

Virtual Social Capital

(a study of Social Capital embedded in Online Social Networks)

www.SocialVillage.me

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Starting Questions

- **Can we consider ego's relationships in Online Social networks as a start point to measure social capital?**
- **If yes, How?**

Online friends lists = a starting name generator ?

Now we can ask:

What is Social Capital?

Selected definition of Social Capital in our research:

“Investment in social relations with expected returns”

(Lin, 1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2008, Van Der Gag, 2005)

So,

People try to build, improve and sustain their relationships with expected returns.

How is Social Capital measurement data being gathered?

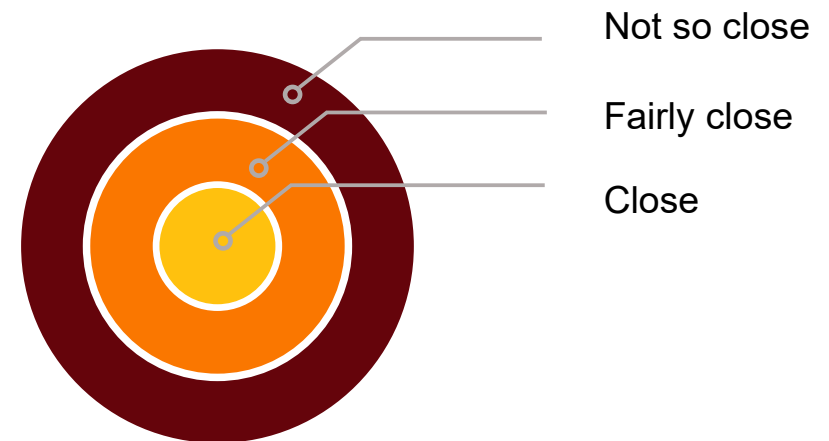
- **Recognition**

- Give a list of people's name and ask... What is happening in their interactions ...
- Good for whole/complete network

- **Recall**

- Open question
 - Affective type
 - Role-related
 - Exchange relationship
- On a written or online questionnaire ask respondents to name who they are connected with and can remember them on a first name basis

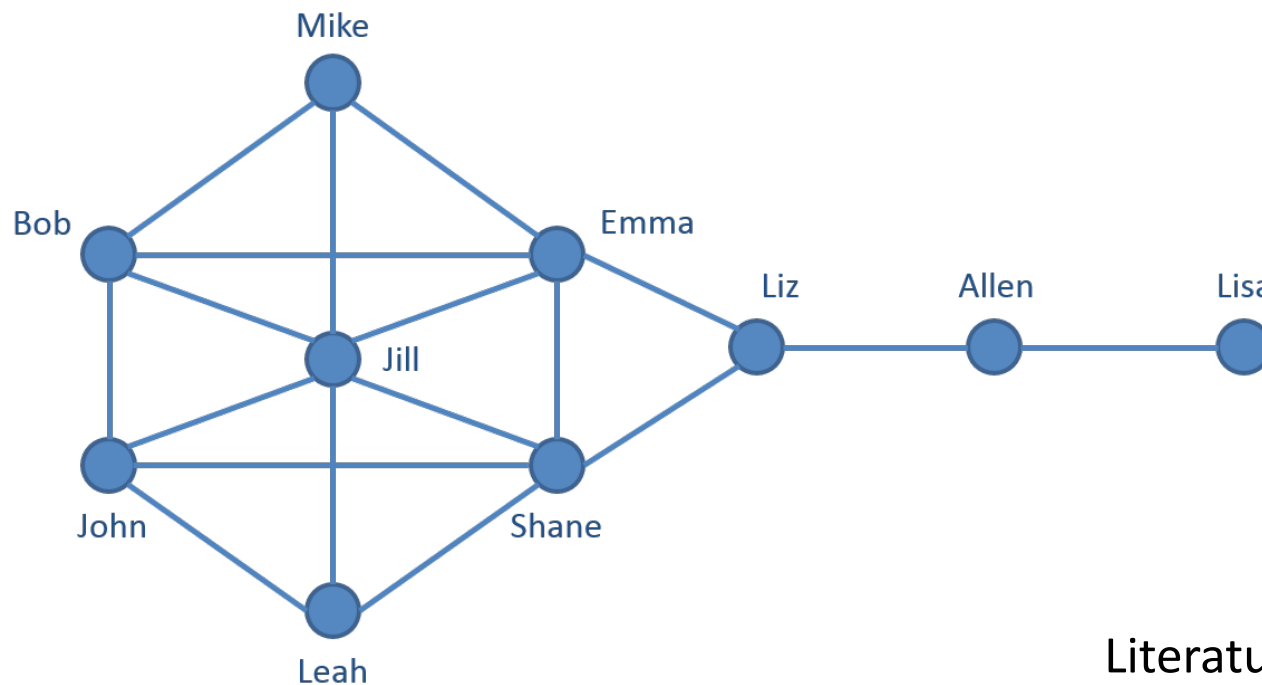
(Van Der Gag, 2005)



What was being studied with the data gathered?

Focus	Measurements
Embedded Resources	Network Resources
	Contact statuses
Network Locations	Bridge to access bridge
	Strength of tie

(Lin,1999)

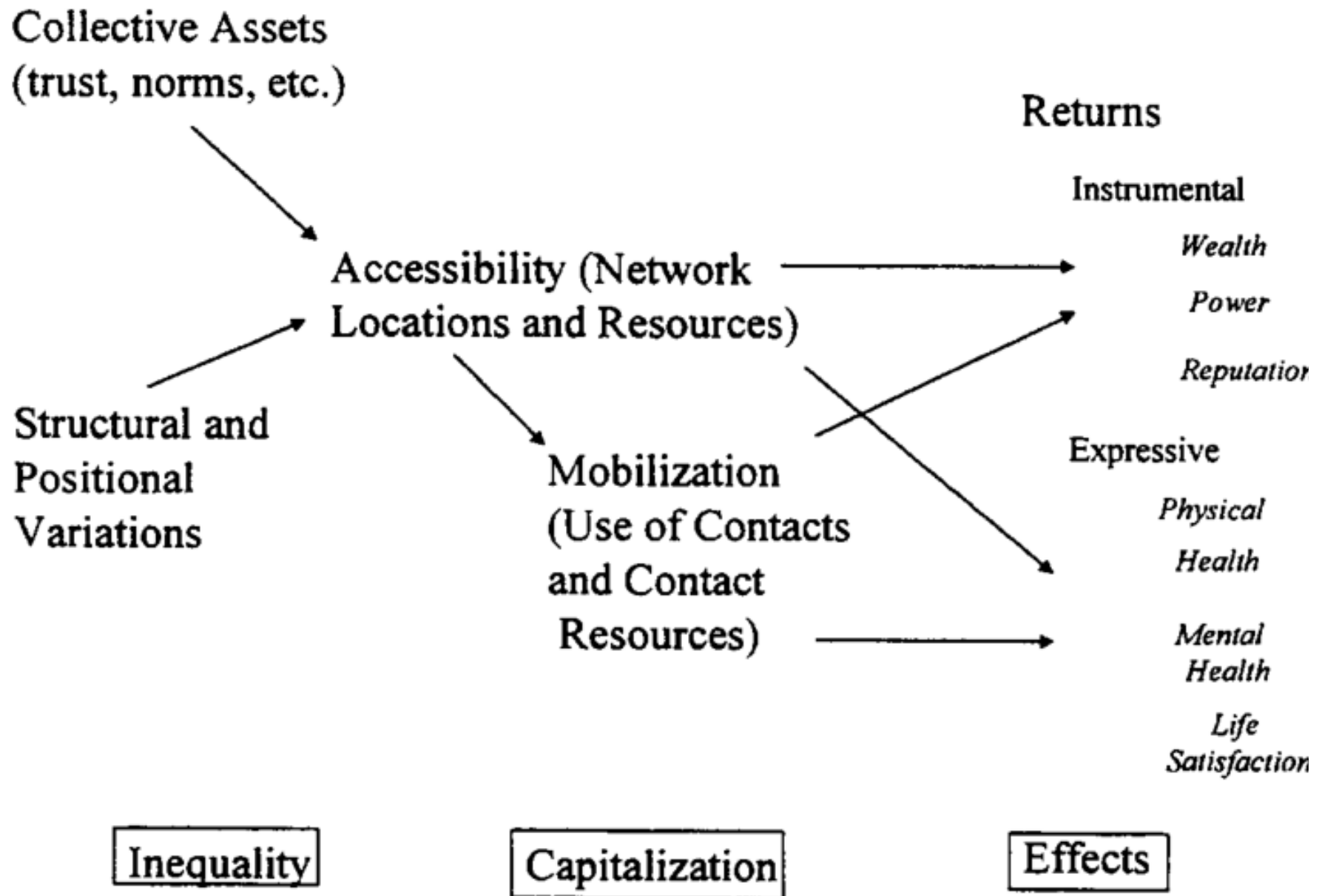


Literature review result in one line;

Despite these efforts to measure social capital,

- there is a “lack of standardized, reliable, theory-driven measurement instruments” (Van Der Gag, 2005) for social capital

Nan Lin's (1999) model of Social Capital



Methodology

- Operationalized Metrics to measure Lin's model concepts:
 - Social Capital questionnaire
 - including position, resource generator (Wellman, 2005, Van Der Gaag & Snijders, 2004a/b, Bos & Van Der Gaag, 2010) and type of relationship questions
 - Netizenship (being a citizen in networked world) questionnaire
 - Motivators for being a SM user, activities, usage stats
 - Quality of life questionnaire of WHO
 - Dimensions on Physical and mental health, life satisfaction and environmental and relationships health factors
 - Personal & Demographic questionnaire

Data gathering started at February 17th and is ongoing so far (in 1.5 months it reached 412 respondents)

Particular Questions about each friend based on name generator results

Dashboard | Social Village

localhost:3000/dashboard

social village Eng Social Village Site under constr Other bookmark

Social Village Dashboard Connected Accounts Log out Persian French English

Ebrahim Eskandari Pour

How do you describe your relationship with him/her? (Please choose all options that applies to you)

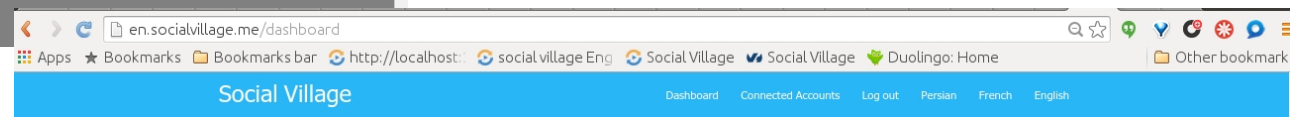
- ☐ Family member
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Colleague
- ☐ Acquaintance (not familiar with much but know personally)
- ☐ I know him/ her Online and we have not yet meet face to face

please select his/her job position from this list.

Please select an option...

Considering your past experience with him/her about these matters, please think in general and answer

Simple & Comparative visualization +
Gamification



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Scale questions for more accurate measurement

Social Village

Dashboard

Connected Accounts

Log out

Persian

French

English

Considering your past experience with him/her about these matters, please think in general and answer

Give/receive advice about how to invest or work with money (next two questions)

I have given him/her advice before

not at all



it has happened a lot

✓ I have no idea

He/she has given me advice before

not at all



it has happened a lot

✓ I have no idea

Lend or borrow money before (next two questions)

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Your Score: 5500

Your score indicates that you are in an average level on our social capital scale, and you are in the middle of the way to get the most score available in our scale. So if you want to make your score more accurate or better than average, all you should do is to answer more questions about more friends of yours! You can invite your friends to answer the same questions about you and others to be able to compare your score with them, so roll the dice and see what is happening with your friends. We should declare that our measurement is not 100 percent perfect and human life and relationships have so many complications but you can trust that we have knowledge in fields of Sociology and Social Sciences and we have calculated scores based on that.

Results 2; Based on data gathered so far

Increased response rate compare to Online surveys

Social Village's 3 languages response rates compare	
Social Village language	Response rate (%)
Persian (n=261)	49.80
English (n= 66)	43.93
French (n= 85)	37.64
Mean of three languages (n= 412)	43.79

Based on the literature, **average response rate in Online surveys are 10 %** ;

- <http://www.surveygizmo.com/survey-blog/survey-response-rates/>; accessed on May 6th 2015

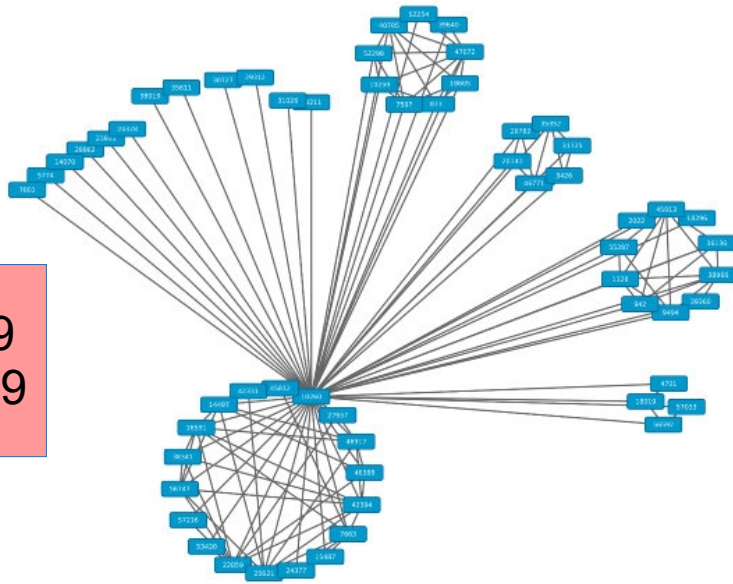
- Cechanowicz, J., Gutwin, C., Brownell, B., & Goodfellow, L. (2013, October)

Sex Distribution

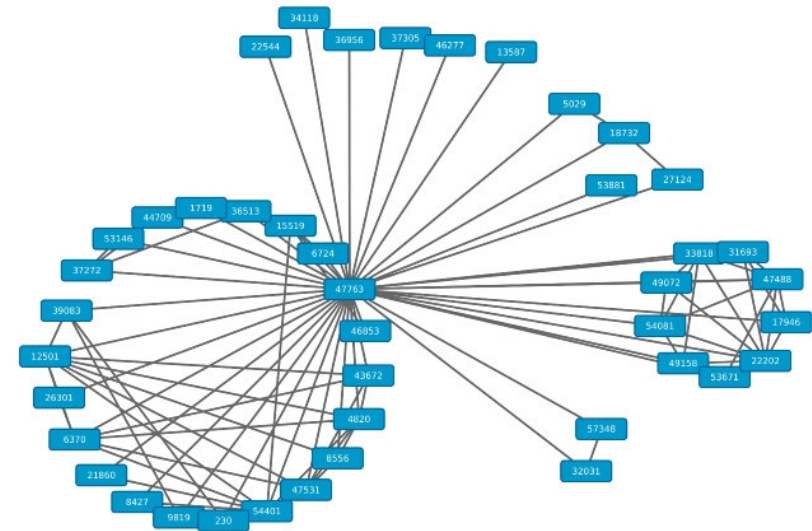
Sex		
	Frequency	Valid Percent
Male	146	66.7
Female	73	33.3
Total	219	-
missing	193	-
Sum	412	

Summary of Name Generator Results

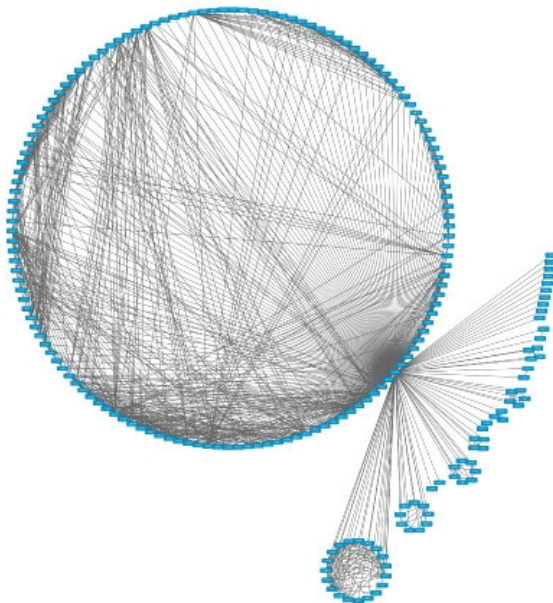
Comparing similarity in ego-networks structures



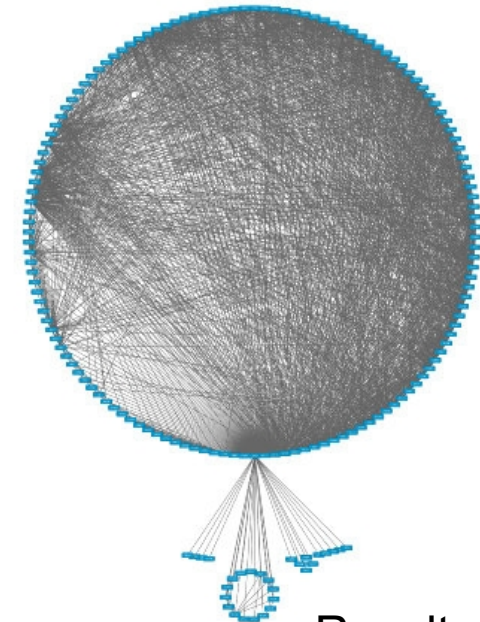
N= 59
E= 149



N= 43
E= 104



N= 207
E= 1000



N= 168
E= 1820

Does people know who they are connected with on Facebook?

Results – page: 10

Position Generator Results

Positions accessed by users of Social Village

friend_position	Frequency	Percent
craftsman, merchant, entrepreneur	16	1.85
Senior position / Executive, Intellectual profession	203	23.50
Own-account worker	28	3.24
Middle-level Profession / Intermediate Profession	169	19.56
employee	51	5.90
worker	14	1.62
retired	5	0.58
pupil, student	298	34.49
Looking for a first job	3	0.35
Unemployed	35	4.05
housewife without a job	32	3.70
None of the above options	4	0.46
I do not know	6	0.69
Total	864	100

Resource Generator Results

Resources accessed by English and French language users

Support type	Frequency	valid percent
invest_money_given_advice	73	5.68
invest_money_receive_advice	66	5.14
lend_money	68	5.29
borrow_money	67	5.21
receive_health_care	62	4.82
provide_health_care	63	4.90
receive_profession_advice	60	4.67
give_profession_advice	61	4.75
job_interview_preparation	58	4.51
receive_professional_opportunities_information	58	4.51
give_profession_opportunities_information	59	4.59
be_there_for_talk	57	4.44
set_you_up_with_sb	57	4.44
set_him_up_with_sb	57	4.44
my_request_charity_work	46	3.58
his_request_charity_work	51	3.97
discussed_political	57	4.44
impact_on_his_voting	45	3.50
impact_on_my_voting	54	4.20
knows_lawyer_to_help	41	3.19
I_introduced_cultural_goods	64	4.98
He_introduced_cultural_goods	61	4.75
Sum	1285	100

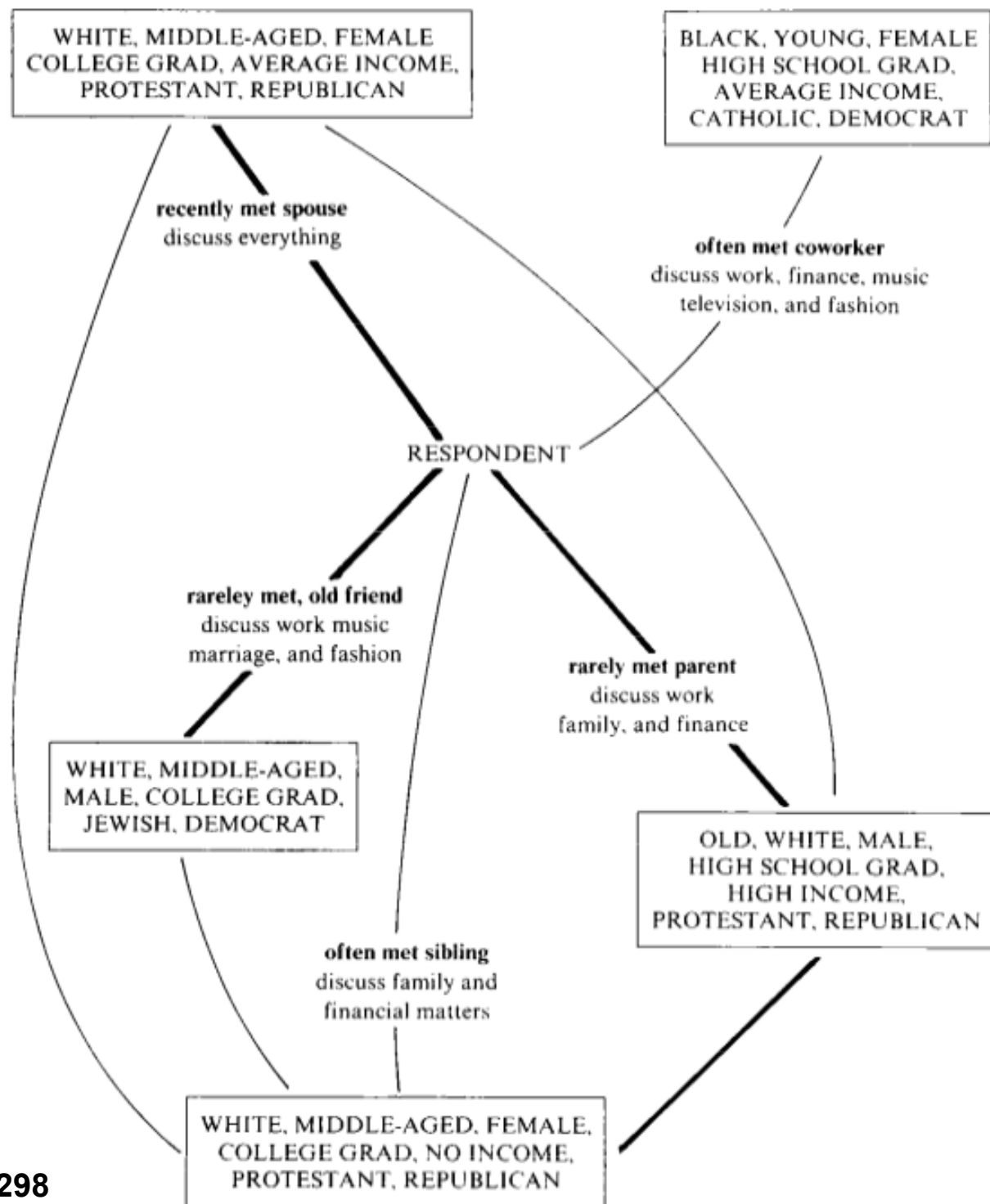
Resource Generator Results

Resources accessed by Persian language users

Support type	Frequency	valid percent
Occupational_advice_or_job_suggestion	345	17.22
Economic_advice_or_lend_money	296	14.78
Cultural_goods_or_set_you_up_with_sb	363	18.12
Liked_a_charity_page_or_helped_a_charity_my_request	281	14.03
Political_discussion_or_impact_on_my_voting_behaviour	349	17.42
Problem_solving_advice_or_practical_help_to_solve_problem	369	18.42
Sum	2003	100

Family_member	Friend	Colleague	Acquaintance	not_face2face	sum
22	66	26	34	15	163

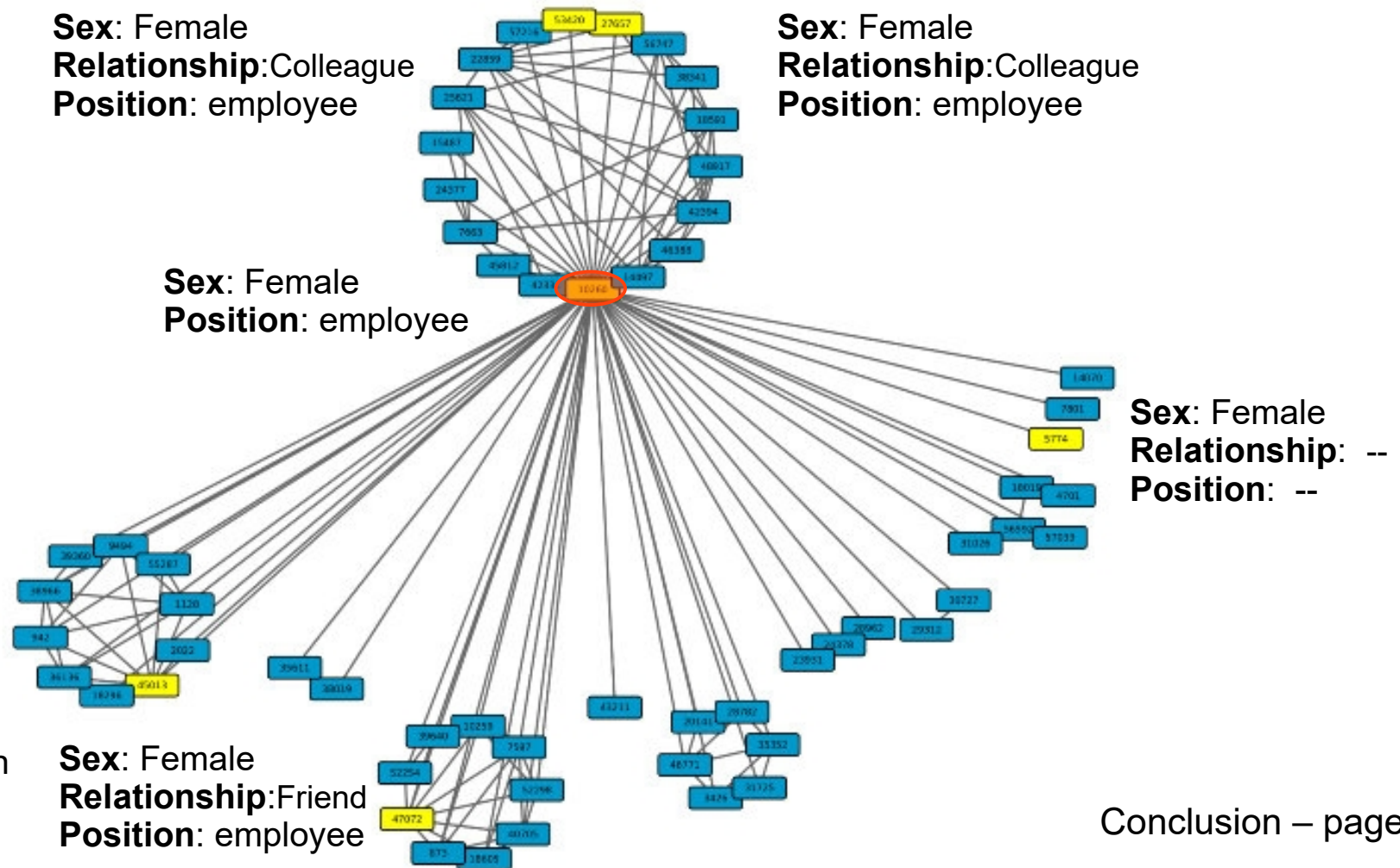
friend	relative_family_member	acquaintance	not_face2face	other_not_in_EN	sum
519	152	151	606	119	1547



Conclusive remarks

A sample of possible conclusion in individual level for one of respondents

Respondent	Potential Social Capital metrics				Mobilized Social Capital
	Degree	eigenvector	betweenness	closeness	Supports & outcomes
XAxvY Ae	53	0.59	0.91	1	0.20



Our Innovations in a nutshell

- Tried to adopt Nan Lin's model of social capital measurement to online social network members
- Tried to improve online social survey and its participation rate by Gamification
- Tried to improve social capital measurement by combining three structural generators of Name, Position and Resource
- Tried to build a dynamic and longitudinal research platform for social capital study and real-time measurement

What to do next

- 1) See the network properties in **Ego level** (rather than component level)
- 2) Test the hypotheses again (like difference in access to position among men and women or how much potential social capital can define level of social support)
- 3) Correct the problems of current version
 - 1) Decrease the number of questions and their length
 - 2) Implement more interesting types of questions (like interactive sliders and scales)
 - 3) Ask about all friends supports (given and received) not some
 - 4) Implement more Gamification (increase entertaining experience) in order to increase participation
 - 5) Increase the number and variety of users to different countries and levels of activity on social media (social technology ladder)

4) Measure social capital and its changes through time (Dynamic network analysis)

Because of real-time changing nature of social networks and social capital

Thanks a lot for your time

Our online research platform, Social Village:

www.SocialVillage.me

I will be happy to hear your comments

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