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Abstract

The present study is the first to examine adolescents' reasons for unfriending people on Facebook. By means of open-end questions, 419 participants described the primary online (i.e., arising from friends' behavior on Facebook) or offline (i.e., emerging from Facebook friends' offline behavior) reason for which they recently unfriended someone. Two researchers took part in the coding process. Qualitative analyses revealed that unfriending happened mainly for online reasons, such as posting (too much) inappropriate, polarizing or uninteresting posts, seeking attention, bragging or stalking, and other irritating behaviors (e.g., using bad grammar). Some adolescents indicated that they unfriended people due to online reasons related to replacing friendships or interests, quarrels, and incompatible friends/family. In previous studies among adults, quarrels and incompatible friends/family were reported solely as offline reasons. These findings suggest that adolescents potentially argue more often online or that their quarrel is so intense it leads to unfriending decisions. Adults in turn, also unfriend people because of posts related to everyday life (e.g., jobs and children). Such everyday life events seemed to be less relevant for adolescents' unfriending. The practical value of this study is that it provides a typology of adolescents' online and offline reasons for unfriending. This typology can be used for further research or by practitioners developing awareness campaigns as it indicates which behavior/events mostly provoke unfriending. Although viewing a post as inappropriate or polarizing might be subjective, general guidelines on how to respectfully address sensitive issues (e.g., political, religious, or other societal issues) can be given.

Keywords: social network sites – Facebook – adolescents – unfriending – online reasons – offline reasons

1. Introduction

In today's society, social network sites (SNSs) offer adolescents a major opportunity to maintain and expand their social circles. Consequently, an increasing number of researchers have focused on (the formation of) friendships on SNSs,¹⁻³ and especially on Facebook as this is the most popular SNS.^{4,5} The Pew Research Center indicated that, in the United States, 71% of adolescents (13-17 years old) have Facebook accounts.⁴ In Flanders, 87% of adolescents (12-18 years old) use Facebook.⁵

However, just as friendships can end offline, this may also happen on Facebook by removing someone from a list of friends. This behavior is called "unfriending"^{6,7} and implies that the friendship on Facebook no longer exists, so the two involved parties stop getting access to each other's profiles. Previous research showed that adolescents often engage in unfriending behavior. Madden and colleagues⁶ found that 74% of adolescents (12-17 years old) have already removed people from their list of friends. Although unfriending might have positive effects (e.g., avoiding harassment),⁸ this high number must be considered cautiously as adolescents may also derive many benefits from their online connections. These benefits may include increased self-confidence, well-being, and mental health, but also obtaining help and information.⁹⁻¹² Additionally, prior research indicates that unfriending on Facebook might cause negative emotions (i.e., feeling depressed, frustrated, or worried) among the unfriended individuals.^{13,14} Therefore, unfriending is also perceived as a threatening and harsh act toward the unfriended parties.^{7,15}

Given that friendships offer several advantages for adolescents,⁹⁻¹² acquiring a better understanding of the reasons why adolescents end friendships on Facebook is needed. Insights into the causes of unfriending are also enriching for the adolescents who become unfriended on Facebook. Because adolescence is a life phase in which individuals are concerned about the impressions they make on peers and the extent to which others appreciate them,¹⁶ a better understanding of the reasons for unfriending may help adolescents to mentally accept

unfriending behavior on Facebook. Moreover, it will prevent them from engaging in behaviors that would possibly lead to unfriending.

Although a few prior studies have investigated adults' reasons for unfriending on Facebook (18 years and older),^{15,17} a clear understanding of what causes an adolescent to end a friendship on Facebook is lacking. This is remarkable as adolescents, compared with individuals of other age groups, attach more importance to their friends.¹⁸⁻²⁰

To gain a deeper understanding of the reasons why adolescents unfriend people on Facebook, the current study used a qualitative approach. Contrary to previous research involving convenience samples of adults,^{15,17} we did not provide a limited number of reasons and answering options. Instead, by using open-end questions to explore the topic more broadly, we questioned adolescents about the reasons for their unfriending, and subsequently, we categorized these reasons. Hereby, we made a distinction between those reasons arising from friends' behavior on Facebook (i.e., online reasons) and those emerging from Facebook friends' offline behavior (i.e., offline reasons). Additionally, we randomly selected our participants. The practical value of this study is that it provides a typology of adolescents' online and offline reasons for unfriending. This typology can be used for further researchers or by practitioners developing awareness campaigns as it indicates which behaviors/events mostly provoke unfriending.

2. Reasons for unfriending

Before two people become friends on Facebook, the initiator of the friendship sends a request which must be accepted by the person with whom the initiator wants to be connected.^{6,17} Most of the time the friend requests are granted²¹ as it is easier to say yes than no.²² However, this does not guarantee long-term friendships. The expectancy violation theory (EVT) of Burgoon and Jones,²³ an interpersonal communication theory, states that people use their expectations about the behavioral pattern of interaction partners to determine their relation with them. This means that when the behavior of an interaction partner is not in line with the expectations that

an adolescent has (i.e., unexpected violations of the adolescent's norms and expectations), it may have consequences for the relation with the interaction partner.²³⁻²⁵

One of these consequences might be unfriending, a behavior that 74% of adolescents already conducted.⁶ To date, only two studies have examined the motives for unfriending people on SNSs, with an exclusively focus on Facebook. Both these studies surveyed convenience samples of adults (18 years and older).^{15,17} Results showed that adults' own decision to unfriend someone on Facebook was mostly taken by the individual receiving and accepting the friend request.¹⁷ Results also pointed out that it is important to distinguish between those reasons arising from friends' behavior on Facebook (i.e., online reasons) and those emerging from Facebook friends' offline behavior (i.e., offline reasons). It was shown that 55% of adults' unfriending decisions were made for online reasons, whereas 28% of adults unfriended people for their offline behavior.¹⁷ The most common online reasons were writing about or sharing (too much) unimportant, inappropriate (e.g., racist and sexist), or polarizing (e.g., politics and religion) topics and photos.^{15,17} However, too little posting activity also served as an incentive for unfriending someone on Facebook, just like sending too many game requests.¹⁵ The main offline reasons were related to people's personalities, dislike behavior (e.g., betray),^{15,17} and alienation.¹⁵ Relocations, quarrels, incompatible friends, or the end of a romantic relationship were also recurring offline reasons.^{15,17}

The ending of friendships has also been (extensively) studied in the context of the offline world. For example, Rose²⁶ specifically examined the reasons for friendship termination among adolescents and young adults (17-22 years old). In this study, the participants had to write an essay to describe what they dis(liked) about the friendship and why it ended. Results indicated that they disconnected with others in the offline world due to physical separation, new friends replacing old friends, dislike behavior (including alcohol and drug abuse), romantic relationships, and competing interests.²⁶ To some extent, these reasons are analogous to the offline reasons for unfriending someone on Facebook.^{15,17} Given that, on Facebook, adolescents

can connect with friends they know from the offline world, it is possible that the motives for ending a friendship in the offline world are also important for unfriending on Facebook.

Based on these insights, we made a classification for online and offline reasons (see Table 1). Hereby, we made a distinction between specific online or offline reasons, and reasons that can possibly occur both online and offline (e.g., quarrels and romantic issues). In the current study, the classification was used as a starting point for coding the various online and offline reasons. During the coding process, there was room for adjustments.

Table 1
Classification of reasons for unfriending

	Online reasons	Offline reasons
Specific online or offline reasons	Too many posts Uninteresting posts (unimportant posts or being non-active) Inappropriate or polarizing posts Gaining attention (e.g., game requests)	Personality Dislike behavior Alcohol and drug abuse
Reasons that can both occur online and offline	Romantic relationship Quarrels Alienation Incompatible friends Replacing friends or other interests	Romantic relationship Quarrels Relocation or alienation Incompatible friends Replacing friends or other interests

3. Method

3.1 Participants and data collection

This study drew upon data from a larger “Best Friends Forever on SNS” project. In April and May 2016, a paper and pencil survey was conducted to gain insight into adolescents’ unfriending behavior on Facebook. We focused on Facebook because this is the most popular of the SNSs among adolescents.^{4,5} In the survey, adolescents were first asked if they already had unfriended people on Facebook (1 = no; 2 = yes, *I did it once*; 3 = yes, *I already did it two to five times*; 4 = yes, *I already did it six to ten times*; 5 = yes, *I did it more than ten times*), whether they remembered the last person they unfriended (0 = yes; 1 = no), and whether this last person was the initiator of the friendship (1 = *I sent a request*; 2 = *I received a request*; 3 = *I do not*

remember). Thereafter, by means of open-end questions, adolescents were asked about the primary online or offline reasons for which they clicked on the “Unfriend” button.

The participants included 1,316 adolescents from 14 Flemish schools, of which 1,117 individuals (84.9%) had Facebook profiles. The schools were randomly chosen from the different Flemish provinces. Prior to the study, we sought approval from the school board. After the school board had provided permission, we sought approval from the parents. Data collection took place in the school during one class hour. When the researcher entered the class, the adolescents had the right to refuse to participate in the study or to withdraw at any time. The study protocol received approval from the Ethics Committee for the Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Antwerp.

3.2 Data analyses

To examine the online and offline reasons why adolescents unfriend others on Facebook, two researchers took part in the coding process. The first independent researcher used existing codes from the literature (i.e., deductive coding; see Table 1) with room for adjustments as previous work indicated that adolescents share values that might differ from those of adults.²⁷ Based on the reasons mentioned by the adolescents, the researcher had the right to add missing codes or could remove superfluous codes. The second researcher, who was involved in the current study, used the resulting codes. During the coding process, the researchers used memos to write down their thoughts and interpretations so that the reliability of the coding work increased.²⁸

Kappa agreement scores were calculated to determine if an agreement was found between the two raters when they assigned the various online and offline reasons to certain categories. The interpretation rules of Landis and Koch²⁹ were used to assess whether the kappa agreement scores indicated a slight agreement (0 to .20), a fair agreement (.21 to .40), a moderate agreement (.41 to .60), a substantial agreement (.61 to .80), or an (almost) perfect agreement (.81 to 1.00). In the case of a mismatch between the two researchers, peer debriefing was used to assign the correct code to a particular reason.³⁰ After a vertical analysis was performed for each participant,

a horizontal analysis across all participants was conducted to develop general insights and patterns.³¹ In order to increase validity, these findings were illustrated with quotes.^{28,32}

4. Results

Out of the 1,117 adolescents, 242 (21.7%) mentioned that they had never unfriended someone on Facebook. Of the remaining 875 adolescents, 204 (23.3%) indicated that they only once unfriended someone while 206 adolescents (23.5%) had already unfriended people more than ten times. Of the 875 adolescents, a total of 479 adolescents (54.7%) remembered the last person they had unfriended on Facebook. As shown in Appendix A, this group of 479 adolescents was still representative for the initial study population as there were almost no differences between the group that did remember the last person they unfriended and the group that did not remember the last person they unfriended. Both groups were compared based on sex, age, personality, frequency of Facebook viewing and posting, number of Facebook friends, and number of strangers on Facebook (i.e., people they have never met in the offline world).¹ Of the 479 adolescents who remembered the last person they had unfriended on Facebook, 419 adolescents (87.5%) mentioned reasons for unfriending in the questionnaire's open text boxes. The final sample consisted of 419 adolescents, including 204 (48.7%) girls and 189 (45.1%) boys (26 adolescents did not indicate their sex) with an average age of 15.34 ($SD = 1.47$).

Table 2
Adolescents' last unfriended person: Who initiated the friendship?

	N	%
I sent the friend request	34	10.86
I received the friend request	279	89.14
Total	313	100

Note: 106 out of 419 adolescents did not remember who initiated the friendship

Of our 419 respondents who remembered the last person they unfriended on Facebook, 106 adolescents did not remember which person took the initiative to start the friendship. Of the 313 respondents that did remember who initiated the friendship, only 34 adolescents (10.9%) indicated that they had sent the request, whereas 279 adolescents (89.1) indicated that they had been the receivers of the friend request (see Table 2). These numbers suggest that adolescents are much less likely to unfriend someone if they initiated the friendship themselves. Adolescents largely unfriend people from whom they have received friend requests.

Additionally, the results showed that unfriending on Facebook happened mainly due to online reasons. More specifically, 214 out of 419 adolescents (51.1%) provided exclusively online reasons to explain their unfriending behavior, while 125 adolescents (29.8%) provided exclusively offline reasons to explain their unfriending behavior. Eighty adolescents (19.1%) provided a combination of both online and offline reasons explaining their unfriending.

To further analyze the reasons as to why adolescents unfriended people on Facebook, two researchers took part in the coding process. For the online reasons, we found an almost significant perfect agreement between the two raters' judgements when they assigned the various reasons to certain categories ($K = .88, p < .00$). For the offline reasons, the kappa scores pointed toward a significant perfect agreement ($K = .97, p < .00$). Tables 3 and 4 provide an overview of the online and offline reasons with examples cited by the adolescents. The reasons are ranked according to their importance.

The most common online reason for unfriending people on Facebook was related to inappropriate or polarizing posts (20.1%), such as offensive posts about politics or religions. When a friend posted things related to such topics, these adolescents ended the friendship. Another frequently recurring online reason for unfriending was related to uninteresting posts (17.4%). When a friend posted things that not appealed to these adolescents, they terminated the friendship. On the other hand, adolescents soon unfriended people when they posted too many things (10.2%), or when they sought too much attention, bragged, or stalked (16%). An interesting finding was that adolescents considered other irritating behavior, such as sending

game requests or not using a language correctly, also to be a main reason to unfriend (10.5%).

Some adolescents unfriended people on Facebook due to alienation (4.8%), the replacement of friendships or interests (3.7%), incompatible friends/family (2.7%), romantic issues (2.4%), or quarrels (2%).

As far as offline reasons were concerned, adolescents seemed to be susceptible to people's personality (19.5%). They unfriended mean and arrogant people. Another commonly cited reason was someone's irritating behavior (17.6%). For instance, when someone was noisy, adolescents ended the friendship with this person on Facebook. Reasons related to relocations or alienation (14.2%) also seemed to be important, indicating that a substantial number of adolescents attached importance to staying in touch with their friends in real life.

Among the offline reasons as well as among the online reasons, a reasonable number of adolescents unfriended people on Facebook as they did not know these friends either online or in person. Not knowing someone was a reason cited for 6.5% among adolescents who unfriended for online reasons, and for 5.9% among adolescents who unfriended for offline reasons.

Table 3

Online reasons for unfriending with examples cited by the adolescents

	N	%
Inappropriate or polarizing posts “Offensive posts about religion”	59	20.07
Uninteresting posts (unimportant posts or being non-active) “Uninteresting posts and pictures”	51	17.35
Looking for too much attention / bragging / stalking “Posts things to seek attention and pity”	47	15.99
Too many posts “Posting things every five minutes”	30	10.20
Irritating behavior “Game requests, whining, or being bad at grammar”	31	10.54
Not knowing the person “I realized myself that I did not know and understand the person”	19	6.46
Alienation “I knew the person from a camp long time ago and we have not chatted for a long time”	14	4.76
Replacing friends or other interests “We had to discuss something about a game and then I deleted the person”	11	3.74
Nothing, just for the heck of it “Nothing, I only use Facebook to log in to apps faster”	9	3.06
Incompatible friends/family “My parents found that the person had a bad influence on me”	8	2.72
Romantic relationship “My ex checked me and my love’s profile”	7	2.38
Quarrels “We argued about stupid things”	6	2.04
Do not know “I do not remember”	1	.34
Everything “Everything about the person”	1	.34
Total	294	100

Table 4

Offline reasons for unfriending with examples cited by the adolescents

	N	%
Personality (pedantic, arrogant, mean, rough, ...) “The person was stubborn and never listened to others”	40	19.51
Irritating behavior “The person annoyed me by staring for a long time”	36	17.56
Relocation or alienation “I never saw the person because he changed from school”	29	14.15
Manipulative behavior (lie, gossip, influencing self-esteem) “The person gossiped and pulled me and my friends apart”	15	7.32
Quarrels “We had a struggle because I changed from sports club”	16	7.80
Not knowing the person “I did not know the person in real life”	12	5.85
Bullying behavior “The person bullied me at school”	12	5.85
Incompatible friends/family “My parents were quarreling with the person”	10	4.88
Nothing, just for the heck of it “Actually, because of nothing”	10	4.88
Romantic relationship “We broke up”	9	4.39
Replacing friends or other interests “The friendship changed over the years”	6	2.93
Do not know “I do not remember”	4	1.95
Alcohol and drug abuse “The person had an alcohol problem”	3	1.46
Everything “Everything about the person”	2	.98
Do not want to say it “This is a personal matter”	1	.49
Total	205	100

5. Conclusion and discussion

This study is the first to examine adolescents' reasons for unfriending people on Facebook. The practical value of this study is that it provides a typology of adolescents' online and offline reasons for unfriending. Insights from this typology can be used for further research or by practitioners developing awareness campaigns as it indicates which behaviors/events mostly provoke unfriending. In order to develop such a typology, open-end questions were used. A total of 419 adolescents mentioned the primary online (i.e., those reasons arising from friends' behavior on Facebook) or offline reason (i.e., those reasons emerging from Facebook friends' offline behavior) for which they recently unfriended someone on Facebook. Qualitative analyses revealed that unfriending happened mainly for online reasons, which is in line with previous research among adults.¹⁷ The most common online reasons for adolescents to unfriend were related to inappropriate or polarizing posts (e.g., posts about politics or religions), uninteresting posts, seeking attention, bragging or stalking, posting too much, and other irritating behaviors (e.g., using bad grammar and sending game request). These reasons are similar to the most common online reasons identified by adults.^{15,17} One reason as to why adolescents' often unfriend people because of the online reasons described previously might be related to their identity development and self-exploration. Facebook provides individuals, and especially adolescents, with the opportunity to experiment with self-disclosure and self-presentation.^{33,34} However, these online self-presentations and their shared opinions will be judged by others and especially by peers as adolescents are highly influenced by them.¹⁶ These judgements may lead to unfriending when there are violations of their norms (cf. EVT).²³⁻²⁵ Regarding the findings, practitioners could develop campaigns to make adolescents more aware of potential online behavior that might be irritating for their Facebook connections and possibly leads to unfriending. Although viewing a post as inappropriate or polarizing might be subjective, general guidelines on how to respectfully address sensitive issues (e.g., political, religious, or other societal issues) can be given. On the other hand, these campaigns could raise awareness about the alternatives for unfriending, such as changing privacy settings to hide some posts. As

Walrave and colleagues³⁴ indicated that adolescents, apply fewer privacy settings than adults, it is possible that adolescents were not aware of (how to use) other (privacy) settings on Facebook (i.e., social media literacy).³⁵

Notwithstanding the apparent similarities between adults' and adolescents' online reasons for unfriending, some important differences should be underscored. Some adolescents indicated that they unfriended people on Facebook due to online quarrels, incompatible online friends/family (e.g., bad influences), replacing interests, and new friendships replacing former Facebook friendships. In previous studies among adults, quarrels and incompatible friends/family were reported solely as offline reasons.^{15,17} These findings suggest that adolescents and their friends potentially argue more often online or that their quarrel is so intense it leads to unfriending decisions. Adults in turn, also unfriend people because of posts related to everyday life (e.g., jobs and children).^{15,17} Such everyday life posts appear to be less relevant to adolescents' unfriending behavior.

As far as offline reasons were concerned, adolescents seemed to be susceptible to people's personalities and irritating behaviors. Relocation or alienation (e.g., having less contact) was also a reason to unfriend someone on Facebook. These reasons are in line with the most common reasons identified by adults.^{15,17} Furthermore, adults' unfriending behavior is also influenced by the end of a romantic relationship whereas this was less common among adolescents.

Among both the offline and online reasons, a reasonable number of adolescents unfriended people on Facebook as they did not know these people either online or in person. This is remarkable as previous research indicates that more than 1 out of 2 adolescents (51.5%-64.6%) is connected with strangers (i.e., people they have never met in the offline world) on SNSs.^{1,36} Therefore, it would be interesting to investigate the extent to which adolescents accept friend requests from strangers, and in which circumstances they unfriend these persons later on and for which reasons. Furthermore, similar to a previous study among adults by Sibona and Walczak,¹⁷ our results indicated that adolescents' decision to unfriend someone on Facebook was mostly related to individuals from whom they received (and accepted) the friend request. That is,

adolescents appear to be much less likely to unfriend someone if they initiated the friendship themselves. This can be because of the fact that most of the time friend requests are granted,²¹ it is easier to say yes than no.²² However, this does not guarantee long-term friendships if the initiator's behavior is not in line with the receiver's expectations (i.e., EVT).²³⁻²⁵ Possibly the initiator is more motivated to maintain the friendship. Furthermore, Hallinan³⁷ states that the initiator of the friend request has lower status than the receiver. As the initiator of the friendship sends a request (i.e., lower status person) which must be accepted by the person with whom the initiator wants to be connected (i.e., higher status person),^{6,17} each response of the higher status person generates the next move in the friendship process.³⁷ Nevertheless, it is recommended for future research to examine the underlying mechanisms in more detail. Additionally, it would be interesting for future research to include questions about the last time an unfriending happened to the adolescents themselves. If possible, it would be recommended for future research to simultaneously conduct research among the person who makes the unfriending decisions and the unfriended parties.

6. Limitations

Despite the study's results, some limitations should be acknowledged. This study examined adolescents' past unfriending behavior, whereby the results might be distorted by recall bias.³² We tried to avoid this bias by asking adolescents questions about the last person they unfriended on Facebook. Nevertheless, a substantial number of adolescents did not remember the last person they unfriended, and whether they were the initiator or the receiver of the friendship request. Our analyses revealed no substantial differences between those adolescents that remembered the last person they unfriended and those that did not, suggesting that our final sample was representative for the initial study population. Furthermore, as this study relied on cross-sectional data from a larger 'Best Friends Forever on SNS' project, the number of scales and the number of items of some of these scales (e.g., Facebook viewing, Facebook posting) included in the survey were limited. Future research might wish to include more variables and could measure these variables

with more extensive scales. In addition, it would be interesting for future research to collect longitudinal data on adolescents' unfriending at several intervals. Longitudinal data would enhance our understanding of adolescents' global unfriending behavior. Because the current study only asked questions about the last unfriended person, the number of reasons investigated was limited. Future research could also make use of more international samples as our study only drew upon data gathered among 479 adolescents from 14 Flemish schools. Although we made use of a representative sample with schools randomly chosen from the different Flemish provinces, it is recommended to conduct the research on a larger scale. By doing this, the external validity of the study's results can be explored as international comparative research could shed some light on possible differences in (reasons for) unfriending.²⁸ Moreover, it would be interesting to investigate the relationship between adolescents' unfriending behavior and other related factors, such as adolescents' experience of being unfriended on Facebook. It is possible that experiencing friendship removal influences adolescents' own unfriending behavior. Additionally, we suggest for future research to examine the influence of adolescents' friendship management (e.g., the number of friends, the friendship acceptance threshold, and the degree of communication on Facebook), their frequency of Facebook viewing and Facebook posting, their attitude towards unfriending, their personality traits, and their perceived social norms about unfriending on their unfriending decisions.

Besides the fact that unfriending is a frequently occurring behavior (78.3% of adolescents in our sample already unfriended someone on Facebook), future research could also explore the alternatives for unfriending, such as the "Unfollowing" feature. This function allows users to remain friends with particular persons, without seeing their status updates in the news feed. At the end of 2017, Facebook also introduced the "Snooze" feature. By snoozing a friend for 30 days, users temporarily do not see the friend's status updates in their news feed. Future research could investigate the reasons why adolescents are (not) inclined to opt for unfriending, and for which reasons they apply these other features.

7. Author disclosure statement

No competing financial interests exist.

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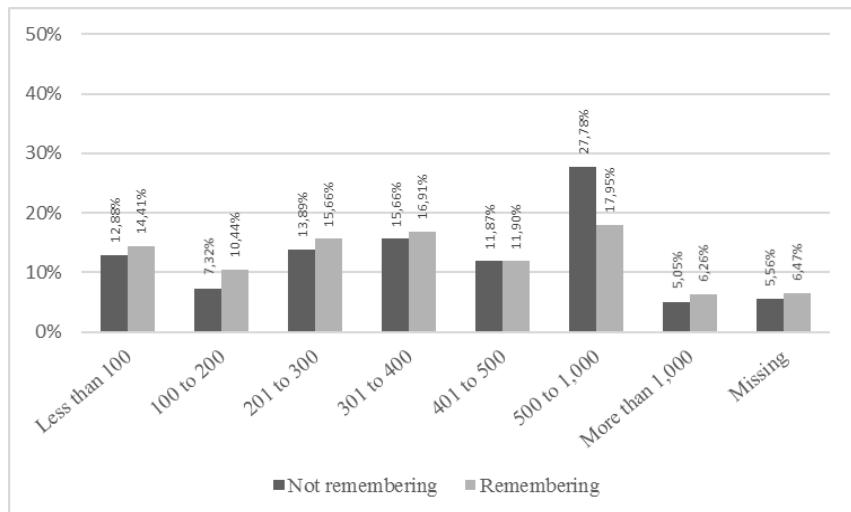
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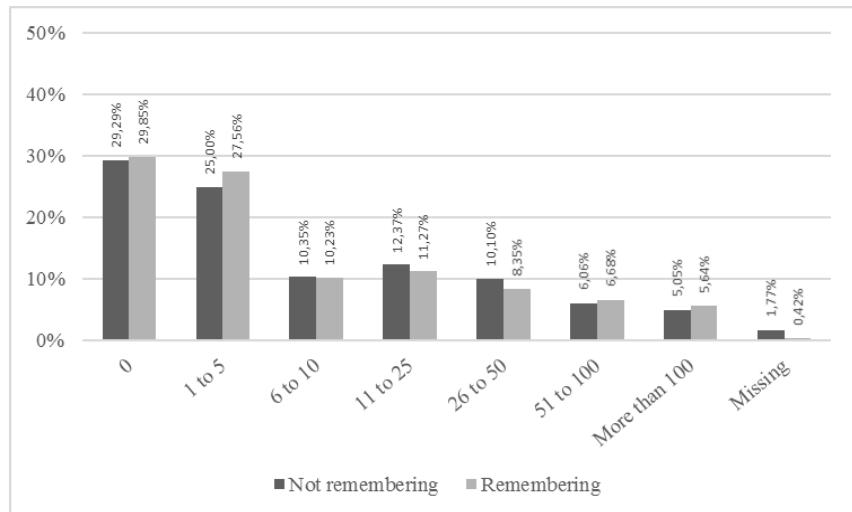
Appendix A ‘Descriptive comparison between the group of adolescents who did not remember the last person they unfriended on Facebook and the group of adolescents that did remember the last person they unfriended’

	396 adolescents (not remembering)	479 adolescents (remembering)	Sig. difference
Sex	Girls = 197 (49.75%) Boys = 188 (47.47%) Missing = 11 (2.78%)	Girls = 229 (47.81%) Boys = 220 (45.93%) Missing = 30 (6.26%)	/ / /
Age	$M = 15.70 (SD = 1.39)$	$M = 15.33 (SD = 1.47)$.00*
Big Five: Extraversion	$M = 3.56 (SD = .60)$	$M = 3.57 (SD = .61)$.81
Big Five: Neuroticism	$M = 2.94 (SD = .65)$	$M = 3.02 (SD = .60)$.26
Big Five: Openness	$M = 3.40 (SD = .52)$	$M = 3.39 (SD = .56)$.85
Big Five: Conscientiousness	$M = 3.16 (SD = .53)$	$M = 3.20 (SD = .58)$.49
Big Five: Agreeableness	$M = 3.46 (SD = .43)$	$M = 3.37 (SD = .48)$.04*
Frequency of Facebook viewing	$M = 7.56 (SD = 1.84)$	$M = 7.45 (SD = 1.85)$.37
Frequency of posting things on Facebook	$M = 4.29 (SD = 2.93)$	$M = 4.39 (SD = 2.84)$.60

Number of friends on Facebook



Number of strangers on Facebook (i.e., people they have never met in the offline world)¹



**p*-value < .05

Note: For measuring adolescents' personality we used the Dutch translation of the Big Five Inventory (BFI).³⁸ The BFI measures five personality traits, namely (1) extraversion or the extent to which someone is talkative, assertive, and energetic (e.g., I see myself as someone who generates a lot of enthusiasm), (2) neuroticism or the extent to which someone is easily upset and neurotic (e.g., I see myself as someone who worries a lot), (3) openness or the extent to which someone is intellectual, imaginative, and independent-minded (e.g., I see myself as someone who is inventive), (4) conscientiousness or the extent to which someone is orderly, responsible, and dependable (e.g., I see myself as someone who does things efficiently), and (5) agreeableness or the extent to which someone is good-natured, cooperative, and trusting (e.g., I see myself as someone who has a forgiving nature).^{38,39} Five fully labeled answering options ranging from "totally disagree" (1) to "totally agree" (5) were provided. Reliability analyses indicated that the scale for each trait was reliable ($\alpha = .64$ to $.82$). Adolescents' frequency of Facebook viewing (i.e., the frequency to which the adolescents check their own Facebook profiles or newsfeeds) and Facebook posting (i.e., the extent to which the adolescents post content on their own Facebook profiles or others' profiles) was measured with a single item. A fully labeled 10-point Likert scale ranging from "less than once a month" (1) to "more than ten times a day" (10) was provided.