

Exploring issues in a networked public sphere: Combining hyperlink network analysis and topic modeling / Daniel Maier, Annie Waldherr, Peter Miltner, Patrick Jähnichen, & Barbara Pfetsch

Abstract: We propose a methodological approach to analyze the content of hyperlink networks which represent networked public spheres on the Internet. Using the case of the food safety movement in the U.S., we demonstrate how to generate a hyperlink network with the web crawling tool Issue Crawler and merge it with the results of a probabilistic topic model of the network's content. Combining hyperlink networks and content analysis allows us to interpret such a network in its entirety and with regard to the mobilizing potentials of specific sub-issues of the movement. We focus on two specific sub-issues in the food safety network, *genetically modified food* and *food control*, in order to trace the involved websites and their interlinking structures, respectively.

Hostile media or hostile source? Bias perception of shared news / Gi Woong Yun, Sung-Yeon Park, Sooyoung Lee, & Mark A. Flynn

Abstract: An experiment was conducted with college students to examine the effects of source and user comments on the perceptions of a shared news story embedded in a blog post. When the shared news was credited to a news organization source incongruent with the participants' political orientation, it was perceived to be biased against the participants' issue position. When credited to a congruent source, the same news was perceived to be biased in favor of the participants' position. In addition, the shared news from an incongruent source was perceived to have greater influence on others' issue position than the same news from a congruent source, although perceived reach of the shared news was not different between the two conditions. A subsequent regression analysis identified source and perceived influence, but not perceived reach, as predictors of news bias perception. On the other hand, the second factor, user comments either agreeable or disagreeable to the participants' issue position, did not influence how the shared news was perceived. In the discussion, theoretical implications of these findings are elaborated and suggestions are made to refine the methods of shared news research.

How social anxiety and reduced self-efficacy induce smartphone addiction in materialistic people / Yu-Kang Lee, Chun-Tuan Chang, Zhao-Hong Cheng, & You Lin

Abstract: Recent research has suggested that materialism influences consumers' usage of technological communication devices, especially smartphones. The current study contributes to this evolving research stream by examining more closely the dynamics of mechanisms that might potentially cause smartphone addiction. We propose self-efficacy and social anxiety as two underlying mechanisms, and further test whether their mediating effects are consistent across people with differing levels of power

distance belief (PDB). We also examine the moderating role of PDB at the cultural level (Study 1: China vs. U.S.) and at the individual level (Study 2: Taiwan). The empirical data are analyzed using the parallel multiple mediator model proposed by Hayes (2013). The results confirm that these two mediators explain the relationship between materialism and smartphone addiction. The mediating effects are stronger for people with a high level of PDB than for their counterparts with low PDB. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Intervening to reduce satisficing behaviors in web surveys: Evidence from two experiments on how it works / Chan Zhang & Frederick G. Conrad

Abstract: Most online surveys still look and feel much like paper questionnaires. In particular although the Web is an interactive medium, Web surveys rarely exploit this interactive capability. One exception is a series of demonstrations that online survey respondents seem to become more conscientious when prompted (usually with a brief textual message) in response to behaviors like item nonresponse, nondifferentiation, and answering very quickly. While these earlier studies have found that interactive intervention can reduce the occurrence of these behaviors, the underlying mechanism – why the intervention works – remains unclear. To shed light on this, we conducted two experiments to explore why respondents might change their behavior after being prompted. Part of the explanation lies in whether the benefits of the intervention are specific to the targeted behavior or lead to a general increase in conscientious responding. The findings show that intervention can lead to genuine improvement in respondent behaviors, but it also runs the risk of producing socially desirable bias in survey answers.

Local Geographies of Digital Inequality / Grant Blank, Mark Graham, & Claudio Calvino

Abstract: Combining data from a sample survey, the 2013 Oxford Internet Survey (OxIS), with the 2011 UK census, we employ small area estimation to estimate Internet use in small geographies in Britain. This is the first attempt to estimate Internet use at any small-scale level. Doing so, allows us to understand the local geographies of British Internet use: showing that the area with least use is in the North East, followed by central Wales. The highest Internet use is in London and south eastern England. The most interesting finding is that after controlling for demographic variables, geographic differences become non-significant. The apparent geographic differences appear to be due to differences in demographic characteristics. We conclude by considering the policy implications of this fact.

Reports and Communications

Establishing an open probability-based mixed-mode panel of the general population in Germany: The GESIS Panel / Michael Bosnjak, Tanja Dannwolf, Tobias Enderle, Ines Schauer, Bella Struminskaya, Angela Tanner, & Kai W. Weyandt

Abstract: Various open probability-based panel infrastructures have been established in recent years, allowing researchers to collect high-quality survey data. In this report, we

describe the processes and deliverables of setting up the GESIS Panel, the first probability-based mixed-mode panel infrastructure in Germany open for data collection to the academic research community. The reference population for the GESIS Panel is the German-speaking population aged between 18 and 70 years permanently residing in Germany. In 2013, approximately 5,000 panelists had been recruited from a random sample drawn from municipal population registers. We describe the outcomes of the sampling strategy and the multi-step recruitment process, involving computer-aided personal interviews (CAPI) conducted at respondents' homes. Next, we describe the outcomes of the two self-administered survey modes (online and paper-and-pencil) of the GESIS Panel used for the initial profile survey and all subsequent bimonthly data collection waves. Across all stages of setting up the GESIS Panel, we report sample composition discrepancies for key demographic variables between the GESIS Panel and established benchmark surveys. Overall, the findings highlight the usefulness of pursuing a mixed-mode strategy when building a probability-based panel infrastructure in Germany.

Examining Completion Rates in Web Surveys via over 25000 Real World Surveys / Mingnan Liu and Laura Wronski

Abstract: A survey's completion rate is one of its most important data quality measures. There are quite a few published studies examining web survey completion rate through experimental approaches. In this study, we expand the existing literature by examining the predictors of web survey completion rate using 25,080 real-world web surveys conducted using a single online panel. Our findings are consistent with the literature on some dimensions, such as finding a negative relationship between completion rate and survey length and question difficulty. Also, surveys without progress bars have higher completion rates than surveys with progress bars. This study also generates new insights in survey design features, such as the impact of the first question type and length, on completion rate.

Learning about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through computerized simulations: The case of global conflicts / Ronit Kampf & Nathan Stolero

Abstract: This study investigates the learning outcomes of a computer game, called Global Conflicts, simulating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The research compares learning outcomes of Israeli-Jewish, Palestinian, Turkish and American undergraduate students, differentiating between direct and third parties to the conflict. Learning is measured by (1) knowledge acquisition about the conflict and (2) attitude change regarding the conflict. Findings show that participants acquired knowledge about the conflict after playing the game. The game minimized the knowledge gap between third parties to the conflict (Americans and Turks), but not between direct parties to the conflict. In addition, direct parties to the conflict did not change their attitudes towards the conflict and the Gaza Operation of 2012, while the attitudes of third parties became more balanced. This study has implications for the scholarship on pedagogy and teaching assessment in the context of peacebuilding. It is part of a series of studies analyzing the effects of computerized simulations on peacebuilding and further research

is necessary to understand under what conditions technology can be used as an effective peacebuilding intervention.