

## **CMC Research Assignment and Assessment 2021-2022:**

### **I. General Theme : Knowledge sharing on Social Network Platforms**

**Assignment:** perform a small-scale, well-motivated research on knowledge sharing and collaboration on one or several social network platforms.

You perform the research (preferably) in pairs (groups of 2).

Based on your research you deliver 2 pieces of work (for content, form, and assessment criteria, see below):

- **Written Research Report**
- **Oral Research Presentation (supported by presentation slides or video)**

Deadline handing in research report: Jan. 14, 2022, end of day.

Deadline handing in presentation: Jan. 19, 2022, end of day.

Presentation date: probably on Jan. 20 or 21, 2022.

In the CMC course you have studied literature on:

- i. Enterprise Social Media and their Affordances for Knowledge Sharing;
- ii. Social Network Analysis and Visualization;
- iii. Computer-Mediated Communication Competence;
- iv. Computer-Mediated Discourse and its Analysis.

Your research focusses on social media data and /or user questionnaire data, revealing interaction patterns of users that indicate interesting aspects of knowledge sharing and collaboration on social media, and/or competent computer-mediated communication.

### **II. Research components**

#### **1. Research question:**

In this final assignment you are asked to combine all this information in a research based on a question that is:

- Well-delimited (search for a clear focus);
- Well-crafted (formulated with care, that is using the right terms for the main concepts involved, and formulated correctly, completely and accurately);
- Empirically answerable from the data collected and analyzed;
- Non-trivial (the answer is of apparent interest and outcomes are not known in advance);
- Embeddable in the course literature (the study has relations with the main course literature concepts);
- Motivated by a hypothesis, even if it is no more than an informal hunch;

- Open-ended (the results of the study contribute new knowledge; the question leaves the door open to unexpected findings)

## 2. Data collection:

The type and amount of data collected for your study, their sampling technique and the process of collection are well described and motivated.

## 3. Operationalization of key concepts:

The key concepts involved in the phenomenon you study are operationalized in empirically measurable terms. This means that the key concepts get an unambiguous definition, and are formulated in concrete, textual terms, such that any other researcher, examining the same data, gets the same results. The more abstract a concept is, the more difficult it is to find a concrete operationalization, without a risk of reduction or distortion. Notice that questions involving highly abstract concepts are often the most interesting to ask.

## 4. Data analysis:

Analytical methods are drawn from qualitative and/or quantitative paradigms, whose results are appropriate to be subjected to a social network analysis, and allow to be explored by social network visualizations.

## 5. Interpretation:

Interpretation of the results is done in a competent and skillful way. It takes place on three levels: close to the result data (involving summarizing and synthesizing the results obtained, and identifying patterns), close to the research question (requiring an explicit indication of how the results answer the question; medium and situational variables are taken into account to explain expected and unexpected results), and beyond the research question (calling upon the researcher to extrapolate from the findings of the study to their theoretical, methodological, and/or practical implications).

# III. Assessment criteria:

## A. Research content:

The research should be set up in an academic way, and conducted according to academic requirements (for instance, it should be reproducible). Based on data collected, the research is supposed to investigate some well-defined aspect of knowledge sharing on social network services from a well-delimited perspective. The interest of the research is to provide insight in knowledge sharing and collaboration on social media platforms.

## Assessment criteria of research content:

1. Problem statement or research question: interest, delimitation, formulation, link with some aspect of social network analysis or visualization;
2. Theoretical embedding: embedding in course literature studied in this course; relevancy of notions introduced; definitions of key notions; adequacy of sources mentioned; coherence; consistency;
3. Methodology: motivation and elicitation of data collection; operationalization of concepts to be measured; appropriateness of methods chosen; correct application of method(s); overall feasibility;
4. Results: validity and reproducibility of results; exploration of results;
5. Outcomes: interpretation of results at three levels.

## **B. Research forms:**

### **(i) Written Research Report** (partly in Dutch):

If you don't feel confident about writing the report in English, you are allowed to write it in Dutch.

The text length of the report should be about 8 pages, in 12pt Calibri or similar font, single-spaced (appendices not included). This is about 4,000 words. A variation of 10% is acceptable. Also text length depends on group size. With a triple, report may have a length of 10 pages (5,000 words). Indicate in a footnote on the first page of the report who did what.

#### 0. Abstract:

- a) Is er een 'abstract' aanwezig?
- b) Beschrijft het abstract de kern van het onderzoek?
- c) Is het abstract beknopt, to-the-point, en helder?

#### 1. Algemene onderzoeksvraag / probleemstelling:

- a) heeft de vraag betrekking op 'knowledge sharing on social media platforms'?
- b) is de vraag origineel?
- c) is de vraag theorie-gestuurd?
- d) sluit de vraag aan bij de literatuur die is bestudeerd tijdens het college?
- e) worden er aardige (interessante, belangwekkende) voorspellingen of verwachtingen geuit over de mogelijke onderzoeksuitkomsten?
- f) is de vraag te beantwoorden met de middelen en data die voorhanden zijn?

#### 2. Selectie van data:

- a) voldoet de datasetselectie aan de in de opdracht gestelde eisen: kennisdeling op socialemediaplatformen, in combinatie met socialenetwerkanalyse(s) en –visualisaties?
- b) wordt er een duidelijke onderbouwing gegeven van de datasetselectie?
- c) Zijn de gekozen data geschikt om te gebruiken voor het beantwoorden van de onderzoeksvraag?

#### 3. Operationalisatie van kernbegrippen:

- a) worden de kernbegrippen (of de componenten die hiervan een indicator zijn) éénduidig gedefinieerd? (bijv. in geval van kennisdeling op Twitter, wat is de definitie van kennisdeling die wordt gehanteerd?)
- b) worden de kernbegrippen vertaald naar een zo'n objectief mogelijk empirisch meetinstrument?
- c) worden codeercategorieën helder beschreven en voldoende expliciet geoperationaliseerd, zodat deze zo objectief en consistent mogelijk kunnen worden toegepast op de data?

#### 4. Keuze en toepassing van onderzoeksmethode:

- a) Is de methode (of: zijn de methodes) die gekozen is (of: zijn) voor het onderzoek de best passende bij de onderzoeksvraag en onderzoeksdata? (bijv. bij het onderzoeken van een mogelijke verband tussen bereidheid tot kennisdeling op socialemediaplatformen en computercommunicatiecompetentie, worden de geschikte methoden in gezet om een mogelijk verband aan te tonen?)
- b) Is de gekozen methode correct toegepast?
- c) Is de analyse van het bestudeerde verschijnsel betrouwbaar, en overtuigend?

#### 5. Interpretatie van resultaten:

- a) Worden de resultaten van de analyses compact en inzichtelijk weergegeven, en kernachtig samengevat?
- b) Worden de onderzoeksvraag en deelvragen beantwoord, en worden onverwachte resultaten uitgelegd?
- c) Worden de implicaties van de resultaten voor de theorie en de praktijk in ogenschouw genomen?

#### 6. Rapportage:

- a) Is rapportage beknopt, logisch gestructureerd en is er een duidelijke samenhang?
- b) Is spelling correct, taalgebruik begrijpelijk, en formuleringen ter zake doende?
- c) Is vormgeving passend en consistent?
- d) Zijn gebruikte bronnen compleet en correct vermeld?

#### (ii) Oral Research Presentation:

The oral presentation supported by slides or other materials is assessed by your peers and by myself with respect to:

- **Clarity, Comprehensibility and Coherence** (Was the content of the research understandable for you?)
- **Informativity** (After the presentation, has your knowledge and insight increased with respect to knowledge sharing on social media platforms, and / or methodological issues?)
- **Academic Depth** (Was the content of the research superficial or did it explore in-depth one or more aspects of the phenomenon investigated?)
- **Entertainability** (Could you keep your attention throughout the whole presentation?)