

Online coping after negative life events: Measurement, prevalence, and relation with internet activities and well-being / Erik van Ingen, Sonja Utz, & Vera Toepoel

Abstract: This paper explores how individuals use online coping strategies after experiencing a negative life event. Many studies have shown that online coping is of rising importance. However, these studies have not provided all pieces of the puzzle, because they tend to focus on one particular online venue (e.g. an online support group or social network site) and on a limited number of coping strategies. This paper aims to provide a more complete picture, by simultaneously examining multiple online and offline coping strategies, using a survey administered to a representative sample of the 16+ population of the Netherlands. Furthermore, we analyze what kind of Internet activities are related to online coping, and whether online coping is associated with well-being. Some 57% of our sample mentioned some form of online coping. Using the Internet for mental disengagement, active coping, and planning were the most reported online coping strategies, whereas strategies aimed at emotional coping were reported less frequently. Online coping encompassed several activities: online gaming, which was associated with mental disengagement; searching for information, which was associated with problem-focused coping; and social network sites and online support groups, which were associated with mental disengagement, problem-focused coping, and socioemotional coping. Finally, we examined the correlations between online coping and well-being. Controlling for offline coping, we found online mental disengagement and online socioemotional coping to be inversely related to life satisfaction, self-esteem, and optimism, whereas correlations between online problem-focused coping and well-being were non-significant. The implications of these findings are discussed.

Frames beyond words: Applying cluster and sentiment analysis to news coverage of the nuclear power issue / Bjorn Burscher, Rens Vliegthart, & Claes H. de Vreese

Abstract: Methods to automatically analyze media content are advancing significantly. Among others, it has become increasingly popular to analyze the framing of news articles by means of statistical procedures. In this paper, we investigate the conceptual validity of news frames that are inferred by a combination of k-means cluster analysis and automatic sentiment analysis. Furthermore, we test a way of improving statistical frame analysis such that revealed clusters of articles reflect the framing concept more closely. We do so by only using words from an article's title and lead, and by excluding named entities and words with a certain part-of-speech from the analysis. To validate revealed frames, we manually analyze samples of articles from the extracted clusters. Findings of our tests indicate that when following the proposed feature selection approach, the resulting clusters more accurately discriminate between articles with a different framing. We discuss the methodological and theoretical implications of our findings.

Making "friends" in a virtual world: The role of preferential attachment, homophily and status / Sonja Utz & Jaroslaw Jankowski

Abstract: Graphical virtual worlds add two new layers to the old question what determines friendship formation. First, it is possible to distinguish between offline (player) and online

(avatar) characteristics. Second, these environments offer new possibilities for studying friendship formation. By tracking friendship requests and their acceptance rate, researchers are able to distinguish between with whom player want to become friends and with whom they actually do become friends. This paper examined friendship formation in Timik, a graphical virtual world targeted at Polish teenagers. Homophily, preferential attachment and status were tested as possible underlying mechanisms. Results showed that preferential attachment and status drove invitations: Players wanted to become friends with high status players. However, high status players were also more likely to reject offers. Homophily only played a minor role. Players preferred players of the same avatar class and similar age, but of the opposite sex. Too similar avatars were disliked. The results are discussed in the light of the generalizability of offline theories of friendship formation to online worlds.

Network models of minority opinion spreading: Using agent-based modeling to study possible scenarios of social contagion / Javier Alvarez-Galvez

Abstract: Although several models in the literature analyze the dynamics of opinion formation, less attention has been paid to explain how the structure of social networks and their contextual circumstances can influence the course of minority public opinions. This work aims to pose three basic questions: (1) how the structure of social networks can affect the spread of minority opinion; (2) how committed agents influence this process; and (3) how mass media action, as a contextual factor, can vary different agents' opinions and network composition. Agent-based modeling is used to create a network model of preferential attachment to explore how phenomena of minority opinion spreading can evolve under different simulated scenarios. This study shows that the success of minority opinions depends on network structure and composition, and thus on external factors such as mass media action that can mediate the strength of these internal determinants. Though people tend to remain silent when they feel that their opinions are in the minority, our findings suggest that prevailing majority opinion may be promptly replaced by what was formerly minority opinion if core agents in the network structure and/or external sources support this view.

A comparison of two cognitive pretesting techniques supported by eye tracking / Cornelia E. Neuert & Timo Lenzner

Abstract: In questionnaire pretesting, supplementing cognitive interviewing with eye tracking is a promising new method that provides additional insights into respondents' cognitive processes while answering survey questions. When incorporating eye tracking into cognitive interviewing, two retrospective probing techniques seem to be particularly useful. In the first technique retrospective probing participants complete an online questionnaire, while cognitive interviewers monitor participants' eye movements in an adjacent room and note down any peculiarities in their reading patterns. Afterwards, the interviewers ask targeted probing questions about these peculiarities in a subsequent cognitive interview. In the second technique gaze video cued retrospective probing respondents are additionally shown a video of their eye movements during the cognitive interview. This video stimulus is supposed to serve as a visual cue that may better enable respondents to remember their thoughts while answering the questions. We examine whether one of the two techniques is more effective when it comes to identifying problematic survey questions. In a lab experiment, participants' eye movements (n = 42) were tracked while they completed six questions of an online questionnaire. Simultaneously,

their reading patterns were monitored by an interviewer for evidence of response problems. After completion of the online survey, a cognitive interview was conducted. In the retrospective probing condition, probing questions were asked if peculiar reading patterns were observed during the eye-tracking session (e.g., re-readings of specific words or text passages). In the other condition, participants were shown a video of their recorded eye movements, in addition to receiving probing questions about the questions displayed. Results show that both techniques did not differ in terms of the total number of problems identified. However, gaze video cued retrospective probing identified fewer unique problems and fewer types of problems than pure retrospective probing.

Advancing qualitative research using qualitative data analysis software (QDAS)? Reviewing potential versus practice in published studies using ATLAS.ti and NVivo, 1994-2013 / Megan Woods, Trena Paulus, David P. Atkins. & Rob Macklin

Abstract: Qualitative data analysis software (QDAS) programs are well-established research tools but little is known about how researchers use them in their research. This paper reports the results of a content analysis of 763 empirical articles, published in the Scopus database between 1994 and 2013, which explored how researchers use the ATLAS.ti and NVivo QDAS programs. The analysis specifically investigated who is using these tools (in terms of subject discipline and author country of origin), and how they are being used to support research (in terms of type of data, type of study and phase of the research process that QDAS were used to support). The study found that the number of articles reporting QDAS is increasing each year, and that the majority of studies using ATLAS.ti and NVivo were published in health sciences journals by authors from the UK, USA, Netherlands, Canada and Australia. Researchers used QDAS to support a variety of research designs and most commonly used the programs to support analyses of data gathered through interviews, focus groups, documents, field notes and open-ended survey questions. Although QDAS can support multiple phases of the research process, the study found the vast majority of researchers are using it for data management and analysis, with fewer using it for data collection/creation or to visually display their methods and findings. The paper concludes with some discussion of the extent to which QDAS users appear to have leveraged the potential of these programs to support new approaches to research.

Reports and Communications

African-American Internet use for information search and privacy protection tasks / Yong Jin Park and S. Mo Jang

Abstract: This study used in-depth observations to investigate the differences in digital literacy among African American young adult Internet users. Sampled Internet users participated in one-to-one real-time observation sessions, in which each user completed Internet-related functions in two dimensions: (1) information search and (2) privacy protection. Observations recorded whether and how quickly each participant completed the assigned tasks. We found that few participants were able to complete assigned information tasks and could control basic features in browser settings. The findings also indicated that levels of digital literacy were more related with their online access experiences than with socio-demographic characteristics. We discussed policy implications of the findings and suggested potential areas of policy concern and remedies.

Impact of web survey invitation design on survey participation, respondents and survey responses /
Mingnan Liu, Noble Kuriakose, Jon Cohen, & Sarah Cho

Abstract: This paper investigates how webpages shown to respondents before they enter a self-administered survey impact whether and how they respond. Using the SurveyMonkey “endpage”, a page that is displayed nearly three-million times daily to survey respondents who have completed a user-created survey, this paper examines if the type of image and text that are displayed on the endpage has a large impact on survey participation, whether different images/texts appeal to different types of respondents, and whether they render different substantive responses. The topic of the survey is about the U.K. 2015 General Election. The findings show that when a concrete image/text combination is displayed, the click rate is lower than more general and abstract image/text combinations. The completion rates across different webpages are similar. We also find that the sample compositions and selected survey responses differ by different endpages. As a last step, we conducted post-stratification in each condition separately to produce estimates that match known population proportions for selected demographic characteristics. After weighting adjustment, the differences on substantive responses disappeared or reduced, suggesting that different people drawn into the survey through different webpages contribute to the different substantive responses.