the latest news articles or videos we can’t find while watching regular TV shows. The society in general also benefits from it, as people are communicating with each other, and thus, even if they are all over the world. However, all these effects are not only positive. Within the society for instance, people became addicted to social media and digital supports in general. 50% of people aged between 18 to 24 years old go on Facebook when they wake up (Noyes, 2018) and an average person is spending 116 minutes a day on social media (Sun, 2017). And with the emergence of SNS and content sharing platforms, such as Facebook, MySpace of LinkedIn, users’ privacy can be abused as Siddiqui & Singh (2016) highlighted it. This privacy takes place when there are too many advertisements directly targeting the users. For instance, who didn’t see plane companies’ advertisements just after having googled such a theme on the Internet? Another important topic concerns the marketing area. Advertisements are invading more people’s life every year (Johnson, 2014). There is also the problem of using private data to create personalized content to catch consumers’ attention, which is defined under the attention of economy. This new economy presents the advantage of sending content to users so that they do not lose time going through everything. But on the other hand, the use of private data to generate personalized data arises the question of strongly influencing people in order to encourage people to purchase items or services they have never thought about in a first place.

Finally, people aged from 18 to 28 are part of the Y generation. And as Obal & Kunz (2013) explained it, the Y generation or Millennials represents the population that believes the most in brands and loyalty online in comparison with Baby Boomers, who value the privacy. It seems then interesting to look at those privacy matters through the eyes of the Millennials also because, as part of the main Facebook’s users, their mistrust could let to economic problems for the firm. We assume that, like any other business, SNS need the trust of their consumers and when the more people are registered, the more people want to join it to be part of the network and the more the platform collects private data and generates revenue from it. This phenomenon is also call network effect (Economide, 1996). By targeting international people, from this age rank, we will collect
data from the most important customers segment Facebook has so far. Letting us be the more relevant possible in our final contributions, both theoretically and practically. We did not specify which nationality we wanted to have in our focus groups because we wanted to mix students according to their study area and country. The reason behind this lies in the fact that we consider the people using Facebook to come from all over the world and also because all user is concerned with the privacy issues on SNS.

As living full-time on the Umeå campus, we talked face-to-face to students, as we live with students full-time in corridors, mixing students from different ages, nationalities, backgrounds and studies. Some of them were our friends, it facilitates then the opportunity to create focus groups. But we also published posts on Facebook (see Appendix n°2) asking people to volunteer for our study and help us gathering data. The post was published on the Facebook group gathering all the international students currently studying in Umeå, but also published it on our former class’ Facebook group. For the first semester, we were actually 35 students enrolled in the same program and courses. We do know that, by using our friends and our former classmates who studied business as well, we are aware they do not represent all Facebook’s users. But our purpose is not to generalize, and we think it would be interesting to gather international and business students. The main reason why is because our topic is related to a business model and international students use Facebook a lot to communicate when they are abroad but also because they have friends in several places in the world.

Within our post on the social media, we created a link to a Doodle to let them fill their availabilities according to others. Once we knew that, we were able to create the different focus groups and to contact every member to set up the meeting. We also asked people to let us know if they had friends not using Facebook anymore or friends who never used it, and who could participate to our study. This corresponds to the second type of sample we used, the snowball sampling (Center for Innovation in Research and Training), letting us reach people who are not easy to find outside famous SNS as Facebook and providing us with an interesting analysis on the studies topic.

4.1.4. Participant Description
We summarized the main information regarding the focus groups in the following table. It describes which focus group the interviewee belonged to, his or her age, his or her nationality, the contact medium, the length of the focus group and the date of registration on Facebook of the interviewee. In order to keep the interviewees’ participation anonymous, we attributed to each of them a code, “R” for respondent, and a number, from 1 to 13 (Table 3).

We decided to mix all nationalities and not having focus groups with a majority of one origin. This diversity is a necessary tool for not having people following the general trend. It is an opportunity to have vigorous talks and multiple opinion about the same topic among a group of participants (Puchta & Potter, 2004, p.121). Thus, people were able to think deeper about each other’s opinion and feed the discussion. Moreover, this encourages people to speak their mind and leading stimulating talks, letting us have the opportunity to observe their reactions as well as deep argues. Hence our role, as moderators, to lead these possible tensions to creative and insightful talks among the participants (Puchta & Potter, 2004, p.121), and thus for us to analyze later.
Table 3. Participants to the focus groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nb. Resp</th>
<th>Nb. FG</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Contact medium</th>
<th>Length FG</th>
<th>Regist. on FB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>28 y.o</td>
<td>Zimbabwean</td>
<td>Facebook post</td>
<td>74’52 min</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26 y.o</td>
<td>South-African</td>
<td>Facebook post</td>
<td>74’52 min</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26 y.o</td>
<td>German-Mexican</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>74’52 min</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>24 y.o</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Facebook post</td>
<td>74’52 min</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26 y.o</td>
<td>German-Italian</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>51’17 min</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>23 y.o</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Facebook post</td>
<td>51’17 min</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>25 y.o</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>Facebook post</td>
<td>51’17 min</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>25 y.o</td>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>51’17 min</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>24 y.o</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>65’31 min</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>25 y.o</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>65’31 min</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>24 y.o</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Facebook post</td>
<td>65’31 min</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>23 y.o</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>Facebook post</td>
<td>65’31 min</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>24 y.o</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>65’31 min</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.5. Conducting

The context and the location of each focus groups when conducted remain a vital part when collecting the data. The participants must feel confident and comfortable to speak freely and spontaneously (Sobrepeerez, 2008, p.182). Therefore, as we wanted to get people’s perceptions about a sensitive topic, we asked them to participate in a focus groups that would take place at the café at Umeå School of Business and Economics. As we wanted to get a deeper understanding of their perception about our topic, we wanted to make it official and to not organize them in a corridor we are living in. All of the three focus groups have been conducted in English, as there were international students participating.

By offering a free Fika, the traditional Swedish coffee break, we put people in a cozy situation, but still keeping it official at the same time by being gathered on the campus and making sign the consent form. Arranging the place where the focus group will be conducted remains important for the moderators as well as for the participants (Morgan & Krueger, 1998, p.13). We arranged the chairs in a circle with a table in the middle so to not exclude anyone and make the place comfortable by having the beverage and the croissants easily accessible. At the Lindellhalen Café, where we sat, there were students coming and going, but also others sitting next to us. However, none of them distracted us from our conversations, everyone talked as we usually do among us.
Before the beginning of any focus groups, we distributed a consent form where the topic of the study, its purpose as well as their agreement were described (see Appendix n°3). Then, we made them sign a paper stipulating their consent explaining we will record the focus group, note remarks and collect personal data. Then we introduced the focus group (Morgan & Krueger, 1998, p.21), the overview of the topic and the people who are present, even if they knew each other, so to break the ice. Then we explained the guidelines of a focus group. We also detailed the role of the moderators who are only here to ask the questions (Morgan & Krueger, 1998, p.23) and if necessary, re-orientate the talks. The objective again is to let the participants talk about a specific issue without influencing them by saying too many things or by being too accurate about an aspect of a subject. So, to collect “unique wisdom and valuable insights” (Morgan & Krueger, 1998, p.4).

When drawing the six questions we would ask during the focus groups, we knew that each focus group would last between 40 minutes to 75 minutes. And actually, the three focus groups lasted 45 minutes, 65 minutes and 75 minutes. However, we warned people that it could last two hours, in case of they might have other activities planned after the focus group. The fact is that we didn’t fix a time limit because the interests of a focus groups precisely lies in the possibility of exploring further and deeper an argue of one of the participants. Making the focus group a situation in which concentrated and targeted data are gathered, and not constantly repeated as it would have been the case if we would have led thirteen interviews instead of three focus groups (Sobreperez, 2008, p.185).

While conducting the focus group, we decided to take notes and find it relevant as, contrary to the audio recording, researchers are able to observe and identify reactions and emotions about a topic, or notice how people say it (Bryman et al., 2011, p.290). In order to gain time and put more effort in analyzing the content, we decided while listening to the focus groups to record it with our phone to be sure to save everything and not forget parts of the discussion. But one of us also took notes during the focus groups to take the most relevant arguments people may have said during the discussion and start at the same time the selection and analysis. Therefore, as one of us was asking the questions and the other taking notes, one researcher was not distracted by taking notes (Bryman et al., 2011, p.291) and at the same time looking at the participants to catch their reactions. Each of us, the researchers, has a specific role to make the first step of the analysis easier. We tried not to interfere and not getting involved in the discussion, otherwise the risk would be to influence people’s opinion (Morgan & Krueger, 1998, p.6). We only asked our questions or push questions when people started to talk about something irrelevant for our study or if we needed to boost the discussion again.

4.2. Data analysis

Our study uses an inductive approach. Thus, the data analysis consists in the exploration of the collected data and the observation of patterns or themes among those data (Saunders et al., 2009, p.490). After each focus group, we were able to already analyze a big part of the arguments and reorganize the ideas according to the several themes we have identified within the data. However, to be sure that we haven’t forgotten anything, we both listened to the recordings three times and we both filed the first paper on which notes have been taken during the focus groups. Therefore, we were able to keep “intact” interviewee’s intervention (Bryman et al., 2011, p.291) and to analyze in a deep way themes people brought up and could have eventually been forgotten during the live transcription.
We decided to conduct a thematic network analysis based on Attride-Stirling’s (2001) model (Figure 6). Firstly, because it allows to visually explain the patterns and categories between data. Secondly, Nowell et al. (2017) used a thematic network analysis, Braun & Clarke’s (2006) model, to conduct trustworthy qualitative research and as our study aims to answer the quality criteria of Guba & Lincoln (1985), it seemed logical to pursue such process. Also, the subject of our thesis has never been studied, thus it is important for us to come back the more often possible to the data collection, which is allowed with thematic network analysis as explained by Nowell et al. (2017). To use this technique, themes need to be developed. Empirically grounded, they will lead to our thematic network analysis and are going to be redefined according to our sub-purposes. They are the titles of the data collection sections for each focus group.

The process that lead to such map is divided in six steps according to Attride-Stirling (2001, p.391). Step 1 is a coding phase that helps to reduce the data. The data are classified in small units first. Qualitative research, and specifically focus-group study, conducted within an inductive approach tends to generate an important quantity of data (Saunders et al., 2009, p.508). Since the qualitative data collection needs to be rich and deep, it generates an important volume of material. While analyzing the data collected, we considered not only the words used by the respondents but also the situation and the intensity of their remarks; it would also be interesting for us to see if the respondents changed their opinion after the discussion as focus group foster interactions between the different respondents thus possibly leading to change of opinions (Morgan & Krueger, 1998, p.6). Therefore, few examples of our codes follow. When respondents seemed to be scared and to have apprehensions, we coded their intervention with “CONCERN”. Sentences such as “It’s really hard to trust Facebook about it” where interpreting by using codes like “TRUST IN QUESTION”. During step 2, themes are identified. Step 3 is the construction of the thematic networks. The themes are reviewed and refined to come up with the more appropriate ones. To refine them we looked at our sub-purposes. Then, once the themes are relevant enough, we defined the basic themes - last themes that appear on the map and are represented by squares with rounded edges - which are the first groups of codes. Then, we defined organizing themes - the circles connected to the global theme - they regroup different basic themes. The global theme, in the center of the network, is
the core point of the analysis. Step 4, 5 and 6 describe and explore the thematic network to find patterns. Concretely, we will for those last steps compare our empirical findings with the current literature. As this study is conducted under an inductivist approach, our purpose is to contribute to the current theory based on our data collection (Saunders et al., 2009, p.41). Nonetheless, we need to show how our findings match with the previous theories and literature (Saunders et al., 2009, p.61).

4.3. Quality Criteria of the Study

Once we are done with the data collection and once we have an analysis method in mind, we need to evaluate our analysis. To be certain about the quality of our study and drew relevant recommendations. And finally, to answer our research question properly. According to Guba & Lincoln (1985), there are four main criteria a study should be used to check the quality of our study. The last criteria which remains very important regarding our thesis is authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p.78), but this is included in our own ethical considerations. Therefore, its values, as transparency, neutrality and an educational and tactical perspectives, are developed in the research ethics we followed during the entire study.

4.3.1. Credibility

Guba & Lincoln (1985) explained that credibility is one of the criteria every study should respect. This criterion deals with how credible our data is and so, in the findings we got. Our topic embraces a constructivism position, and thus, is mainly concerned with how people view a social reality. And as Guba & Lincoln (1985) stated it, “these realities” can vary from a person to another. Therefore, as researchers, we have to make sure that the words from each participant are believable and credible. In order to achieve that, Guba & Lincoln (1982) advised us to choose a “persistent observation” to obtain a high quality of data and avoid irrelevant one, but also to use to several and different sources to cross-check them and be certain about it. We listened carefully to how people argued, what arguments they gave to support their analysis and if they contradicted themselves. Following Guba & Lincoln’s (1985) recommendations, we recorded participant’s ideas and talks as well as their reactions to one another’s responses to know when they might be some argues and really disagreement or agreement. And we looked to several sources while investigating the literature review and designing the theoretical framework and check if what has been said during the focus groups whether it is in contradiction with what has been read in research articles. So, to be as accurate as possible, especially as we aim to draw further recommendations to companies.

4.3.2. Transferability

Transferability can be defined as how it can be useful for someone else. The collected data comes from a convenience sample and thus, the results based on that sample can be used for another study, insofar as what we learn from it should be relevant for more people and not only for Facebook’s users between 18 to 28 years old and international students, but also for other SNS companies’ users and online business models in general. To respect this quality criteria for a qualitative study, Guba & Lincoln (1985) recommend to provide the study with a solid description about the sample and the participants involved in the study, its context. This is used to let the others judge about the transferability of our study. That’s why we described the paradigm and what position our study embraces. And that’s also why we explained thoroughly the context about our focus groups, such as the location
of it, the context in which it took place and how we tried to make everyone comfortable while talking about a sensitive topic.

4.3.3. Dependability
Dependability is about the reliability of the study, if it can “be repeatable under the same circumstances in another place and another time” (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p.247). And that’s why in order to meet this criterion, we detailed the choices, the structure of our thesis as well as our theoretical framework in a very understanding way. Every step from our thesis, from the methodology to the data collection process, has been explained. So, to let other researchers understand correctly what we had in mind and how we did it (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p.247).

4.3.4. Confirmability
The last criteria Guba & Lincoln (1982) advise us to use is confirmability. It consists in determining if our data interpretation is logical and if our findings accurate (Nowell et al., 2017, p.3). It also deals with “practicing reflexivity” (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p.248), that is to say, explain why we decided to investigate and look for a specific topic or assumption in a specific way. In other words, it is linked with neutrality, our own way of writing the thesis and the choices that has been made for the study. Hence our choice to conduct a deep and complete literature review as well as a broad choice of theory, in the view of letting our readers follow our logical thinking easily (Nowell et al., 2017, p.3). Having a clear governing principle will help the reader to verify each finding and each conclusion we make, and consequently, make the reader aware of our reasonable interpretations. That is the reason why we both combined and talked through our analysis of the focus groups and we both drew the recommendations. So, to avoid any misunderstanding and to make our findings more interesting and complete.

4.4. Research ethics
Ethic refers to “the moral values or principles” (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.30) that are at the core of every action that is taken. Within research studies, it goes from the topic, to the conclusions, going through the definitions of each important used term, the data collection method and its analysis. Ethics concerns are especially raised when researchers have to deal with participants, that is to say during the data collection method. As researchers, we have to be opened about what people say and explain, and do not influence the study in itself. That is to say, be aware of the possible bias or opinions we might have and do not integrate it in the study if it is not linked with the literature review or data collection. For this stage, Bell & Bryman (2007, cited in Collis & Hussey 2014, p.31) explain that there are 11 main principles every researcher should pay attention to.

Obviously, no harm to any participant has been intended during the entire study. And to prove that we are following this principle as well as the consent, privacy and confidentiality principles, we drew a consent form that we submitted to every participant before the beginning of every focus group. We wanted to be as transparent as possible with them, as they were willing to help us for our study (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.32). Neutrality and transparency, which can be found under another quality criteria, authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p.78) are also part of our ethical considerations all along our study. In this mind, we also guaranteed the participants we wouldn’t use any of the information they would give us for a wrong objective. And we also used our focus groups to raise the participants’ awareness regarding the data issue, reaching the
educational goal that belongs to the authenticity criteria. We wanted to be clear about our respect for their dignity in this process (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.31). That’s why we also told our participants and to potential participants on our Facebook post (see Appendix n°2) that their anonymity was guaranteed as well (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.31), especially as we recorded all debates and therefore have everything that has been said on the record. And all the records have been deleted once the thesis was over. It was explained again in the consent form (see Appendix n°3) we make them signed once they have read the consent form. This has been established as part of a more global objective which was building trust between researchers and participants and among participants themselves as well. Our study embraces privacy issues. We had, more than any other study, to be very careful about that. By the way, in this spirit and to avoid any misunderstanding or falsely reports, both researchers were present during all the three focus groups. And we let them know that if they had any question regarding the focus group and possibly what they could have said during it, they could ask us to listen to it and tell us whether they wanted us to analyze the information or not. We were accessible at any time if needed.
5. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This part of the thesis is about presenting the results of the three focus groups we conducted. Through this chapter, we are presenting what each focus group said about the four themes we talked about: use and perception of Facebook, understanding of Facebook’s business model, feeling of the data monetization and ethical issues of the business model and change of behavior. As our topic embraces a constructivist position, it appeared really important to us to transcribe and quote each participant exactly in order to reflect each participant’s point of view and argue they might had with each other. Thus, getting a deeper understanding of their own perceptions and where differences must be highlighted.

5.1. Focus group 1 (74'52 min)

This focus group last around 75 minutes and gathered students between 24 to 28 years old and coming from Zimbabwe, South-Africa and Sweden as well as a German-Mexican student. Respondents are coded as “R”, from 1 to 4 as they were the four first participants. Overall, students are clearly aware of the data monetization pursued by Facebook and this has an impact of the use of Facebook. However, because of the network effect, they are still using this SNS.

5.1.1. Use and perception of Facebook

In response to the question “What do you think about Facebook and how do you use it?”, R1 said that before going any further, he explained us that he wanted to delete his Facebook account. The reason lies in that fact that Facebook became a “big giant information platform and that [he] do[es] not agree with that as it is keeping [his] private data, to make money out of it”. Therefore, R1 directly stated he does not trust Facebook as a sharing platform. Hence his use of it only “to communicate to friends and colleagues while working on group works, especially during our studies”. That’s why he “barely use[s] Facebook now”. R4 explained that he puts basic information barely personal on Facebook, but these remain always true, such as his family name, first name or even date of birth. He does not understand why putting false information, like the others do.

R2 agrees on that but also specifies that she is using Facebook as a “newsfeed and see what people are posting and to which events they are participating”. But she does not share status and pictures of herself on a “daily basis” as some others do. She especially uses the platform to “get a lot of news”, because by doing so, she does not have “to go on news website and it gives news that are relevant to [her]”. R4 agrees on that, especially about being aware of what’s happening, by precising that he wants to know the local events among colleagues or students. “It’s a fear of missing out” if we are not on Facebook. Facebook is a “huge network and has a big network effect. The cost of not using Facebook is just too big. We are kind of locked-in”. R2 added that it is also a place where you can talk to people and connect with them, getting “recommendations about items you would never know if you were not on Facebook”. It gives access to resources and a huge network.

R3 explains that he never used Facebook. He understands what the people just said about the platform, but it is “alarming” him in a way that news based only on your own interests and people you are friend with “exclude you from the rest of the news and the world”. He took that moment to call out to the others about that aspect and tried to make them react about it. And they started to confront their opinions about it, as it was stated. And although
Facebook was designed to share news, pictures, status with your friends and communicate with companies through their Facebook page, the focus group here mostly uses it to communicate with their friends through Facebook messenger; and in slightest way to get news and be aware of events that might take place around them.

5.1.2. Understanding of Facebook’s business model
All of the participants were aware of Facebook’s business model. They suppose that Facebook is using their private data as a source of revenue, selling data to third parties or using them to design targeted advertisements published on your Facebook feed. Participants were more afraid of “whom they are selling to”, as R2 and R1 said. They explained in together and supported each other. And as R3 explained it, Facebook’s users “maybe consent to give Facebook data, but [they] didn’t consent letting Facebook testing ads on [them]”. R4 stopped talking, he was just following the conversation.

R2 added that she would “agree to have [her] data sold, but [does] not agree to sell it to everyone”. She pointed the importance of knowing what Facebook intends to do with it. And finally, where the data are going and what they are going to be used for. However, she highlighted the fact that even if Facebook’s users receive ads, these ads are based on their interests. Thus, making them “relevant and benefiting” the users in the end “because it reduces the amount of time you spend looking for the same information”. There is resource to exploit and they use it to make profit out of it, “that’s how business works”.

5.1.3. Feeling of the data monetization and ethical issues of the business model
Regarding the questions about their perception about the data monetization, the four participants had different perspectives on it. R1 directly stated he disagrees with this system, because “the fact that [his] data are on the platform doesn’t give them the right to use it for their own profit”. Before the others jumped on the subject, he recognized however that he agrees to the terms of agreement while registering on Facebook. But as it is not clearly stated whom the data are sold to and what they are doing with it makes it “scary”. And they all agreed on that, by saying words such as “yeah”, “absolutely”. Especially that now Facebook has reached a “monopoly situation, it became too powerful. This platform has too much power over its users”. R1 and R2 listened to this carefully, analyzing this sentence. While R4 was adding, when speaking about Facebook Analytica, that “what they did scandal is illegal, at least what the guy who sold the data to Cambridge Analytica did is illegal”. All of the four agreed on the scary part of the data monetization and more precisely the use that is made of it. But also, on a feeling of Facebook acting unethically. And according to them, the algorithms that are behind the platform remains full of questions as well. R1 is alarmed by the fact they “can know what you like in general based on one like!”. R4 and R2 assenting as well. But as R3 explained it, if the data collection and further the data monetization are made in order to conduct researches, “that would be fine”. But the fact that “they are using it to manipulate people” should not be allowed. That belongs to the ethical considerations Facebook should look at now and be more careful about it according to them.
However, even if the negative aspects of the data monetization have been raised spontaneously, R2 put also the positive ones on the table. She justified her position by saying that she can receive news based on her own interests, and “from people [she] is friend with”, which makes it relevant. By benefiting from such a data use, she can save time while looking to be informed or to purchase a specific new item, for instance the cheapest plane ticket to go home. For R2, it is a gain of time that is “so helpful nowadays, as everything goes fast”. R1 counter-argued that he has time for it and does not want to be “influenced, especially when it’s about purchasing something”. This is “manipulation”. Even if there might be influence, R2 replied by stating that “you have the final word, you are the final decision-maker”.

5.1.4. Change of behavior

The final part of the focus group was meant to be about possible change of behavior, especially after the serious questions and discussion that have been conducted since the beginning of this focus group. To the question if they would be willing to change their behavior on Facebook if the platform were changing its advertisement methods, R4 spontaneously stated that users and themselves as well “are still using Facebook, even after the several scandals. So why would Facebook change then?”. Everyone else agreed on that part, as they realized clearly, they are still on it and still using it. That’s why we asked a question about a possible willing to give Facebook some of their data in order to keep the free registration. And here we got interesting answers as R2 said that she would, because “it’s up to [her] to give Facebook data for advertisements, but at least [she] know[s] what data Facebook is using. But it would also depend on what they are going to with it”. R4 followed her on that; and R1 still added that he wouldn’t mind instead “paying for a premium model and not have [his] data used by Facebook to send [him] these ads”. He is still stipulating that “sending me ads is manipulating me”.

So, now, are they going to change their behavior because of this scandal? R1 spoke the first by explaining that “it was a warning sign. Again”. So, he decided to continue “minimizing [his] social activity on Facebook and just limit [his] use of Facebook to communicate with friends”. And then R4 responded to this statement by sharing us his concern about a possible reading of what is in private chats and private messages. Because it seems “private, you feel secured and do not pay attention to what you are saying to your friends and send more easily sensitive pictures, or pictures that could harm you or them”. Nobody added something to this, as it started to make them think about what they might have sent just recently …

Therefore, we wanted to know if they would change Facebook for another SNS that wouldn’t use their data. As researchers, we thought the answer would be yes definitely, as it seemed obvious after such a discussion. However, they pointed out an aspect we seemed to have forgotten. R4 formulated the first answer: “Yes I would, but it’s harder to get all the friends we have on Facebook and get them on another SNS”. And they all agreed on that. They might go on another SNS, but they would not leave Facebook, even if it would be only “a visit once a week” as R2 said. The network effect seemed to have reached such a level, that it would be difficult to get it somewhere else. Yet, the network effect is exactly what people are trying to get when registering on a SNS… Logically, they are aware of alternatives, such as Vero, and might be already on it, as R1 told us. But “there is no guarantee they won’t use your data though”. That’s why R2 said that for now on, she is “more reluctant to register on another SNS”. In a word, according to the
first focus group, they will still use Facebook, but will “definitely be more careful about what [we] are posting now, for sure”.

5.2. Focus group 2 (51’17 min)
The second focus group lasted a bit more than 50 minutes and gathered students between 23 to 26 years old and coming from Denmark, Germany, France as well as a German-Italian student. Respondents are coded as “R”, from 5 to 8 as they were the four next participants.

Students from this group know what Facebook’s business model is and measure the impact of the image of the firm. But again, because of the network effect, these students are still present and active on this SNS. The participants in this focus group didn’t really talk to each other as wishes but were more answering the questions and adding another perspective to some responses.

5.2.1. Use and perception of Facebook
As the first focus group stated it, the four participants are using Facebook mostly as a communication tool, through Facebook messenger, with friends and their family. But also, to be “part of the community and the groups that are created through groupworks or events”, as R6 stated it. R8 explained the same but added that if he “had the chance of not using Facebook, [he] would not. Because private data are used and abused by Facebook”. R8 is sharing private data as his name, his birthday because he has “nothing to hide, and therefore do[es] not mind having these” on the platform. He is sharing posts and articles to attract potential employers. The others didn’t add something else, they were just listening to his opinion.

There is also a pressure coming from the university, as R5 explained that it is the “main media of communication between the university department and the students”. R7 follows him on that, as he “thought about deleting Facebook before coming to Umeå University”. But because he wants to be part of the events, and therefore not being “excluded”, he is still on Facebook. It makes his “life easier while being at the Uni”.

However, they all try to minimize their activity on Facebook and trying slowly to remove it from their daily habits. R5 uses it “to keep contact with friends [he] can’t see as often as [he] wants, and now use[s] Facebook differently than the first time [he] registered on it”. Daily publications or pictures of himself are no longer his activity on the platform for instance. He does not want to be visible anymore “because of the data that are kept by Facebook but also because of the ads” on the feed. And R7 also explained his willing to delete it by the fact that “it’s too much distracting”. He tries to “post the least possible thing on it”. But at the same time, he is using “Instagram or WhatsApp, which are owned by Facebook”. Hence his perception of feeling tracked by this company.

5.2.2. Understanding of Facebook’s business model
“They are taking the data and selling those as a revenue stream”. Three out of the four participants are into business studies and clearly understand how Facebook is making money, especially the free registration part. And even if the only student not enrolled into a business program didn’t study the concept of the business model, he said he understands the way Facebook is working and making profit. The discussion went shortly as everything has been said about it according to them. They just answered after one another.
Yet, they stated that they have “more than one” friends who are not aware of it. R6 wished that “more and more people are aware about it”, but as R7 added, “being aware doesn't mean they care”. The others assented.

5.2.3. Feeling of the data monetization and ethical issues of the business model

They are afraid of sharing data, but mostly “of what will come, because through the Facebook application, they can even listen to what we are saying”, R7 explained. He knows for a fact that human resources managers have “to check Facebook profile of applicants”. That’s why he “put[s] few likes on Facebook and [is] following very few things on” the SNS. He wants to “keep this information for [himself] because Facebook is interested in it to make money out of it”. R6 agreed on this, hence the same behavior on the platform. He is “scared” about what Facebook can do with his data. Even if he estimates that “we have a bit control of it but we don’t have proof about what Facebook is doing with it and how. It’s really hard to trust Facebook about it”. Hence R5’s spontaneous reactions by saying that “the main point is that we don’t have control about the data we are putting on Facebook”. That’s why R7 feels trapped but is still trying to limit the “use of Facebook by subscribing with [his] email account” for instance while registering another website. R8 was only following the conversation, not feeling things differently apparently.

And because of the data shared on the platform, people are now used to targeted marketing. R6 and R7 talked about that, going deeply through their analysis. R6 said that yes Facebook is “posting ads based on your interests”, but “they sell things you don’t want to”, for R7. And even if “it’s relevant, because it’s the future of marketing success, they can predict what you want, even if at the moment you don’t know it”. R7 considers it as a manipulative tool, just as R1 stated it during the first focus group. But as said, even if they consider Facebook as an intrusive tool, they have “no other choice, because everyone is using it” and “you are cut of communication if you are out of Facebook”. All the four said this, and also recognized that the latest scandal did not affect their use of the SNS because they “accepted it” and are “already in jail”, as R8 stated. That’s why R7 didn’t understand the scandal that has been made about Facebook selling data to a third party. “We all knew”. And for R6, “the users are the first responsible” for the data monetization. Because according to him and the others, people gave Facebook their data. But Facebook has also its responsibility in this because “this explanation [of the monetization] was not clearly stated” for R5. While recognizing that none of them read the terms of agreement while registering on the SNS.

Hence their claim about this unethical behavior of Facebook. It could be “less unethical if [the data monetization] was clearly stated while signing up” R5 added; and if Facebook would “have to raise the awareness” about it according to R8. Moreover, he said that “Facebook turned the illegal into a legal activity, but it is still unethical”. R7 counter-argued a bit by saying that “at the same time, you still have the choice of not registering or not sharing data. They are just doing business. What happened with the Cambridge Analytica scandal was an accident I think”.

5.2.4. Change of behavior

There are alternatives and other tools for communication and social activities, but nobody is using it, as “Google, Vero or WhatsApp” as they stated it. As students with a business and economic background, they even mentioned the network effect that remains too
important and can’t be found elsewhere. Moreover, as R8 detailed it, even if these are trying to “guarantee us private data won’t be use or monetize, as you long as” they are not paying a subscription fee, “there is no way this can be guaranteed”. And none of them is ready to change their behavior and accept to pay for such a service. R6 explained it more thoroughly by saying that if he “had private data to hide, [he] would pay to keep them hidden. But as [he] do[es] not have this issue”, he is not going to pay for it. R8 totally agreed on that part and had the same logic in mind. R5 and R7 stopped talking here, they didn’t exactly know how to interpret this situation.

Then, what if they would be willing to give up some of their data to keep the free registration of Facebook? R6 answered by saying that “it’s okay to try targeted marketing to keep the service free, because as users we still have the choice to buy or not to buy. If you are aware of this, you should be able to decide yourself either to purchase or not. You would definitely be influenced, that is for sure, but we can still decide to buy”. In a way, he would be ready to try that. On the contrary, R7 “would not because [he] would rather pay. [He] do[es] not really see the point of giving “public” information, such as his name or his age”. Speaking of behavior, he is not sure about keeping Facebook once he is done with his studies.

If their friends were registering on another social media, they would follow them. For sure. But it depends “on the ‘price’ to use it, what the counterparts are” R5 added. R7 just concluded this focus group by saying that “no one cares about the scandal anymore; Facebook goes stronger and there is no escape of it”.

5.3. Focus group 3 (65’31 min)

The third focus lasted a bit more than 65 minutes and gathered five students between 23 to 25 years old and coming from France, Sweden, Italy and Germany. Respondents are coded as “R”, from 9 to 13 as they were the last five participants. Overall, students are clearly aware of the data monetization pursued by Facebook and this has an impact on the use of Facebook. However, because of the network effect, they are still using this SNS.

5.3.1. Use and perception of Facebook

Again, Facebook is mainly use first of all to communicate with people, friends and family at first, through the option Facebook messenger; and secondly to be part of the several events that are launched at school especially and “other social groups that are not in my nearest friends group” as R9 said. He said minimizing his social activity on Facebook “because [he] take[s] into account the fact that everything that [he] share[s] on Facebook is recorded and kept”. He added that he “share[s] stuff [he] [is] interested in, because this is self-expression”. He said then explicitly that he does not want to have intimate conversation on Facebook, just as R11. R11 is really careful about what she posts on Facebook because of potential employers who are checking Facebook’s profile before interviewing someone for a job position. Again, she is sharing “news and articles that interest” her, but no “personal or intimate information”. R13 totally agrees. “You have to be careful about what we put on social media, because everything is kept online”. Which can be resume in this sentence pronounced by R9: “You have to be accountable for your old yourself”.

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There has been some argue then. R10 said, on the contrary, that yes she uses Facebook just for communicating with her friends, and does not “understand the purpose of this platform anymore”. But she does not mind “Facebook using [her] private data because [she] do[es] not share a lot of personal information. [She] want[s] to keep it private. Facebook is more to connect with people, through events or conversations, and not through pictures”. On that point, R11 also agrees. R9 and R12 were just following the lead, having nothing really to add. But all said that Facebook became very time-consuming. They insist on the fact that it is very valuable as Facebook remains a great platform to connect with people and stay connected with friends. R12 supported this affirmation as he is not using Facebook as he used to do since a year. The main role assigns to Facebook is to “to keep up and have news when [he] [is] far from people and friends”.

However, because R10 pointed out that besides the friends and the family, Facebook may also be used as a networking community to find a job or an internship, as she did last year. And added that thanks to Facebook, “[she] gets good suggestions and can go faster in [her] research, because they know [her] interests”. But it’s also useful “to sell stuff” as R12 highlighted it. Again, the network effect is really important here as R9 stated it. He said that he “tried to disconnect from Facebook and [he] felt excluded, specifically by [his] classmates” because he was actually not on Facebook anymore.

5.3.2. Understanding of Facebook’s business model

Four out of the five participants were business students. However, all the five of them could explain us the business model of Facebook, highlighting the fact that “we know”. And the principle of monetizing private data is particularly true when you try to “create new accounts on website by using your Facebook account. You can see that in less than two seconds, the company can know everything” based on your profile, R11 explained. Even if they all know how it works, R9 said that he believes the GAFA (Google, Amazon, Facebook and Apple) do have integrity. But it does not mean he “take[s] their words for truth”. The others were just listening to the conversation, remaining silent on that point.

5.3.3. Feeling of the data monetization and ethical issues of the business model

Regarding the principle of the data monetization, R10 said that thanks to this system, “[she] gets good suggestions and can go faster in [her] research, because they know [her] interests”. R9 goes the same way, as he does not care “they are selling [his] data because it’s a free service. [He] understand[s] that [he] [has] not paid for anything, so Facebook must earn money. Of course, if it’s against [its] will, it’s illegal and unethical”. Then, there was a bit of an argue about the use of the free Wi-Fi connections and the potential use of the data you are giving them in exchange of using these services. R13 pointed out that she disagrees with this analysis as “internet providers do not have big costs anymore; and so, it should be free because there is not cost and not because they are selling my data”. R11 also agreed and claimed that Facebook “should let the customers know when and to whom what data has been sold”. What is really dangerous for R12 is “not the data per se, but the transformation of the data and its translation. Then, they might understand what people might think or say about everything”.

On the responsibility part, everyone agrees to say that both users and Facebook are responsible “because we agreed on publishing and they having our data exploited”. But they pointed out however that Facebook “is going too far though. If you have a company
like that, and when you know what they can do, it is scary. It is a good way that there are scandals and that they are forced to change a bit their policy. For one of the participant, the latest scandal was “the first time the integrity of Facebook has been a topic on the public place. And now, the terms of agreement are changing thanks to this pressure”. But the scandal has not changed anything, all of them are checking the “privacy settings and double thinking before posting something on the platform”. Having the data exploited appeared partly unethical for them as “they are tracking everything”, even if they all agreed on the terms of agreement without actually reading them. Here again, it appears “unethical because nobody wants to read such a long page of policies” R9 stated. R11 kept following the conversation without interfering.

5.3.4. Change of behavior
After all that has been said, the question of why they are still on Facebook deserved to be asked. And the answer remains “because of the network effect”. They were all interested and wanted to add something. Facebook is very useful for R10. “When you are in a group and have to work together; when you go abroad, you use Facebook, when you want to sell stuffs, you use Facebook”. For them, it is “really convenient” because everybody is on it. R10 added that she “can’t see [herself] without Facebook because there are so many advantages.

So, would they be willing to pay to have the same service? They all refuse it. “Because there are other alternatives, like Google Plus”. R12 would pay “for the protection of data which are relevant and the ones that should not be on the public place; but otherwise, if it’s not needed, no”. Then, R9 suggested the State to play a role in here, that is to say, to tax the citizens in exchange of supplying them with such a SNS. “But it’s not a democracy anymore if the government can know everything about you and can use it. The problem is the power, because if you can do it, then the temptation is very big” R13 replied; even if R9 said that Sweden is a proper democracy and respect its citizens rights, “you never know”.

Then, what about giving up some of your data to keep the service free? R10 said she could give everything. R9 was surprised, as he would “feel persecuted. It’s violation of [his] privacy if a company were using all” his data. And the others said that there is difference between talking about it theoretically, and actually see what kind of pictures and information you would give to Facebook. Therefore, they can’t say for sure what they would do in such a situation. R10 still supports the idea of giving up some of her privacy as “information can be used for good things. For instance, during the Paris terrorist attacks, Facebook brought a great advantage to let people know there were safe” through the geolocation application.
6. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This part aims to analyze the empirical findings through the lens of the concept and theories presented in the literature review chapter.

The data collection provided us an important amount of data. We needed then to analyze it. To do so, we needed to define codes and themes that would structure our analysis. As explained in the practical methodology, we are following Attride-Stirling’s (2001) thematic network analysis model. For reasons of space, we will not detail the whole process that goes from codes to categories and then themes here, but they are presented in a table (see Appendix n°4). This table explains how we developed the basic and organizing themes respectively represented by the squares with rounded edges and by circles. As the goal of this qualitative analysis is to discover how Facebook’s consumers reason about their data monetization by the platform, our research question is the global theme this network lead to. The reader can therefore find it in the center of our thematic network analysis (Figure 7). The data analysis here consists in the exploration of every basic themes from this thematic network in presenting the current empirical findings from the data collection, and cross-checking them with theories on the subject, if they exist.

![Thematic network analysis diagram](image)

**Figure 7. Our thematic network analysis**

6.1. User’s perception of Facebook

6.1.1. Perceived benefits

Facebook as a SNS has connecting and networking features (Wirtz et al., 2010). Mayfield (2008) presented five characteristics of a social media. His conversation aspect of SNS is consistent with our findings since our respondents use Facebook mainly to communicate with their friends and family, especially as they are international students for the majority. Then, Mayfield’s (2008) community feature is also present. Ellison et al. (2007) showed also that Facebook does not only allow you to connect with your loved ones, but also with people from a “geographically-bounded” communities, especially on university campus. This is consistent with our findings. Facebook appears for our respondents as the only powerful tool to use in order to be part of Umeå community, especially at the university.
where the Buddy Group and some Master Programs’ administrators use it to communicate with the students and post a lot of information in private groups. Respondents are thus aware of local events that take place in Umeå and at the university. Finally, our respondents said that they read a lot of online articles through Facebook. And this confirms what Kilian et al. (2012) demonstrated, that is to say that Facebook is used by Millennials as a replacement of traditional media.

6.1.2. Perceived risks
The privacy issues on SNS have been evoked by many scholars (Acquisti & Grossklags, 2005; boyd & Ellison, 2007; Debatin et al., 2009; Norberg et al., 2007). This is also the first type of risks perceived by our respondents. They discussed their fear about employers, Facebook and third parties having access to their data. Those problems directly linked with the data monetization will be discussed in the allocated part for those feelings towards data monetization. To be noted, the data monetization concerns arrived in the conversations more quickly than we, researchers, expected. But another risk not evoked by the literature and that turns out to be an interesting finding is the time consuming as an aspect of Facebook. Respondents have difficulties to limit themselves and can be easily absorbed on the application.

6.2. User’s understanding of data monetization
When comparing respondents’ discussion to the theoretical literature on Facebook’s business model (Enders et al., 2018; Esteve, 2017), we realized that all of them were aware of the monetization of their data by Facebook and understood the way the platform makes money through their data. Even if some do not manage to define it with their own words, they are not astonished and rather agree with the definition given by the other members part of their focus group. Thereby they all evoked the trade of their private information as such, the link with the third parties that buy or sell that information, the free registration in exchange of the access to their data and the retargeting through ads. Thus, they are all aware of the fact that their data are sold, but they do not know to whom.

The literature demonstrated that there is a clear misunderstood of the use of data, in general, and by third parties more specifically (Acquisti et al., 2016; Evans, 2009; Hull, 2015; McDonald and Cranor, 2010). Our study is in harmony with those theories. Although respondents all seem to know about data monetization showing a global understanding of Facebook’s revenue stream, there is a misunderstanding about the use of their data by Facebook. The only respondent (R11) who actually knew that information made a request to Facebook to review Facebook’s stocked data on her, thus showing that the process to know this kind of information is complex and not easily accessible. This shows an abstruseness from Facebook and a lack of information about the corporate behavior, as demonstrated by Boulstridge & Carrigan (2000) also called information asymmetry (Acquisti & Grossklags, 2005; Acquisti et al., 2016; Hull, 2015). This unclear use of the data is also linked to vague privacy policies according to Hull (2015). Almost all of our respondents agree with this point. Yet, none of them read Facebook’s privacy policies because of their length.

This misunderstanding of the real use of their data seem to create some reactions among our respondents, discussed in the next section.
6.3. User’s attitude towards data monetization

6.3.1. Reactions

Acquisti & Gross (2006) demonstrated that people cannot control the use of their private information when it is detained by third parties and they are afraid of that. This is consistent with our respondents’ first reaction which is to state to feel powerless and not control their data towards third parties using their data. An additional contribution to Acquisti & Gross (2006) is that they are not only afraid by third parties, but also from Facebook. Even if there are privacy settings, those ones prevent peers on Facebook to access their data but not Facebook itself. And it is not the use of the data as such that bothers the respondents, because in a way, they explained they got used to it and are fully aware that they are responsible for their own data, it is more the impossibility for them to track their data and know what it is legally used for. They understood that the information they disclose could be used, but they still have a control on it since they choose what to disclose or not. The main problem is that they did not authorized third parties to use their private information.

Regarding their reaction toward targeted advertising in specific, the prior online behavioral advertising (OBA) literature (Leon et al., 2015, p.6; Ur et al., 2012) showed that on the one hand, consumers express privacy concerns but, on the other hand, the ads seem also to be relevant for them. Our findings are thus in line with what has been written. Targeted advertising appears to be relevant for few of the respondents and makes them save time, but the majority of our respondents considers this process as a manipulation tool that could influence their free will and create desires.

boyd & Ellison (2007) defined SNS as collaborative platforms, but Beer (2008) responded to their definition by expressing concerns. What danger could it be if it is “fueled by the free to access and user generated nature of such sites”? (Beer, 2008, p.524). With the context of knowing capitalism, information appears as a value (Beer, 2008, p.523). And among our focus groups, they all shared the fear of the future and the possible manipulation. One respondent precisely compared the information to a war resource. They also say that it will be difficult in the future to keep information private. This is the reason why one of the respondent claimed that big data should be embraced, and people should not be afraid of such technology, because, it is the future and it will be all around. But overall, we see here that people are afraid of this future.

6.3.2. Questions of ethics and responsibility

Culnan & Armstrong (1999) showed that when policy data are considered as fair by the consumer, a relationship based on trust emerges. Yet, none of our respondent either likes or trusts Facebook as a company, thus validating that consumers consider that this company is conducting unfair policy. All respondents consider that Facebook’s revenue stream is unethical. This debate also leads to the question of the responsibility of such practice. Hull (2015) demonstrated that Facebook’s practice was not due to an individual risk management responsibility but more due to a problem within the global structure. The author stated that privacy became part of commercial transaction and this has nothing to do with the individual. Our findings are slightly different. Even if the majority of our respondents think that Facebook’s practice is an abuse because it is not clearly stated how Facebook use the data, what for, and who can use it, they all stated a shared responsibility between the users and the company. Respondents consider that it is a duty for Facebook to keep their data private even if the company exchange them.
Mainly, our respondents reacted negatively towards this data monetization and Facebook’s practices are clearly seen as unethical by our respondents. Could the feeling towards Cambridge Analytica Scandal and this data monetization lead to different behavior? This is described in the next part.

6.4. User’s behavior towards data monetization

6.4.1. Question of a behavior’s change

Within the literature, the consumer adopts different behavior types when facing unethical corporate behaviors (which we summarized in Table 1). Lindenmeier et al. (2012) showed that the emotional response following a scandal could lead to boycott. It is not the case for our respondents. However, there is a response. Among the three focus groups, they all reduced their use of Facebook insofar as they share less. This type of nonverbal resistance was already expressed by Hull (2015). To be noted, this minimization goes back way before the scandal. And according to them, they will definitely be more vigilant in the future.

But they will continue to use Facebook, and especially chat on Messenger. This can be seen as paradoxical, indeed, all the respondents acknowledged unethical practices from Facebook and most of them had already planned to delete their Facebook account once or many times. Thus, although the users of Facebook highlighted those ethical concerns and negative feelings previously, it seems that they accept it and continue to use it, at least, while they are in Umeå University. We consider as researchers that this is symptomatic of an acceptance of Facebook’s unethical behavior. This can be explained by the fact that the user observes only a “vague impact” of its behavior (Fullerton et al., 1996, p.812).

Furthermore, our respondents’ behavior does not match with their first reactions and intentions. This is consistent with the gap usually observed in business ethics literature between intention and actual behavior (Carrington et al., 2012; Öberseder et al., 2017). This also confirms Guckian et al. (2018) findings when analyzing Volkswagen scandal. A slight difference with the authors’ findings is that none of our respondents that were already using Facebook decided to not engage in the future after the scandal. They all seem to consider that “few bad apples” caused the scandal and will continue to engage with the brand in the future. Notwithstanding the authors model based on anger, we did not detect such feelings in our study. This could be explained by the fact that it is not the first time that Facebook is dragged into such scandal - Beacon scandal (Hull, 2015) - and that our respondents got used to such practice.

In line with previous research in other contexts, the explanation for such paradoxical phenomenon is called to the privacy paradox (Kokolakis, 2015; Norberg et al., 2007; Utz & Krämer, 2009). The privacy calculus theory (Krasnova et al., 2012) applies here for the monetization of Facebook’s users data. This theory states how consumers trade the cost of disclosing personal information for the benefits in return Here, the cost of disclosing personal information is smaller than the benefits in return for this disclosure, a free way to communicate with friends and be aware of every events. This is because the value proposition offered by Facebook meets its customers’ needs. There is a real fear of missing out and it showed that Facebook created a need and really shaped the current societal behavior. The first reason stated by one of the respondent is due to high switching costs and benefits provided on Facebook. The cost of not using Facebook is just too high, this is due to the network effect (Economide, 1996), as almost everybody uses this SNS.
The network effect presented by Economide (1996) is the fact that when a product is highly sold, people want to buy it. Here, the same definition applies but with the consumption and not a purchase. Moreover, it is important to stress here the fact that those non-switching intentions have nothing to do with the consumer loyalty or any attachment to the brand (Sierra et al., 2017, p.665) since people would leave the service if they could. It is more linked with Facebook’s lock-in business model as explained by Amit & Zott (2010). The business model retains customers. It is really hard to leave because Facebook offers the highest value proposition on the market. The authors specify also that people are staying because they invested time to personalize their page, thus it is seen as costly for the user to switch to another provider. We do not disagree, but we will add some precision here. Nowadays, the business model is still about personalization, but it is not the consumer that personalized its page but rather Facebook that does it through the user’s content itself.

But we will here add a precision towards the privacy paradox which is the consideration of a benefit on short-term only. This is what Acquisti & Grossklags (2005) highlighted. People trade their long-term privacy for short-term benefits, usually linked with the product. The reasons for such paradox in our case are linked with the benefits of the product. The literature also demonstrated that this paradox could come from the information asymmetry (Acquisti & Grossklags, 2005; Hull, 2015) which is validated here since our respondents are not aware of the use of their data.

What are the long-term risks for Facebook? As demonstrated by Enders et al. (2018) “advertising models can be implemented in situations where users’ willingness to pay is low or even zero and a minimum level of consumer trust is guaranteed. The key revenue driver in this model is a high level of traffic on the platform”. The user does not trust Facebook, thus there is a risk on the long-term behavior. If it were following this corporate behavior considered as unethical by the consumer, and if a competitor arouses, our respondents could leave Facebook for this new competitor. This is consistent with Creyer & Ross (1996, p.183) who showed how unethical acts could limit a “company’s capability to compete effectively in the marketplace” and thus advantages the competitor. But, the only behavior we could really observe was the reluctance of a respondent to subscribe to another SNS, while the others could not predict their behavior. This is more consistent with Trump et al. (2017) findings which explain that when a company transgresses the ethical rules within an industry, it could jeopardize the whole industry.

6.4.2. Alternatives

When asking what they want to change and how they would change Facebook’s revenue stream, respondents do not really believe that they can benefit from the same type of services for free. Indeed, the free aspect of Facebook appears as the most important for them. Leon et al. (2015) already found an unwillingness for some users to pay for their privacy. For their respondents, to pay was seen as an extorsion of a natural right, here privacy (Leon et al., 2015). As a matter of fact, in our study, the majority of our respondents is also not willing to pay for a service that has always been free. Only few explained they could as they were already paying for e-services like Netflix or Amazon Premium which is around 5€ per month each. The unwilling users are aware that they pay for SIM card to contact people on their phone, but Internet disrupted everything. This is consistent with the findings of McDonald & Cranor (2010) who discovered a gap between the willingness to pay for the protection of data against the willingness to accept benefits in exchange for private data. So, if they are not willing to pay, to protect their data, they
could willingly give their data. It means user would choose what data to give. As previously theoretically demonstrated, the user could accept to give some data in exchange of a free service and the choice between targeted or tailored ads (Prince, 2018). Although, this would suppose a total trust between the members (Enders et al., 2008) and as none of our respondents trust the platform anymore, it seems impossible to implement such new model. As they emphasize, respondents accepted the fact that they already gave data and that marketer know everything is needed to know on them, thus, they are not willing not do anything to protect their data anymore.

6.5. Summary of the analysis

Our main contribution is within the business model literature and more precisely, the SNS business model literature. This study aims to bring a deeper understanding on SNS’ users reasoning towards Facebook’s data monetization. Our findings on this research area are summarized in our Figure 8. We see that, on one hand, Facebook users’ perception is negative, and they perceive risks. Indeed, they do not consider the use of their data by Facebook as unethical since it is business, but those users see an unethical practice when those data are taken against their consent and used by unknown third parties. Indeed, they assume that, by using Facebook, they can give their data in exchange of a free registration. But they are against the trade of those data by Facebook to third parties. Also, there is a fear of those data being held by Facebook on the long-term. People would like to leave Facebook, but they cannot because of a network effect, all their friends are on the SNS. This is a negative intention on the long-term. On the other hand, they perceive the benefits from Facebook’s value proposition that offers a free service. This data monetization also makes their feed more relevant for them and allows them to be part of a community and to connect with people for free, at least, until they are in Umeå University. Those are benefits, on the short-term, but more valuable than the risks. This lead to a specific behavior and a specific intention that are opposed. This is the intention-behavior gap presented in the ethical literature. Sheeran (2002) considers any person with such gap as disinclined. This gap is, for us researchers, disturbing and is the one that lead to a paradox.
Users disagree with the corporate behavior of Facebook, they consider the data monetization unethical, but at the same time they accept it because of the perceived benefits. When offering the possibility to protect their data, in exchange from money, they are refusing to pay. Nonetheless, they still want the company to protect their data. Moreover, we contribute to this literature in specifying that in the case of SNS’ users, the gap exists on a short-term time period. Indeed, the intention of leaving Facebook, which for now costs more to our respondents, is considered on the long-term, while the benefits are only seen on the short term. This shows that Facebook needs to change its business model, since it is seen as unethical by the consumer, and because it is not sustainable anymore because of a long-term negative intention. Those last thoughts are beyond our research area and could be the starting point of further research in business model innovation.

Our other contribution is, at a larger scale, within the ethic literature. We also contribute to Papaoikonomou et al.’s (2011) model of ethics on the marketplace. Indeed, the authors by presenting their view on the ethics in the marketplace only presented the marketing ethics. We do not disagree with their definition but would like to add a precision. Our study showed that we could also consider business model as part of business ethics (as shown on our Figure 9), thus adding findings to Papaoikonomou et al.’s (2011) model. We also added the consumer ethical value and the response to unethical corporate behavior to the authors’ model, to make it clearer for the reader. This ethical business model part could be developed further. Indeed, within the business model literature, although some scholars touched upon the subject of sustainable business models and ethicality, ethical business model as such has rarely been addressed by scholars. But this is going out of our research area.

![Figure 9. The study of ethics in the marketplace adapted (in blue, our contribution)](image-url)
7. LAST THOUGHTS AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we will draw our general conclusions and demonstrate how our findings answer the research question. It is also the opportunity to state theoretical as well as practical contributions. We will finish by highlighting the limitations of our study and imply further research for this new field.

7.1. General conclusions

The main objective of this study was to increase the understanding and knowledge about users’ perceptions of the revenue stream in SNS business model. This means to get a deeper understanding of user’s perception of Facebook’s business model, and more specifically on their revenue stream that is partly based on the monetization of users’ private data. We aimed to investigate untouched research topics connecting business model and consumers’ perception, but also ethics and business model. To do so, we defined the following research question:

*How do SNS’ users reason about their data monetization by the platform as part of its business model?*

We managed to answer this question in developing a qualitative study and collecting the reactions of thirteen respondents, all students in Umeå University and part of the Millennials, dispersed among three focus groups.

Our main purpose was to increase the understanding and knowledge about users’ perception of the revenue stream in SNS business model. To do so, we designed three different sub-purposes. We are going to summarize our findings through those sub-purposes.

Our first sub-purpose consisted in the understanding of people’s use and perception of Facebook. Our findings are consistent with the previous literature (Ellison et al., 2007; Mayfield, 2008). Facebook was originally created to connect with people and share information with them as part of web 2.0 (O’Reilly, 2005), however, one of our contribution is that our respondents use it more passively in reducing the data shared and using more Messenger, Facebook’s chat, to initiate conversation. This is linked with privacy concerns that arouse among SNS’ literature.

Our second sub-purpose implied to discover how people understand the data monetization and how do they intend to react towards it. We found that overall, students are clearly aware of the data monetization pursued by Facebook and understand it, which is one of our contribution and new finding among the SNS business model literature. This is a new finding. However, in accordance with the previous scholars’ findings (Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Debatin et al., 2009; Krombholz et al., 2012), Facebook’s users do not understand what their data are used for. This is mainly due to a lack of clarity and communication from Facebook towards its privacy policies. This is consistent with the information asymmetry observed by many scholars (Acquisti & Grossklags, 2005; Acquisti et al., 2016; Hull, 2015). People are afraid that third parties could used unwisely their data. Thus, they are reducing their use of Facebook.

Finally, our third sub-purpose was to know if respondents would change their behavior, thus bringing a new theoretical contribution. Respondents consider Facebook’s data
monetization as unethical and this has an impact on their use of Facebook, as they reduced their use of it. Nevertheless, because of the network effect (Economide, 1996) and perceived benefits of the platform, they are still using this SNS. Indeed, the more people use Facebook, the more it is difficult to leave Facebook. This qualitative study sheds light on the privacy paradox demonstrated by many researchers (Kokolakis, 2015; Norberg et al., 2007; Utz & Krämer, 2009). The perceived risks of using Facebook seem to be less important than the perceived benefits of the platform, but also less important than the perceived risks to leave it as well. This lead to an intention-behavior gap (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). Our additional theoretical contribution is the observation that this gap is unbalanced by short-term and long-term considerations that could question Facebook’s revenue stream sustainability. People could indeed leave. Enders et al. (2018) showed that the number of users is a revenue driver for Facebook. Also, like every SNS, Facebook is dependent on its users. The sustainability is also linked with the ethicality (Van Marrewijk, 2003) and the revenue model of Facebook is already defined as unethical by all our respondents. More importantly, although this study was relatively on a small and local scale, the unanimous acceptance of an unethical behavior has to be taken seriously. If Facebook really conduct unethical practices, this should not be accepted. It appears essential for Facebook to change its revenue model by either adopting an existent revenue stream, based on charged subscription and therefore risk to lose some users, or to innovate. Zyskind & Nathan (2015) for instance applied blockchain to privacy on Facebook, suggesting such an SNS to investigate the blockchain opportunities. The blockchain is a new way to save and secure list of records thank to cryptography (Swan, 2015).

As a conclusion, our findings draw attention on unethical practices among SNS and the perception of consumers on business model, more specifically, SNS advertising way of revenue stream that jeopardizes the sustainability of such business models. Consequently, it brought ideas in order to transform the current SNS’ business model, and thus it also contributes to the business model innovation area.

7.2. Practical Implications
7.2.1. General practical implications
On a more practical level, our study draws many conclusions. First, this study discussed issues that directly concern Facebook’s users - and more generally SNS’ uses. A loss of trust in the company is significant. None of our respondents trusts Facebook less when considering the protection of their data. This happens in the same line as the fake news and the loss of public trust towards social media for traditional media (Oppenheim, 2018). Thus, people need to question their use and time spent on social media. Our study aims to raise awareness around the data monetization business model and the resulting possible manipulations.

Then, our findings have an importance for the service provider. Conducting this study will help SNS companies designing business models in a more ethical way based on consumers’ desires. As shown by Trump et al. (2017) the unethical behavior of one SNS could jeopardize the all industry. How to do concretely? We showed that in the first instance, Facebook should explain the use of their data in a clearer way and be more transparent with its users. They would like to get more information about the way thirds parties are using their data. In the second instance, they need to rethink their revenue stream and business model. In knowing how people feel and react to the monetization of their data, we encourage SNS and here especially Facebook, to take proactive approach
in redesigning their business model in a more ethic way rather than changing it because of a scandal, which is called a consequential approach as explained by Shea (2010). Even if for now, there is no direct threat for the American giant, the respondents clearly stated that if a safer SNS would surface, with the condition that everybody would register, they could give up on Facebook. Even in controlling a network effect, they have a self-limit and the firm will automatically be less effective in meeting the needs of the customers, thus creating an opening for competition (Porter, 2001).

7.2.2. Ethical implications
As shown during our theoretical framework, the way companies do business affect the consumer as a user but also as a person (Crane & Matten, 2010). This is why our study in discussing the ethical consideration of SNS obviously brings some ethical contribution. One of the business ethics theory is the social contract theory that ethically forces businesses to improve the welfare of society in satisfying consumers but also employees’ interests without infringement of the law (Hasnas, 1998). If companies can enhance the welfare of a whole society, companies could also do the opposite and be able to cause harm to the whole society. Thus, we understand here the importance of such research area. Our study aims to question the ethicality of business model, thus bringing SNS to think about more ethical way to do business that would mean no harm to their users. Not only SNS, this study sheds light on the importance for any company to look at ethics when considering its business model.

7.2.3. Societal implications
Different societal institutions are concerned with our research. First, the universities play a major role. Our study raised issues on the excessive use of Facebook by the university of Umeå to communicate with the students about events or Buddy Group Programs, thus locking them up. This is in contradiction with Roblyer et al. (2010) findings that showed the reverse trend. For the authors, the students in higher education see more the benefits of Facebook as an educational tool than the faculties. Thus, we are wondering if it would not be interesting for Umeå University to think about other ways to communicate with its students. The email has been the subject of a part of our respondents’ discussion, but the University could also support the development of its own communication platform. One already exists, Cambro, but it could be possible to implement a solution elaborated by engineering or interaction design students. If it is developed by the school as an institution, students will trust it more. However, the students would prefer an application that has many functionalities and could remind them of the local events, allow them to talk to each other and more.

Then, our research affects the society in general. Because we highlighted the concern about privacy issues and the fact that big companies are using private data to earn profit and to influence our purchase behavior as well as our decision-making. As mentioned by our respondents, either the State must take its responsibilities and take legal measures to protect its citizens against such practices. For now, Hodge (2006) already argued for example that the U.S constitution legal dispositions concerning privacy were not ready to address SNS. It will be interesting to see what could change when the European GDPR will be applied, starting on the next 25th of May (Hern, 2018). Even if Facebook is registered in the U.S., this law will apply for any business that deals with European consumer’s personal data. Following this new law, many companies changed their privacy policy, like Facebook, which became more transparent, but this could force the SNS to also rethink their business model.
Or the citizens themselves need to react and stop using Facebook as an SNS to show their disagreement and force the company to change its business model. This users’ way of action could be sent as a strong message to other companies which may want to implement a business model close to Facebook’s. Eventually, we encourage citizens to think about the use and the stock of private data by big firms such as Google, Amazon, Facebook and Apple. As citizens, do we all really want to give them the opportunity of misusing our private data and influence our day-to-day life? Or do we prefer to maintain control over these?

7.3. Limitations & Further Studies

We are aware that our main limitation is our sample. First, we have not focused particularly on one nationality. We know that the cultural differences among the interviewees may change our findings. Nonetheless, as already mentioned, the goal of this study was to open a research area in the field of ethical and sustainable business model and thus, it did not focus on a comparison between the different nationalities. Although, this constitutes an interesting fact highlighted in our study and which could be the subject of further research. We observed a difference between Swedish interviewees and the other respondents. Indeed, Swedish people use real names on Facebook while the third of the International students changed it. They also share more information. We assumed that this can be explained by a transparency education and culture conveyed by the Swedish State as the Ratsit proves it. This online database is gathering information about every Swedish citizen, such as name, age, address, income revenues and more (www.ratsit.se).

Then, we decided to only interview students from Master level in Umeå University. They can be seen as quite privileged given their background, their education level and the fact that they study abroad. This may not be representative of Facebook’s community, but, as we are conducting a qualitative study, our purpose is not to generalize our findings but get a deeper understanding of people’s perceptions. Plus, in choosing those students, it gave us the chance to interview respondents who already knew about the data monetization because of their studies’ level or specialization. But interviewees themselves emphasized, for the majority, that they know a lot of people around them who are still unaware of the data monetization situation and continue to post a lot on the SNS. As an example, our Millennials respondents raised the topic of the next generation, the generation Z, that may not be aware of those data privacy issues and that fully embraces the big data. It would be interesting to run a study on those. The behavior between those two generations could be different as showed by Fullerton et al. (1996) that age, education and income influence the behavior when facing an unethical corporate situation. Also, the findings need to be taken carefully and not extrapolating them when applying them to other SNS. We analyzed here a free revenue model based on advertising, but this is not the case of LinkedIn, for example, which is using a freemium model and has different target groups (e.g. professionals).

Our qualitative study aimed to observe the reasoning of consumers and thus their perception, attitude and behavior. We are aware that usually quantitative are chosen to study consumers, as it is a broad sample. However, given our findings, we acknowledge that the interpretivist paradigm of this study was the best angle to analyze Facebook’s data monetization phenomenon. Firstly, the reasoning of users has been demonstrated by behavioral researches as the analysis of reasons for and reasons against a firm or product (Westaby, 2005). In this study, even if users seemed to be against the monetization of
their data, they adopted a different behavior that is in favour of Facebook. This makes the observation of such phenomenon more complicated because the simple analysis of the numbers such as the daily connection on Facebook or the current behavioral use of Facebook does not reflect the real intention of Facebook’s users. This data monetization paradox could not have been analyzed otherwise.

One of our interesting findings is the analysis of the two paradox we highlighted, the privacy one and the intention-behavior one, but a quantitative study could further analyze this phenomenon in observing the relations between people’s ethical values, intention and actual behavior and verify or not such intention-behavior gap. We also acknowledged that we used self-reported behavior and not actual observed behavior. As emphasized by Westaby (2005, p.3), there is an intention-behavior gap and when asking how people behave, they usually give us their intentions and not their real behavior. This could further be analyzed.

Also, one of our limitation is that we assumed that the scandal was source of unethical behavior, which was validated by our respondents since they all considered Facebook’s practice as unethical, but our study did not aim to look at the perceived ethicality of Facebook as a company. It would be insightful to see if all the respondents have the same definition of ethics. Therefore, the creation of a new scale specific to the e-services is worth conceivable. This does not exist yet since Freestone & Mitchell (2004) demonstrated that the Internet is a new unethical behavior environment and that the four ethical dimensions defined by Vitell & Muncy (1992) are obsolete. Therefore, this subject could be further explored.

Our findings present that corporate behavior had bad consequences on the firm reputation and brand equity since there are trust issues. We did not detail this part in the present study because we focused on the business model and not the marketing aspect of a firm (brand equity/loyalty/reputation/trust). We still decided to evoke it here since it came across the focus groups’ discussion quite often. It could be thus interesting to analyze those relationships in further studies.

Finally, our findings show a fear towards the evolution of SNS. More generally and at a bigger scale, it would be interesting to look at the consumers’ reasoning and perception of big data and its future.
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APPENDIX N°1: FOCUS GROUP QUESTION

Use of Facebook and sharing data online

We must understand how people use Facebook. So far, people are reluctant to share private information online and at the same time they are more and more publishing content, sharing private moments and videos. Having this sub-purpose in mind will lead us to understand the kind of data users are spontaneously willing to share on Facebook.

1. What do you usually expect from a firm (of which you are using the product)?
2. What do you think about Facebook and how do you use it?
3. What do you think about privacy and sharing info/data on Facebook?
4. What do you think about targeted marketing on Facebook?
5. How does this monetization of your data affect your behavior and why?
6. How does your opinion of the firm (in this case Facebook) influence your behavior (ethics scandals)?

Push questions:
7. Do you know how Facebook is offering a free registration?
8. How do you think they get money of you?
9. Do you think the way a social media is making money influence your choice of subscribing or not to this precise social media?
10. Did you hear about the Facebook Cambridge Analytica scandal? What did you think about it?
11. Would you give up on some of your private data to keep free access to Facebook? Which one? Why?
APPENDIX N°2: FACEBOOK POSTS

Pauline Brideron
23 avril, 11:53

Do you know how Facebook is making money? Have you read or listen to the recent Facebook Scandal with Cambridge Analytica? If you are Swedish, between 18-37 years old, then we need you! 😊😊 Besides, if you know people who recently deleted their Facebook account or who never registered on it, please let us know!

We are 2 business students currently writing our Master thesis about Facebook’s revenue stream which is based on trading your private data. We are seeking volunteers to participate in small talks, between 4-5 people, around 4 main questions. This would last around 1h to 1h30… with on top of everything, free fika! 🍲☕️

Send us a mp for more information (Fred or me),
We wish you a lovely day! 😊

J’aime  Commenter

Do you know how Facebook is making money? Have you read or listen to the recent Facebook Scandal with Cambridge Analytica? You know people who recently deleted their Facebook account or who never registered on it? We need you! We are 2 business students currently writing our Master thesis about Facebook’s revenue stream which is based on trading your private data. We are seeking volunteers to participate in small talks, between 4-5 people, around 4 main questions or face-to-face interviews. This would last around 1h to 1h30… with on top of everything, free fika! 🍲☕️

If you want to participate, you can fill this doodle: https://doodle.com/poll/fxq3hp42qhp8g28. For more information, contact me or Fred by PM!

We wish you a lovely week-end! 😊

Doodle: Small Talks on Facebook Revenue Stream

Hej, thank you for helping us and saving our thesis! 🙏

As previously said, we are 2 business students seeking volunteers to participate in small talks of 4-5 people, around 4 main questions, or face-to-face...

DOODLE.COM

J’aime  Commenter
APPENDIX N°3: CONSENT FORM

1st YEAR MASTER’S THESIS WORK, 15 ECTS

Research investigator:
Pauline Brideron and Frédéric Hussler

Purpose:
The purpose of this study is to examine the consumer reasoning of Facebook’s business model. Specifically, we want to understand how consumers understand and feel about the revenue stream of Facebook but also how their perceived value of the firm, and how it is affected. We will use this information for our master’s thesis to get a consumer view of business model in the perspective of practical contribution such as recommendation to redesign current social networking sites business models.

Procedures:
If you participate in this study, you will be in a group of approximately 4-5 students. There will be a facilitator who will ask questions and facilitate the discussion, and one note-taker to write down the ideas expressed within the group. If you volunteer to participate in this focus group, you will be asked some questions relating to your experience with Facebook. These questions will help us to better understand how you feel about the social media’s way of doing business.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality
Anonymous data from this study will be analyzed only by us. No individual participant will be identified or linked to the results. The results of this study may be available online and discussed during a presentation, however, your identity will not be disclosed. All information obtained in this study will be kept strictly confidential until the presentation and be destroyed after the study validation.

Consent
- I agree to participate in this focus group carried out by Pauline Brideron and Frédéric Hussler to aid with their research and I understand the aims of the project.
- I am aware of the topics to be discussed in the focus group.
- I am fully aware that I will remain anonymous throughout data reported and that I have the right to leave the focus group at any point.
- I am fully aware that data collected will be stored securely and safely.
- I am fully aware that I am not obliged to answer any question, but that I do so at my own free will.
- I agree to have the focus group recorded (dictaphone), so it can be transcribed after the focus group is held, knowing that no transcripts of what I say will appear on the research paper and that they will be destroyed after.
- I am aware that I can make any reasonable changes to this consent form.
By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you fully understand the above information and agree to participate in this focus group.

**Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant's name</th>
<th>Participant's signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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**Researchers**

- Pauline Brideron
- Frédéric Hussler
## APPENDIX N°4: TABLE

Table. Themes for our thematic network analysis adapted from Attride-Stirling (2001, p. 396)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussed issues</th>
<th>Basic themes</th>
<th>Organizing themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication way</td>
<td>Perceived benefits of using Facebook</td>
<td>Consumer perception of Facebook and their use of the platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>everybody uses it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helpful to communicate with family and friends</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>be aware of every news (local events or worldwide)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Community (university and buddy program)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feed based on interests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Time saving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vital</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>High switching costs</td>
<td>Perceived risks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Network effect</td>
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<td>Large influence</td>
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<td>Too much power</td>
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<td>Monopoly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not trustworthy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Privacy threat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Target according to preferences</td>
<td>Targeted marketing</td>
<td>Understanding of Facebook’s data monetization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data sold to other companies</td>
<td>Third parties involvement</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I never subscribed for them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Money out of private data</td>
<td>Facebook trade of data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information monetized</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>information taken by Facebook without consent</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alarming</td>
<td>Reaction toward their understanding of the data monetization</td>
<td>Attitude toward Facebook’s data monetization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interrogation on the use of the collected data</td>
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<tr>
<td>No free will and being manipulated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data is a new resource to make war</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethical issues</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Shared responsibility with consumers</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Not clearly stated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Privacy policies too long</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Not unaware but ignorant (++)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Blur around the use of the data</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Against the consumer will</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Manipulation (++)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Just business</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Scared about misuse of the data</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change of behavior towards data monetization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Minimization of the sharing data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Keep using it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Data privacy paradox</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer perception to alternatives to SNS business model</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Not willing to pay</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Reluctant to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Select data</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Vero</td>
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</tbody>
</table>