

Virtual-Cyber Social Capital; a new method to measure Online Social Capital



Aliakbar AkbariTabar
Ebrahim EskandariPour
Ehsan AhmadiGharache
www.SocialVillage.me



Abstract

Main question that this research project have been trying to answer based on Nan Lin's theory of Social Capital is what affects user's structural position in online social network in order for him/her to gain access to more potential social capital. After that, what aspects of individual's personality or SES has more influence on their will and ability to mobilize this potential social capital to result in person's possession of different outcomes and supports. we have mixed three different types of generators for social capital measurement titled as Name, Position and Resource generators in an integrated Online application that let us see all members of a users' personal social network along with combining it with supports and resources s/he has gain access to based on this people's socio-economic positions. Beside that, we have utilized measures for health and quality of life (designed by WHO), and we have developed scales for Virtual Social Capital and Netizenship, that when a user decides to give our Online application (<http://socialvillage.me>) access to his/her data, and when s/he answers these scales questions, s/he will see his/her score in real-time and also we have put some interpretations for them to be able to get much more knowledge of their online life and see their most relevant people's picture in an interesting way, in exchange for their participation in this research.

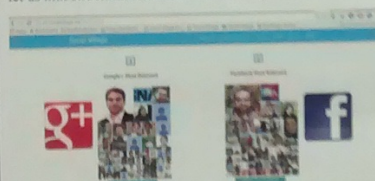
Introduction

The research on online social networks has followed the booming development of the users of such tools. Nevertheless this research activity, there is a lack of research on what people gain, by being connected to online social networks. Beyond the users' motivations to be online, do they receive "supports" from their online contacts? By "supports" we mean social capital that people can use to get access to some resources otherwise not available to them. And does this supports impact on their online or offline activity/outcomes?

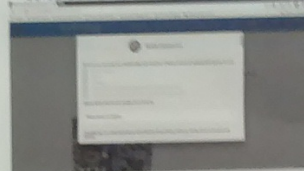
This ranges from being emotionally relieved, be able to sustain physical and mental health or improve quality of life thanks to economic, social, cultural, and political outcomes that users receive from their social network's members or so called "friends".

Methods

In this research we have utilized a structural method to gather and analyze relational data based on Online social networks (so far Facebook and Google plus) users' permission with social network analysis theoretical approach and metrics; in second phase, we have requested this users to fill in questionnaires that let us mix structural data with social survey data.



Cyber Social Capital online Assessment service www.SocialVillage.me



CONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION

the main issue of this research was to provide a tool to study what affects user's structural position in online social networks, all of the process is being studied in online sphere using data gathering and analysis methods suitable to this kind of online life like Social Network Analysis (SNA) and Gamified Social Survey. Another point of innovation in this research is that there is a kind of mixture among three different generators that are being applied in social capital measurement titled as: Name, Position and Resource generators that we have combined in one single online application to measure virtual social capital.

That means we have tried to use online recorded data to avoid user generated biases in our name generator and then we crosscheck this recorded data with users' evaluation to be more sure of this measurement and avoid common lack of information in social capital studies, or measures based on users' memories only.

this kind of social survey is more promising and reliable to provide data that is much more close to reality and is less biased toward the subjective pictures of users of what they are doing online.