Chapter 6

Conclusions

The concept of privacy in India has not been investigated in detail, and also lack of empirical data with respect to privacy perceptions among Indian citizens. Recent developments in the Indian scenario e.g. privacy bill, NATGRID, UID project, signify need for privacy awareness and understanding in Indian masses. It is also important for policy makers to comprehend sentiment and opinion of masses for structuring effective laws and policies for citizens of India. Our study focuses on understanding privacy perceptions and expectations of Indian citizens. In the first phase, we conducted interviews among 20 participants and 4 focus group discussions with 31 participants in total, to collect qualitative data about the privacy perceptions. In the second phase, we developed a survey questionnaire to collect quantitative data. We collected responses (10,427) from various cities in India which could help in creating an information base for masses and policy makers, showcasing the true (perceived) picture of privacy in India on various platforms e.g. mobile phone, credit cards, online social networks, and government related issues.

Key takeaways from this research work are stated below:

- Citizens have misinformed mental models of the privacy situation; e.g. some portion of the participants felt that there is a law which protects them where there is no privacy law in India, but.

- Most participants felt passwords to be the most protected Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and then, financial information (bank, credit card details). In comparison to this, religion, mobile phone number, and health related information were rated as less protected PII.

- Mobile phones are becoming the next destination for storing private information. Participants stored personal information like passwords, credit card numbers, Permanent Account Number (PAN), PINs, etc. Privacy seems to be the primary concern for not storing personal information on the mobile phones for the rest.

- About 5% of the survey participants tend to accept friends request from strangers or people whom they dont know, but just have common friends. This behavior seems to be same even with the third party applications.

- About 80% of the survey respondents were aware of identity theft issue through credit cards.

- About 65% of the survey respondents felt comfortable to use the ATM center with more than one machine in it.

- About 5% of the survey participants tend to accept friends requests from strangers or people whom they dont know, but just have common friends. This behavior seems to be same even with the third party applications.

We are in the process writing a more academic style paper on reasons, and implications of the results from this data. We are also working on comparing the numbers from this study to the numbers with 2004 study from India and compare our results with other prior privacy studies around the world.