'You're fired,' says the robot: The rise of automation in the workplace, technophobes, and fears of unemployment / Paul McClure

Abstract: The rapid adoption of new technologies in the workplace, especially robotics and Artificial Intelligence (A.I.), has motivated some researchers to determine what effects such technologies may have. Few scholars, however, have examined the possibility that a large segment of the population is apprehensive about the quick pace of technological change and encroachment into modern life. Drawing from economic projections about the future of the digital economy and from literature in the sociology of technology and emotions, this paper explores whether certain fears of technology exacerbate fears of unemployment and financial insecurity. Using data from Wave 2 of the Chapman Survey of American Fears (N=1,541), I find that there exists a sizable population of "technophobes," or those who fear robots, A.I., and technology they do not understand. Technophobes are also more likely than non-technophobes to report having anxiety-related mental health issues and to fear unemployment and financial insecurity. With advances in robotics and A.I, the threat of technological unemployment is discussed as a real concern among a substantial portion of the American population.

Political advertising on the Wikipedia marketplace of information / Sascha Göbel and Simon Munzert

Abstract: We point to a popular yet under-researched platform of political information, the online encyclopedia Wikipedia. Considering the supply side of the marketplace, we argue that personal biographies on the platform are an attractive medium for politicians to enhance their appearance. We trace changes to biographies coming from the parliament by using data that cover the entire edit histories for biographies on all German MPs for the three last legislative periods. Our findings show editing of personal biographies to be a persistent phenomenon. Moreover, type, timing, and driving factors of editing behavior highlight the importance politicians' attribute to Wikipedia for pursuing reelection. Our results speak to the domains of political professionalization, voting behavior and the general measurement of communicative patterns.

How things become popular: A probabilistic approach for on-line popularity / António Filipe Fonseca & Jorge Louçã

Abstract: This work discusses the mechanisms of popularity generation on the Internet. What we propose here is a model that replicates the statistical distribution profile of popularity. It is a probabilistic model of the number of individuals who read, hear or see, and then replicate a message, and parameterizes an individual's preference for either new or older messages. Messages can gain in popularity according to a process of paying attention and the resulting popularity distribution has a stretched lognormal configuration. The stretch depends on the degree of attention paid to new messages

versus that paid to older messages. We considered three sets of data to test the fit of the model: the American singers/songwriters listed on Wikipedia; videos on YouTube belonging to two different categories; and the number of visits to Wikipedia pages on music albums and film categories. Our main results adjust, with good approximation, to this experimental data. In each of the three case-studies, the fit produced by the model is better adjusted to the data than the lognormal standard function.

Non-probability sampling and Twitter: Strategies for semi-bounded and bounded populations / Patrick Rafail

Abstract: Twitter data are widely used in the social sciences. The Twitter Application Programming Interface (API) allows researchers to build large databases of user activity efficiently. Despite the potential of Twitter as a data source, less attention has been paid to issues of sampling, and in particular, the implications of different sampling strategies on overall data quality. This research proposes a set of conceptual distinctions between four types of populations that emerge when analyzing Twitter data, and suggests sampling strategies that facilitate more comprehensive data collection from the Twitter API. Using three applications drawn from large databases of Twitter activity, this research also compares the results from the proposed sampling strategies, which provide defensible representations of the population of activity, to those collected with more frequently used hashtag samples. The results suggest that hashtag samples misrepresent important aspects of Twitter activity, and may lead researchers to erroneous conclusions.

Mobile and Dirty — Does using mobile devices affect the data quality and the response process of online surveys? / Stephan Schlosser & Anja Mays

Abstract: In this article, we present a study on the data quality and the response process of mobile online surveys using an experimental design as compared to a standard computer. We used the following indicators to measure data quality and response properties: reaction time to survey invitation, break-off rate, item non-response, length of responses to open-ended questions and survey transmission, processing, and completion time. With regard to completion time, we also explored the significance of the place as well as the situation in which the survey was completed, the kind of Internet connection the respondents had as well as the hardware properties of the devices used to answer the online survey. Our results suggest comparable data quality and response properties in most aspects: There were no noticeable differences between computer and mobile users as regards break-off rate, item non-response and length of responses to open-ended questions, nor the place where the survey was completed. However, it took respondents in the mobile group longer to complete the survey as compared to respondents answering the online survey on their computer. In terms of the completion time, there was a significant decrease in the differences between mobile devices and PCs when respondents used technically advanced mobile devices and had access to a fast Internet connection.

Can incentive effects in web surveys be generalized to non-western countries? Conditional and unconditional cash incentives in a web survey of Ghanaian university students / Bart Meuleman, Arnim Langer, & Annelies G. Blom

Abstract: Because research on the impact of web survey incentives has exclusively focused on Western settings, it is unclear to what extent current insights translate and generalize to non-Western societies, which are usually characterized by very different economic conditions, cultural traditions and survey climates. The current paper presents the results of a web survey incentives experiment among almost 4,440 Ghanaian university students who were offered conditional and unconditional incentives of different values (in the form of telephone credit). Our analyses partly replicate Western findings: higher value incentives produce higher participation rates and unconditional incentives outperform conditional ones in the lower value conditions. In the case of relatively high incentives, however, conditional outperform unconditional incentives. No differential effects of incentives on response quality were found.

Reports and Communications

Smartphone display size influences attitudes toward information consumed on small devices
Jamie S. Naylor & Christopher A. Sanchez

Abstract: Previous research has suggested that differences in the size of extremely large displays can change how individuals perceive and react to the displayed content. However, are such effects also observed on small screen devices (i.e., smartphones)? Participants read a news article on either a small or large smartphone display, and rated their attitudes towards the material before and after reading. Results indicated that although participants remembered information equally well across the different smartphone displays, the larger smartphone display did produce a larger change in attitude towards the material. These results suggest that characteristics of smartphone design can impact perceptions of the content being viewed, fundamentally changing how one views some information that has been gathered on these mobile devices.