

Homework 1 Computational Social Science

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1. Twitter recently started returning conversation IDs as part of its API responses, which allow entire conversation trees to be reconstructed, preserving the structure of replies and replies to replies.
 - a. What kinds of analyses, according to you, are possible now that information about the replies stemming from a tweet is available?

Ans :

With the Twitter API version 2, we can retrieve and now get an entire conversation stream, to get a better understanding of how conversations started and how it impacted the people which can be identified with their replies and responses. The id of the conversation can be used to track the entire history of the messages as it can be used as a query parameter to retrieve these results. This conversation id can be used in conjunction with other operators to get more detailed analysis of what specific information actually wants to be retrieved by the user. We can also get a number of the Tweets in a conversation using this tool by the count of tweets.

Replies and response to a certain Tweet, along with the replies to the above replies, are all present in the thread of the conversation that we can fetch with the help of the conversation id. This indeed would help to analyze the way people think about a particular topic and how and in what sense does it affects them.

It would be a great way to develop an understanding of how people react to some matter which is of their concern and also how it affects the people who probably are not directly concerned with the matter , but share their ideas on this platform which could prove to be of great importance.

b. Mention one CSS-themed project or research question where having access to such information would help.

Ans: Using the filtered stream endpoints to stream publicly available Tweets to your server and annotations, we can create an app to more easily surface Tweets around a topic of interest. The filtered stream endpoint gives you the haystack of data in the form of Tweets. CSS-themed project : Finding remote developer job openings: Imagine creating a remote developer job listings app with remote developer job openings being shared across Twitter.

2. Please find 3-5 Social Science Students / Faculty / Researchers in your network and arrange a slot to have a phone / Meet / Zoom call with them. Remember to record the conversation. The purpose of this question is to explore / understand the difference in the domains: how Social Science people think of a topic / problem / solution. Feel free to be creative in making up questions to discuss with these Social Science friends / connections. Some sample questions / directions to think about.

a. What is the field that you are associated with ??

Social Science Student 1 (IIM Indore)

I am working in the field of psychology .The science behind psychology in any particular or specific domain is determined by its method of investigation, not what it studies, or when the research was done, and certainly not by who did the investigation.

Social Science Student 2 (Delhi University)

I am studying economics and my main area of interest is financial economics which studies fair value, risk and returns, and the financing of securities and assets.

Social Science Student 3

I am studying political science .It includes concepts like governance political system, the study of various political theories and concepts and a deep level of understanding and knowledge of all the important factors that influence the government.

b. What are they currently working upon??

Social Science Student 1 (IIM Indore)

I am focusing on Perception, Cognition & Cognitive Neuroscience involves the study of awareness and thought, and includes such topics as perception, learning, memory and consciousness.

Social Science Student 2 (Delhi University)

I am currently working on the project -Impact of Internet Banking system and technology on Indian Banks .

Social Science Student 3

I am working on my final year project which is the challenges of youth participation in governance. It is a project which will create a literature review followed by a general hypotheses and arguments that will be relevant to the project followed by a final proposal .

b. Walk them through the project idea that you want to work for the course for now make some hypothetical project] and get their inputs.

Social Science Student 1 (IIM Indore)

Your project (World's happiness index) is of really good scope. You will need to first prefetch a humongous amount of data from various trusted sources and finally create a valid dataset that would involve a lot of parameters and criteria's based on which you would draw your results. This would really help you understand how data along with computing can help simulate a real world model which is in general of very much concern to the society.

Social Science Student 2 (Delhi University)

This project will definitely make you realize what computational social science is all about. Just as a suggestion, I would like to say that , try to find out the results with your model that you create and also try categorizing them into several ranks based on the indexes that they get along with a final proposal of a solution to give that last amazing finishing touch to your project.

Social Science Student 3

It's a good project idea. Just make sure that you do not compromise on the accuracy of the data that you gather . Other than that , you will definitely get benefitted from this project.

3. YouTube recently removed the count of dislikes from their interface-i.e. although a user can like or dislike a video, only the like count is visible to all users and not the dislike count.

a. What could be the potential reasons for removing the dislike count?

Ans This main motive of this decision is to improve and create a better situation for content creators who can get largely demoralized by seeing their videos being disliked by many people especially for those who have just started their channels or are slowly progressing in this field of content creation and delivery. YouTube said smaller scale or new creators reported being unfairly targeted in attacks, where people work to drive up the number of dislikes on videos.

b. What are the pros and cons of not showing the dislike count?

PROS: The main advantage of this is to reduce hate attacks and creator harassment on easily targetable platforms like YouTube. Nevertheless, if some creator wants to track the numbers of these likes or dislikes, he will still be able to track their dislikes, along with other parameters and criteria regarding their video's performance, on YouTube Studio if they wish to do so. It will also facilitate to focus more on the content creation and delivery rather than worrying and stressing too much about the reaction of the people which indeed is very important but also can be misleading sometimes because of hate attacks and harassment.

There are also many cons like : The major cons or disadvantages of the hiding of the dislikes button is that users now would not be able to get an exact idea of how the quality of video is. It is because the number of counts alone would not give a proper insight and information of how people liked or disliked the video.

c. Do you think this would affect the user behavior in any ways? If so, list few ways, if not, why not?

I think , yes indeed this would affect the user behavior in some sort. Actually when a viewer wants to watch some video, the number of likes and dislikes and the comments in the comments section largely shape their mindset of how the video according to other people is. This actually saves a lot of his time as now he himself does not have to watch the entire video and get an idea about the quality. Hence , in order to get an idea of would the video be useful for them or not , they will have to spend their time watching the video to realize that it would be of any importance to them .Therefore , now that the dislike button is hidden , no one would care that much to unhide the button first and check the number of dislikes and also even if they see the number , it would not be of any major importance .

d. Do you think not having the dislike count feature would cause users to dislike the video less now? Why or why not?

The dislike count button now is hidden for the users and people who view the content on You Tube. Hence , the general attitude of the people would be that “Why should I click the dislike button if it is not visible?” Therefore now, this feature won’t be very of much importance to the viewers as they might just leave the video without bothering to unhide the dislike button and then disliking it . Hence , Only some users will click on dislike.

Sources for reference:

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