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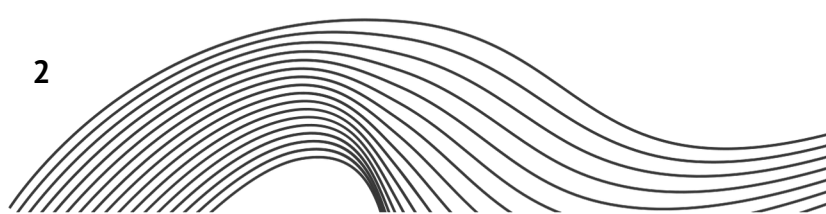
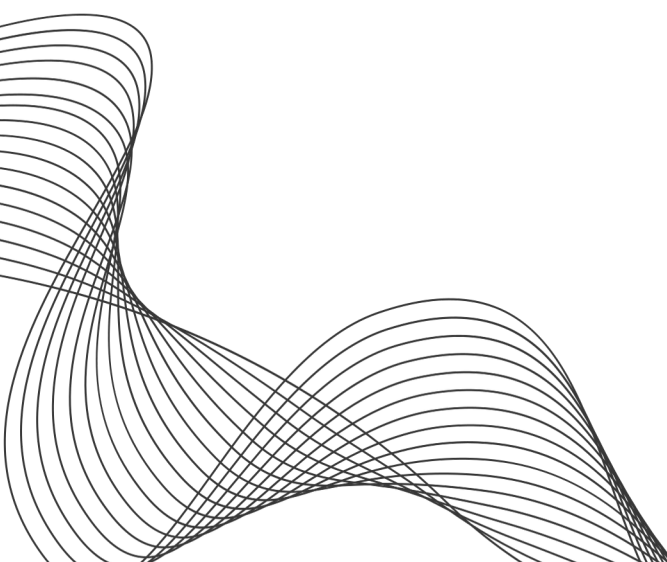
DIGITAL SOCIAL RESEARCH: ETHICAL BOUNDARIES AND METHODOLOGICAL BIASES

07/08 NOVEMBER 2024
UNIVERSITY OF SALERNO

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

EDIT BY GIUSEPPE MASULLO
SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR OF
INTERNATIONAL LAB FOR
INNOVATIVE SOCIAL RESEARCH (ILIS)





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BOUNDARIES AND METHODOLOGICAL
BIASES**

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Introduction

By Prof. Giuseppe Masullo (Scientific Coordinator of the International Lab for Innovative Social Research)

With the 5th International Conference, our network celebrates its first five years of activity, which have seen the involvement of numerous colleagues from various national and international universities, on topics of innovation in the field of social and digital research.

In this preface, which introduces the abstract book of this 5th conference, it may be useful to provide a summary of what has been accomplished so far, not only as a self-celebratory moment (which, after all, is essential to renew the spirit of belonging to such a young community of scholars) but also to trace a common thread that allows us to understand “where we started” and “where we are going”.

From the first conference in 2019 (the year the network was formed) to 2025, the initiatives promoted by the ILIS network have involved over 250 scholars from various universities, both Italian and abroad. Regarding this last point, the foreign scholars who participated in our conferences come from five continents, so the network has increased its level of internationalization over time. Following these events, the number of foreign researchers and scholars who have chosen to join our network has also increased, thus establishing these colleagues as a stable reference for our future initiatives.

Also important were the side events to the usual annual conference, which involved some network members at various foreign university campuses. Among the initiatives sponsored by the ILIS network, the following are worth mentioning: the seminar days at the University of Finance and Administration in Prague (Czech Republic) promoted by Giuseppe Maiello in 2022, the conference “Genders, Sexualities and Diversities” at CODEISO with Mar Gallego Duran, and two international conferences (in 2023 and 2024) promoted by Estrella Gualda at the University of Huelva (Spain). These and other individual initiatives, also held in Italy, have made it possible to intensify and strengthen a network of exchanges and focused

discussions on some common research aspects, thus allowing the formation of subgroups of scholars who reflect and conduct research on specific topics. Examples include the ethical and methodological dilemmas raised by research on gender and sexual minorities in the digital realm, the theme of hate speech, and digital social capital. These are just some examples of how our network, by connecting researchers from different disciplines, has fostered an integrated and transdisciplinary knowledge and understanding of social and digital research methods and techniques.

Much remains to be done, and it is hoped that these opportunities to meet may in time form the basis for working together on broader and more important objectives, including the possibility of forming research teams to participate in competitive calls for proposals both within the framework of initiatives promoted by the EU and other international research bodies. Turning to the theme of this year's conference, we started from the premise that technological innovations create new opportunities and challenges for social research based on digital information (Addeo, Masullo, 2021). These do not derive exclusively from the digitization of traditional information collection techniques and the use of digital contexts such as websites, email, social media, videoconferencing or messaging platforms for administering questionnaires or conducting interviews, focus groups, etc. They especially derive from natively digital traces both intentionally and unintentionally generated by internet users in their daily use of socio-technical systems. They are not requested but spontaneously released by internet users and "found" by the researcher: these traces exist regardless of the research (unlike information collected from a questionnaire or an interview) (Veltri, 2019). Differently from traditional data, digital traces can be considered as dynamic (vs static), natural (vs provoked and self-reported) and not designed (exist apart from collection) (Delli Paoli, Masullo 2022). Their nature is changing the traditional cycle from theory to empirical research, due to the availability bias which drives towards defining measurement strategies from available data rather than from operationalizing theory. This provides several epistemological and methodological implications.

Moreover, the massive use of digital traces entails a variety of possible and unique methodological pitfalls that have only partially addressed in the literature.

We can broadly distinguish between epistemic concerns (Mittelstadt et al 2016) related to the biased nature of digital traces

and normative concerns (Olteanu et al. 2019) related to the consequences of research.

On the epistemic side, these challenges are related to trustworthiness, generalizability and validity. For some the non-intrusiveness of digital traces plays in favor of data quality and trustworthiness in particular. However, digital information is still affected by some forms of bias common also in traditional survey research and mainly related to self-presentation strategies, such as the social desirability bias. Most of time, digital content is carefully selected to adhere to one's idealized self. However, social desirability may also appear in different from those we are used to experience in traditional research: on the internet people may have the need to appear more anti-normative than they actually are. We call this the social undesirability bias, when people emphasize their dissent from normative and social-orientated discourse, also through a deliberately offensive language that defies the codes of political correctness and sometimes takes on the connotations of hate speech. Also the presence of fake accounts or non-human entities, such as bots designed to imitate human behavior, put into question the trustworthiness of digital traces. Digital traces may potentially guarantee very large research samples. However, sample size is not a sufficient (or even necessary) condition for representativeness.

Representativeness is affected by population biases and questioned both with reference to general population and to internet population for the interconnection of different motivations. First, the digital divide. Second, the wrong equivalence between access and participation and the different level of participation of users. Thus, the digital representativeness does not refer neither to the general population nor to the internet population but at maximum it can refer to the internet population leaving digital traces useful for social research. Moreover, the sample creation is affected by selection and accessibility biases. Selection biases derive from the algorithmic mechanisms of information selection which are always opaque. This opacity can in fact produce direct and/or indirect digital discrimination in extraction in the form of inequalities based on income, education, gender, age, ethnicity, and religion because of algorithmic user selection or data mining techniques (Crawford and Schultz, 2014; Barocas and Selbst, 2016). Digital discrimination can in fact affect sampling, which is already complicated online by the over-representation of some subjects in internet use, and the interpretation of results. Digital information may impact also validity. In particular:

1. face-validity and the assumption that digital information can be treated as analogous to the non-digital equivalent (e.g. Facebook friends as similar to actual friends);
2. construct validity: the most easily available measure is not necessarily the most valid since online behavior may be driven by individual motivations but also by technological functionalities, community norms, etc.

On the normative side, social research in the digital context also raises several ethical dilemmas that researchers must address. The accessibility of digital data does not necessarily imply that they can be collected and analyzed without any concern. Possible ethical pitfalls include breaching user's privacy (Goroff 2015) or enabling racial, socioeconomic or gender-based profiling (Barocas and Selbst, 2016). The assumption that publicly data cannot harm because they do not directly impact people's lives is wrong since they can be combined with other data sets posing serious risks to individuals and communities. While innocuous in themselves, such anonymous public datasets when merged with other may make individuals highly identifiable (Metcalf and Crawford 2016). There are several cases of re-identification of de-identified data. Digital social research subverts existing ethics regulations, their assumptions about responsibility, types of risks and researcher-subject relationship and strategies. Moreover, digital traces pose particular challenges to the practice of informed consent. New ethics framework balancing between privacy and accuracy should be provided against possible harmful outcomes such as stalking, discrimination, black-mailing or identity theft.

In the previous editions of this conference, we focused on the theoretical, epistemological and methodological impact of digital methods, on innovative methodological practices (digital ethnography, computational analysis, etc.), on the impact of the digital on traditionally "offline" and face-to-face contexts such as education, policy and politics, sensitive topics and population such as gender and sexualities.

This led to several publications collecting the participants' contributions:

- 3 special issues in Italian Sociological Review (Class A journal - ANVUR rating) dedicated to the reconceptualization of social research in the digital era:
Vol 11, No 4S (2021); Vol 12, No 7S (2022); Vol 14, No 10s (2024);

- A special issue in *Frontiers in Sociology – Sociological theory* (Class A journal -ANVUR rating): *Theories, Methods, Practices, and Fields of Digital Social Research*, Vol 7 (2022); Vol 8 (2023);
- A special issue in the *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education* (Class A journal -ANVUR rating): *The impact of digital on research, socialization, and communication processes – vol. 14, n. 3* (2022);
- A special issue in *Mediascapes Cultural Machines* - vol. 20, n. 2 (2022);
- An issue in *Sociologia Italiana* – vol. 24 (2024);
- A special issue in *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* – under review (2024);
- *The Handbook of Research on Advanced Research Methodologies for a Digital Society* (2021), IGI Global;
- *The Handbook on Digital challenges for social research methods in a changing world: new methods and new analytical frontiers* (2024), McGraw Hill;
- 2 special issues in *Cultura e Studi del Sociale* (Scientific journal – ANVUR rating): *Between Infodemic and Pandemic: On-line Researches in the Time of COVID-19* - vol. 6, n. 1, Special (2021); *Exploring Everyday Digital Life* - vol. 7, n. 1 (2022);
- A book dedicated to ethnography and netnography.

For the first time, this year's edition plans to award two prizes for the best papers, aimed at celebrating the most significant contributions in their fields:

- The “Natale Ammaturo” Award, intended for young researchers at the beginning of their careers.
- The “ILIS – International Lab for Innovative Social Research” Award, reserved for the most significant contribution in the field of Digital Social Research.

I conclude this editorial with a personal tribute to Professor Natale Ammaturo, a sociologist and scholar who passed away prematurely

in 2018. Together with Costantino Cipolla, I dedicated a book tracing his human and scientific profile (Cipolla, Masullo, 2020).

Professor Natale Ammaturo taught for over thirty years (among other things, Methodology and Techniques of Social Research) at the former Faculty of Education of the University of Salerno (now the Department of Humanities, Philosophy, and Education, where the ILIS Lab is currently based). I would like to recall, in particular, his book from 2003 titled “*Elements of Sociological Epistemology*”, published by FrancoAngeli Milano. In this work, Natale Ammaturo highlighted that: “On scientific knowledge, starting from the second half of the 20th century, a reflection was imposed by developments, especially in cognitive sciences, that led to overcoming numerous epistemological obstacles, but inevitably posed others. The critical reflection that science has about itself has raised issues on which, especially for social sciences, easy solutions have not always been reached, sometimes resulting in real paradoxes.”

As will emerge during this 5th edition of the International Conference, the “paradoxes” encountered by researchers dealing with the study of the digital society are numerous, as are the possible solutions that, it is hoped, scholars will attempt to provide with their contributions over these two days of work. These contributions will focus on the ethical and methodological dilemmas arising from the digitalization of social research.

Natale Ammaturo’s view of methods and techniques went beyond any form of sterile methodological dualism (such as the qualitative-quantitative debate), urging the need for sociologists to adapt their tools to the characteristics of social phenomena as they appear in contemporary times. His premature passing did not allow him to fully explore the consequences of what is now referred to by many as the “Digital Turn”. However, I am convinced that he would have paid great attention to the epistemological and methodological potential inherent in this field, with the critical perspective that characterized him.

I have decided to dedicate this award to him, also in recognition of the care and sensitivity he showed towards the human and scientific training of young scholars in this specific field of study. His particular scientific and methodological rigor can serve as a valuable example for those entering the field of social and digital research methods and techniques for the first time.

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Digital social research: Ethical boundaries and methodological biases

07 - 08 November 2024

Salerno, Catanzaro & Indiana Universities
(Hybrid Format)

Conference Schedule

07 - 11 - 2024

On Site - AulaDe Rosa, University of Salerno - 10:00 – 11:00

 **Online - [Meet](#)**

Institutional Greetings:

Vincenzo Loia – Rector of University of Salerno (Italy)

Paola Aiello – Head of the Department of Humanities, Philosophy and Education (DISUFF),
University of Salerno (Italy)

Giuseppe Masullo, Angela Delli Paoli, Felice Addeo, Gabriella Punziano International Lab for
Innovative Social Research (ILIS), University of Salerno (Italy)

Cleto Corposanto – Full Professor of Sociology - University Magna Grecia of Catanzaro
(Italy)

Brian Gilley – Full Professor of Anthropology - University Bloomington-Indiana (USA)

Introduction to Conference - Invited Speech

On Site - Aula De Rosa, University of Salerno - 11:00 - 12:30

 **Online - [Meet](#)**

**Making sense of the Self in digital ethnography: some reflections on the tensions
between researcher positionality and ethics practices**

Anita Lavorgna – Professor of Sociology of law and deviance –
University of Bologna

A personal journey through the three stages of digital social research

Giuseppe Veltri – Professor of Computational Social Sciences and Behavioural Data
Science - University of Trento

From source criticism to Generative AI: social research tested of digital media.

Giuseppe Tiplado - Professor of Sociology of Communication -
Polytechnic of Turin

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch Break

Session in partnership with:



DIGITAL RESEARCH, GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Brian Gilley*, Giuseppe Masullo**

**Indiana University Bloomington*

***University of Salerno*

7/11 (ore 14:00 – 16:30)

On Site - Aula Pecoraro, University of Salerno

 **Online - [Meet](#)**

<p>Jitka Cirklová Czech Technical University</p>	<p>Navigating Ethical Boundaries and Methodological Biases of Netnography: Insights from the Dull Women’s Club</p>
<p>Antonio Gnazzo LUMSA University of Roma Gabriele Oliva Centro Clinico per la formazione sull’identità di Genere ITER</p>	<p>The Digital Space as aggregation context and definition of identity: an exploratory investigation on the polyamory community in Italy</p>
<p>Alessandro Vetrano University of Rome La Sapienza</p>	<p>What’s the role of male issues? Institutional challenges and ethical dilemmas</p>
<p>Angela Mirello Annabel Alfano Cristina Ugliano Anna Senatore University of Salerno</p>	<p>Woman and modernity: motherhood becomes a choice, the childfree phenomenon</p>
<p>Francesco Notari Felice Addeo, Valentina D’Auria University of Salerno</p>	<p>The Hidden Face of Discrimination: Gender Bias in LinkedIn recruitment processes</p>
<p>Erika De Santis Barbara Sonzogni University of Rome La Sapienza Gabriella D’Ambrosio ISTAT</p>	<p>Understanding Cyberbullying in the Alpha Generation: a Qualitative Study on Pre-Adolescents.</p>

15:00 – 15:15 Coffee Break

RETHINKING DIGITAL METHODS AND PLATFORMS

Fiorenzo Parziale*, Marco Di Gregorio**

**University of Rome la "Sapienza"*

***University of Turin*

7/11 (ore 14:00 – 16:30)

On Site - Aula Cilento, University of Salerno

 **Online - [Meet](#)**

<p>Farhad Yousaf University of Naples Federico II</p> <p>Antonio Balzanella, University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli</p> <p>Cristiano Felaco, University of Naples Federico II</p> <p>Mahdi Shafiee Kamalabad Utrecht University</p>	<p>Integrating Node Features and Structure: Distance Measures in Social Network Comparison</p>
<p>Elisabetta Risi IULM University</p> <p>Riccardo Pronzato University of Bologna</p>	<p>Research On and Through generative AI? An inevitable entanglement</p>
<p>Rafael Oliveira Jonathan Pratschke University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Digital tools to promote social innovation in tourism: A systematic literature review</p>
<p>Vanessa Russo University G. d'Annunzio Chieti-Pescara</p>	<p>Exploring the Integration of Social Network Analysis and Agent-based Modelling: A Bibliometric Analysis</p>
<p>Guido Anselmi Valentina Sturiale University of Catania</p>	<p>Gauging hidden affordances: a methodological perspective for studying LLMs</p>
<p>Claudia Cantale Guido Anselmi University of Catania</p>	<p>Mapping hallucinations: empirical research on Stable Diffusion imaginary</p>

15:00 – 15:15 Coffee Break

Session in partnership with:



**VOICES, IMAGES, RELATIONSHIPS.
 SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS DEALING WITH AI AND CREATIVE USES OF
 DIGITAL METHODOLOGIES**

Cleto Corposanto*, Giuseppe Maiello**

**University "Magna Græcia" of Catanzaro*

***University of Finance and Administration, Prague*

7/11 (ore 14:00 – 16:30)

On Site - Aula B, University "Magna Græcia" of Catanzaro, Viale Europa

 **Online - [Meet](#)**

Umberto Pagano University of Catanzaro	How AI Will Transform Epistemology and Praxis of Social Theory and Research
Beba Molinari University Roma Tre	From digital traces to artificial intelligence: new boundaries from representativeness
Laura Caroleo University of Catanzaro	From Text to Voice: Methodologies and Technological Prospects
Luciana Taddei Michele Santurro CNR - National Research Council	Open science and ethical concerns: exploring controversies building the Italian Online Probability Panel
Giuseppe Maiello University of Finance and Administration of Prague	The Czech Vikings: Navigating Social Desirability and Undesirability Biases of One Online (and Offline) Community
Gesualda Bruno University of Naples Federico II	A methodological approach that integrates off-line and digital environment in medical research on aging
Luigi Giungato University of Calabria	Hybrid War Experiences: Netnographic and Semiotic Analysis of onlife Russian-Ukrainian narratives through life story research

DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Felice Addeo*, Angela Delli Paoli*

**University of Salerno*

7/11 (ore 17:00 – 18:30)

On Site - Aula Pecoraro, University of Salerno

 **Online - Meet**

Mahmudul Hasan Laskar Dheeman Goud University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya (India)	Affect of Social media Influencer Culture on Cultural and Economic capital of Youth in Indian society
Marianna Coppola Edmondo Grassi University of Molise	End of Life in the Digital Age: Navigating New Spaces for Grieving and Ethical Dilemmas
Michele Varini Università of Milan Cattolica del Sacro Cuore	Awaken in dreams. Old and new inequalities in the fashion of the future
Martina Masullo Alfonso Amendola University of Salerno	Generation Z and influ-environmentalism: a netnographic perspective
Noemi Crescentini University of Naples Federico II Andrea Rubin University of Ferrara	Visitor Experiences in Science Museums in Italy: An Analysis of TripAdvisor Reviews
Ilenia Picardi Marco Serino University of Naples Federico II	Translating online discourse into networks. A proposed protocol for qualitative digital data collection

20:00 - Social Dinner

ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND METHODOLOGICAL BIASES

Francesca Romana Lenzi*, **Marianna Coppola****

**University of Rome "Foro Italico"*

***University of Molise (UNIMOL)*

8/11 (ore 9:00 – 11:00)

On Site - Aula Cilento, University of Salerno

 **Online - Meet**

<p>Danilo Boriati International Telematic University Uninettuno</p>	<p>Older people and digital discrimination: promoting digital literacy to reduce bias in online social research</p>
<p>Noha Atef Egypt (independent researcher)</p>	<p>Persona and Ethicality: Effective Communication with Online Influencers in a Diverse Social Media Landscape</p>
<p>Viviana Condorelli Fiorenza Beluzzi University of Catania</p>	<p>Bad News: AI-LLMs and digital traces in journalism, the bias of copyright protection</p>
<p>Caterina Ambrosio Ciro Clemente De Falco University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Studying algorithms in social sciences: a systematic review</p>
<p>Elvira Martini University Giustino Fortunato Alessia Sabatini University of Foggia Erika Lese University of Pegaso</p>	<p>What a machine can do. The impact of artificial intelligence on the world of work</p>
<p>Dario Pizzul Alessandro Caliendo University of Pavia</p>	<p>The Digital Data Double Standard: Economic Value Extraction Versus Scientific Knowledge Limitation and the Opportunities of Data Donation</p>
<p>Salvatore Monaco Free University of Bozen</p>	<p>Social Research in the Era of the Metaverse: Innovations, Implications, and Ethical Challenges</p>

10:00 – 10:15 - Coffee Break

**WHY NOT EXPERIMENT? CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF
 EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

Biagio Aragona*, Cristiano Felaco*

**University of Naples "Federico II"*

8/11 (ore 11:30 – 13:30)

On Site - Aula Pecoraro, University of Salerno

 **Online - Meet**

<p>Domenico Trezza Evelina Bruno, Giuseppe Luca De Luca Picione Carmine Sergianni University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Digital Technologies and Value Co-Creation in Social Policies: Public Service Logic from the Perspective of AI Innovation</p>
<p>Cristiano Felaco Angelo Cristofaro, Michela Castaldi Gaia Guarnieri, Silvio Lamonaca Sirio Nadir Restucci, Sabrina Prima University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>How to Choose a Car Ride. A Digital Experimental Approach to Testing the Role of Authority in BlaBlaCar's User Decision-Making</p>
<p>Dario Chianese University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Gender biases in language-vision AI models' representation of occupational categories</p>
<p>Mattia De Angelis Serena Abbatiello, Maria Grazia Cerreto Roberta Croce, Lorenzo De Stefano Alessia Iodice, Maria Lionetti University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Gender discrimination in gaming, digital experiment in a pluralistic approach applied to investigate the phenomena.</p>
<p>Suania Acampa University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>A New Wave of Social Media's API Restrictions. A Decade of Challenges for Digital Social Research.</p>
<p>Vincenzo Laezza Francesco Amato University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>The Communication Strategies of Italian Oncology Fund Raising Campaigns: A Mixed Analysis Through GPT Integration</p>
<p>Mattia De Angelis Francesco Amato University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Retracing the Narratives of Artificial Intelligence on YouTube videos</p>

DIGITAL DEVIANCE

Marcello Ravveduto*, Francesco Notari*

**University of Salerno*

8/11 (ore 11:30 – 13:30)

On Site - Aula Cilento, University of Salerno

 **Online - [Meet](#)**

Maria Paola Faggiano Sergio Mauceri University of Rome La Sapienza	At-risk Gaming among Adolescents and Services addressing Gambling Disorder in the Lazio Region: the Role of Digital in an Intervention Research
Roberto Graziano Sabrina Bellafronte Guo Jianpeng University of Naples Federico II	Investigating the forms of reproduction of gender inequality on Tik Tok through a qualitative approach: the case study, The "Malessere" Phenomenon"
Maria Chiara Calò Vincenzo Laezza University of Naples Federico II	Being a camorrist: narratives and self-representation of the Bari camorra on TikTok
Federica Palmieri Marco Sallusto Palmiero University of Naples Federico II	The Narratives of Quartieri Spagnoli of Naples. An Integrated Digital Research
Valentina D'Auria Francesco Notari University of Salerno	Redefining the Online Mafia Narrative: An Empirical Investigation of the Mafiosphere

13:30 – 14:15 - Lunch Break

**WHAT CAN I DO? THE DEBATE ON THE MANAGEMENT AND COLLECTION
 OF DIGITAL DATA**

Gabriella Punziano*, Giuseppe Michele Padricelli*

**University of Naples "Federico II"*

8/11 (ore 14:30 – 16:30)

On Site - Aula De Rosa, University of Salerno

 **Online - [Meet](#)**

<p>Mirela Moldoveanu University of Ottawa (Canada)</p>	<p>Questions of reliability and validity of research based on social media-scraped data</p>
<p>Maria Carmina Sgambato Elvira Martini University Giustino Fortunato</p>	<p>Service Learning and Social Research: Challenges and Opportunities</p>
<p>Viviana Capozza Institute of INVALSI Michela Cavagnuolo University of Rome Foro Italico Alfredo Matrella University of Milan</p>	<p>The use of artificial intelligence within social research: A Classification Proposal</p>
<p>Michela Cavagnuolo Francesca Romana Lenzi University of Rome Foro Italico</p>	<p>Youth sport: a web survey on family sport culture in Italy</p>
<p>Francesca Romana Lenzi University of Rome Foro Italico Maria Carmela Catone Angela Delli Paoli University of Salerno</p>	<p>Researching what, Researching who? Data Nature, Quality, and Ethical Implications in Digital Social Research.</p>
<p>Antonio Vettori, Giuseppe Michele Padricelli, Gabriella Punziano University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Algorithmic feedback loops in soft science disciplines. An application of the Systematic Literature Review on the evolution of definitions from 2000 to 2023</p>

15:00 PM – 15:15 PM Coffee Break

FIELD RESEARCH AND APPLICATIONS

Carolina Rebollo*, Noemi Crescentini, Valentina D’Auria*****

**University of Granada*

***University of Naples “Federico II”*

****University of Salerno*

8/11 (ore 14:30 – 16:30)

On Site - Aula Pecoraro, University of Salerno

 **Online - [Meet](#)**

<p>Fabio de Filippo Alisa Bragari, Alessandra Crispino, Giorgia di Micco, Marianna Flagiello University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Responding to an emergency: the bradyseismic phenomenon and "Quelli della zona Rossa"</p>
<p>Marica Castaldi Stefano Cesare, Manuela Letteriello Marco Melucci University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Digital Society and the Labor Market: a Mixed Methods approach in five departments of the University of Naples Federico II</p>
<p>Ilaria Nardiello Teresa Cante Fabiola Ingenito University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Trend analysis and mixing of the impact of the 'Cucine da incubo' programme on the restaurants involved</p>
<p>Teresa Cante Anna Coppola, Giuseppina De Cristofaro, Amalia Caputo University of Naples Federico II</p>	<p>Evaluating Digital Transformation in Campania: Developing a Regional Digitalization Index with DESI and PNRR Insights</p>
<p>Vittoria Mascellaro University of Milan Bicocca</p>	<p>Ethical considerations in the use of artificial intelligence for image generation and art</p>

Aula De Rosa

17.00

Best young scholar award in honour of Natale Amatore

- The prize will be delivered by Prof. Tullia Saccheri

Best digital social research paper

- The prize will be delivered by the Organizing Committee



17.30 Conclusion

*ABSTRACTS OF THE V INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ILIS*

*DIGITAL SOCIAL RESEARCH: ETHICAL
BOUNDARIES AND METHODOLOGICAL
BIASES*

*07/08 NOVEMBER 2024, UNIVERSITY OF
SALERNO*

A New Wave of Social Media's API Restrictions. A Decade of Challenges for Digital Social Research

Suania Acampa, University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

In the socio-digital era, where the proliferation of digital technologies generates continuous transformations in the quantity and nature of social data (Halford, Pope, Weal 2013), the cyclical restrictions imposed on the APIs of major social media platforms represent a significant challenge for digital social research. These limitations, initiated in 2014 to improve security, protect user privacy, and prevent abuse and manipulation, have since evolved into complete closures, profoundly impacting researchers who use this data to study contemporary societal phenomena. Social media plays a critical role in socio-political life by providing valuable information for studying complex social phenomena like disinformation, hate speech, conspiracy theories, and political polarization, ensuring at the same time platform transparency and accountability.

Meta introduced the Open Graph API in 2010, allowing developers access to extensive user data. However, by 2014, Meta began reducing data access, culminating in 2018 after the Cambridge Analytica scandal, which prompted drastic API policy changes, limiting personal data access and imposing stringent security requirements. By 2020, Meta further restricted API access, especially concerning groups. CrowdTangle, a platform provided by Meta for accessing social media content, has been a crucial tool for studying online social phenomena. Its planned closure in August 2024 raises significant concerns among researcher's dependent on it.

Similarly, Twitter began reducing API requests in 2018 to prevent abuse. In 2023, the platform announced the end of free API access, introducing fees that significantly impacted researchers and developers. By 2024, Twitter (renamed X) had completely closed data access, further complicating the work of researchers and developers. Researchers view these changes as attempts to control data use, limiting transparency and external oversight (Bruns 2021; Venturini & Rogers 2019). In Europe, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Digital Services Act (DSA) govern access to social media data for researchers. While the GDPR poses challenges for the use and distribution of social media data for research purposes and its implementation varies among Member States; the DSA requires platforms to provide data access for research purposes that serve

to improve understanding of online social dynamics and counter illegal content (EU Commission 2024).

Starting from the EU regulations and Platform Policies, this work presents a dual critical reflection on the new wave of API access closures: it highlights the consequences for academic research and public understanding of socio-digital phenomena while opening a discussion on the need for new ways to guarantee data access that balance privacy protection with the needs of digital media research.

Keywords: API Restrictions; Digital Social Research; Social Media Research; European Regulations.

Retracing the Narratives of Artificial Intelligence on YouTube Videos

Francesco Amato & Mattia De Angelis, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

The emerging application of Artificial Intelligence poses a substantial challenge to understanding how these technologies harm and benefit individuals and society. Our study focuses on the narratives of YouTube videos regarding artificial intelligence. The narratives on these platforms develop meanings shared on the Internet and can have performative effects on the materiality of technology.

Studying the narratives of artificial intelligence is crucial to understanding the complexities of contemporary and future topics.

YouTube hosts a wide range of content, including informative videos from public institutions, tech industries, experts, and creators. Such subjects produce videos containing narratives about AI, which they disseminate among platform users.

For this research, we used the YouTube search engine, through which we selected search settings that led to the emergence of videos with a duration equal to or greater than 20 minutes on artificial intelligence. From the videos we extracted the subtitles on which we performed a file structuring process and subsequent textual analysis.

We argue that narratives about the future can influence present decisions and actions and can be studied to understand futures in the making. These narratives shape government policies and corporate investments and determine which technologies are developed, who benefits from them, and what possible future scenarios open or close. Narrative analysis allows us to understand how futures are being claimed and their fundamental implications.

This study summarises the landscape of YouTube video narratives on AI. It shows a research strategy for capturing video narratives using AI and textual analysis tools.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, YouTube, Narrative Analysis.

Studying Algorithms in Social Sciences: a Systematic Review

Caterina Ambrosio & Ciro Clemente De Falco, University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

In recent years, the discourse surrounding algorithms and artificial intelligence has been extensively addressed in the social sciences (Bircan & Salah, 2022; Kitchin, 2014). After establishing that algorithms are sociotechnical assemblages capable of influencing human actors and broader social phenomena (Marres, 2017), the literature has focused on aspects such as algorithmic bias (Thiem et al., 2020), algorithmic awareness (Felaco, 2022), and algorithmic transparency (Coglianese & Lehr, 2019). These topics highlight the importance of the social sciences in engaging with a research area that has long been considered the domain of technical disciplines (Seaver, 2013).

The dimensions of algorithms addressed by social scientists in recent years are numerous, and there is, therefore, a need to systematize what has been produced so far. Over the years, systematic reviews of algorithms have been conducted primarily within STEM disciplines. Few reviews within the social sciences have focused on specific aspects, such as algorithm audits (Bandy, 2021) and decision-making algorithms (Mahmud, 2022). To have a broader perspective, this work aims to provide a systematic review through a comprehensive bibliometric examination of the scientific literature on algorithms and AI within the field of social sciences collected from Scopus and the Web of Science.

This contribution offers an in-depth analysis of the subject, identifying key elements such as the most relevant publications and authors, the network among these entities, and tracing the development of specific themes over time. By doing so, we aim to fill the gap in the existing literature and provide a valuable resource for future research in this interdisciplinary area.

Keywords: Algorithms; Systematic Reviews; Artificial Intelligence.

Gauging Hidden Affordances: a Methodological Perspective for Studying LLMs

Guido Anselmi & Valentina Sturiale, University of Catania, (Italy)

The shift to digital sociology (Lupton 2014) has been highly productive: over the past 10 to 15 years, social researchers have been able to use social media data, as provided by platforms through their APIs. Out of this abundance several new methodological approaches have flourished, from computational social science (Anselmi 2024, Thornberg Uitermark 2021) to digital methods (Rogers 2009). However, as we are witnessing a wave of API closures, there is a dire need for new research methods. We claim that Large Language models (LLMs hereon) such as GPT or Midjourney, may provide us with some relief in that regard; however, due to the technical complexity of these tools and the amount of hype and expectations they have generated, there is a need to develop a strong methodological and epistemological framework on which to base further deductions. We are going to ground our methodological stance on the basic intuition that digital platforms are ‘epistemological engines’ (Rogers 2009), namely they do not provide ‘stored’ information, but they create a specific discourse on different topics (Burkhardt and Rieder 2024). Traditionally, digital methods have used the concept of ‘affordances’ to explain how digital platforms operate in such a way. The absence of a ‘dislike’ button forces platforms-mediated interaction in a very specific direction. Compared with social networking platforms LLMs’ affordances are ‘hidden’ as they are embedded in their training set: models are biased because some instances are over-represented in their training set, or they may hallucinate (Huang et al. 2024) when few instances of an entity are present. However, affordances of LLMs are knowable albeit with statistical inference and through computational methods: biases of the training set may be discovered when a large enough sample has been produced and analyzed through computational tools. In this paper we want to propose a qualitative-quantitative pipeline for analyzing the affordances of both textual and image-based Generative Artificial Intelligence models. Our method relies upon the creation of synthetic data (de Seta et al. 2023) which is then fed into specific data parsers that allow the analyst to apply more traditional content analysis techniques, both quantitative and qualitative. So, for example, an AI-generated image can be converted into textual labels through an image parser. This allows for content to be analyzed through standardized

methods, such as textual co-occurrences and correspondences. Most importantly, it allows us to analyze generated content at scale and account for random variations. To test our methodological protocol, we will investigate the textual and visual imaginary around different topics: local immaterial cultural heritage, GAFAM companies, and commercial brands. While the focus of this contribution is methodological, we also hold that such an approach allows for the examination of the broader internet without needing direct data access, given the increasing amount of 'filler' content which is LLM-generated. Additionally, by assuming that the output of LLMs will contribute to internet content, we can gain empirical insights from understanding the functionality and capabilities of these models.

Keywords: Digital Methods, Computational Sociology, LLM.

*Persona and Ethicality: Effective Communication with
Online Influencers in a Diverse Social Media Landscape*

Noah Atef, Independent researcher (Egypt)

The proliferation of social networking sites and the subsequent formation of online communities have fostered diverse subcultures, creating novel challenges for researchers seeking to establish effective communication with these groups. This presentation explores the potential of the "researcher's identity" to act as an obstacle to achieving or even initiating desired communication with online influencers. "Researcher's identity" in this context refers to the sum of identities and ascribed power that the influencer may attribute to the researcher. This study is based on in-depth interviews conducted between December 2019 and October 2021 with a sample of 27 prominent YouTube personalities from Egypt, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates. The analysis focuses on how the influencers perceived the researcher's identity and its impact on communication dynamics. The research reveals two key aspects: 1. Heterogeneity of Influencer Identities: Influencers are not a monolithic group. They possess distinct professional backgrounds and cultivate online personas that necessitate variegated communication strategies. 2. The Researcher's Identity: The study analyzes how the influencer's perception of the researcher's persona (including assumed power or expertise) influenced communication. The presentation explores strategies employed to address this perceived power disparity and achieve successful data collection. Finally, the presentation will discuss the ethical considerations surrounding the development of an online persona for facilitating investigator-influencer communication.

Keywords: Online Influencers; Boundaries; Social Media Research; Researcher Identity; Power Dynamics; Communication Strategies.

Older People and Digital Discrimination: Promoting Digital Literacy to Reduce Bias in Online Social Research

Danilo Boriati, International Telematic University Uninettuno (Italy)

In post-modern society, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have assumed such a central role that they are now considered essential for people to be truly included within social systems.

However, not all people have the same chance to be integrated within digital social systems, due to the low digital literacy, the digital divide and the consequent limited accessibility of digital platforms by older people.

In particular, this condition causes an increased digital discrimination (Delli Paoli, Masullo, 2022) in globalised social contexts, i.e. that kind of injustice or inequality in the treatment of people on the basis of their ability to access or use digital technologies. For elderly people, in particular, this means remaining excluded from the possibilities offered by virtual reality (Castells, 1996; Bauman, 1999; Norris, 2001), as well as from possible online social research paths.

Starting from the presentation of some surveys conducted online, this contribution aims to reflecting on the need to address the digital divide and digital discrimination among the elderly, in order to reduce the possible methodological biases that often occur with social digital research (such as the low representativeness of the elderly component in online surveys conducted on the entire population).

Specifically, the contribution emphasises possible strategies to be implemented in order to include older people in social research conducted online: offering, for instance, through life-long learning (Drew, 1997; Diggs, 2008 Quadagno, 1999) and digital literacy (Rivoltella, 2017) strategies, free training courses to teach older people how to use digital technologies and to develop technologies and interfaces that are easily usable by older people, taking into account their physical and cognitive needs.

In this way, it will be possible to increase the share of the elderly component that - when not specifically targeted by researchers - is currently excluded from participating in social researches that are conducted with the purpose of digital tools.

Keywords: Elderly; ICTs; Digital discrimination; Biases; Digital literacy.

A Methodological Approach that Integrates Offline and Digital Environment in Medical Research on Aging

Gesualda Bruno, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

Digitalization has had a significant impact on the design of scientific research with regards to access to data, analysis tools, participant involvement, collaboration within the working group and increase the wide of population. Even in medical research, online medical databases and registries can easily be used to collect data, diagnoses, treatments, results on patients and conduct

epidemiological studies or clinical outcomes.

The primary objective of this study is to describe the experience in a multidisciplinary team at work on a medical research, by the metodological point of view.

In the multicenter non-pharmacological experimental scientific study on aging called "Metabolic aspects of vascular diseases: importance in the development of atherosclerosis and identification of new therapeutic approaches and biomarkers" lead by F. Cacciatore and P. Abete the end point is the validation of the instrument diagnostic called "fr-AGILE" which allows the identification and quantification of frailty in elderly patients hospitalized in facilities with different intensity of care.

The data collection takes place in a non-digital context, in the low - medium - high intensity care facilities related to the study, distributed throughout the Campania region, and uses information acquired from the patient - or his "care giver" - in a detailed and individual way, through the administration of tools such as Edmonton Frail Scale and fr-AGILE, plus evaluation at 6, 12, and 24 months of follow-up. Sample size will be up to 800 patients.

Main findings indicate that specific medical needs leads to a mixed approach that combines off-line evaluation and digital elaboration.

The importance of adhering to patients' informed consent - an indispensable requirement whose lack constitutes a criterion for exclusion from the study; awareness of a marked digital divide within the elderly population; the pressing need for extreme personalization of care; the need to identify a medical tool for the identification and quantification of frailty in the elderly patient that is simple, rapid and multidimensional (Faller JW et al., 2019); the need to leave behind Fried's phenotypic model (the strict biological paradigm) to reach a complex bio-psycho-social paradigm which includes, in a multidimensional approach, the estimate of the physical state, the psycho-cognitive sphere, the aspects functional and social ones (Abete P et al, 2017) are all motivations that dictate the need for a research methodology that integrates individual and personalized off-line data collection tools with digital contexts of analysis, processing and sharing of

data, thus valorization of interconnection between the UOC and the various professional figures relating to the study.

Keywords: Customization, Fragility, Integrated Methodology.

Being a Camorrist: Narratives and Self-Representation of the Bari Camorra on TikTok

Maria Chiara Calò & Vincenzo Laezza, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

One of the difficulties in interpreting the mafia phenomenon is mainly linked to the fact that it represents a multidimensional phenomenon (Sciarrone, 2009), a multi-faceted prism made up of cultural, criminal, social, economic, political aspects (Santino, 2006). Looking, in this case, at the cultural aspects that constitute this prism, the mafia can be interpreted as a network of communicative exchanges built on the basis of a shared system of norms and values. A subculture, therefore, on the basis of which actors are able to build communication networks on which mafia organisations stand and, above all, spread (Santoro, 2007). These networks, today, are mainly developed through social media, facilitating the creation of a mafia interreality shared online and based on the dissemination of sayings and ways of dressing, body postures, weapons to be used, cult objects to be owned, phrases to be remembered, photos to be shared, dialogues to be passed on and clips to be viewed (Raveduto, 2019). Also because, in order to be credible, it is necessary for the digital identity to reflect the real one. Therefore, if the mafia identity predominates in real life, it will also dominate in the management of the digital profile, conferring the status of 'interreal' mafioso. The study proposed here of a particular criminal group - the Barese camorra - and its way of communicating and self-representing itself on the most modern social network scene is based on this groove. Therefore, in order to analyse the Bari camorristic communication and its self-representations, it was decided to implement a digital ethnography on the tiktok platform. Through the API given by the platform for the research, it was decided to collect all of a selection of profiles ranging from 01/01/2023 to 31/06/2023. The time period and the selection of profiles were chosen on the basis of the DIA's activity report and achievements in the first half of 2023. The list of profiles in fact corresponds to the selection of Tiktok profiles of clan members and their family members. Once the data was obtained, the analysis was implemented through digital ethnography using a hermeneutic approach, which is considered valid as an approach for digital ethnography (Masullo & Coppola, 2023), accompanied by the use of Visual Media Analysis, specifically through Visual Trend Analysis, which through the use of image grids, allows us to observe how different visual representations change over time and according to specific cultural contexts (Bainotti & Rogers, 2022). These analyses have shown how the communication of the Bari camorra is the result of self-narrative that seeks to anchor itself in the multimedia products inspired by Gomorrah the series. Songs, images and symbols

define a code to demonstrate power and wealth, which is constantly flaunted even in difficult times. The analysis of the images allows us to fully observe these symbols and how they tend to increase over time, solidifying the status of the 'inter-religious' mafia, which translates into the enlargement of the mafia network thanks to the increase in mafia reputational capital.

Keywords: Mafia Phenomenon, Subculture, Digital Identity, Camorra Barese, Digital Ethnography, Visual Trend Analysis.

Mapping Hallucinations: Empirical Research on Stable Diffusion Imaginary

Claudia Cantale & Guido Anselmi, University of Catania (Italy)

From 2022 we are attending the spread of Text-to-Imagine (TTI) linguistic models (LLM) which will influence the collective imaginary, but which on the other hand are fueled by the collective imaginary. Indeed, the data used for the learning phases of LLMs, such as Dall-E, Mid-Journey Stable Diffusion GeminiAI, come from territories of the Internet that we ourselves have nurtured through the social practice of sharing and participation on which the social web is built. Therefore they represent a reflection - sometime exasperated - of our culture, of our prejudices.

Indeed, it is reasonable to think that it is the expression of the hegemonic Western "US-centric" culture. We know that Internet is dominated by content that comes from the United States, i.e. US companies dominate the LLM market. The use of English for training and prompting attributes a linguistic, therefore culturally oriented, boundary to the results (Nicoletti, Bass 2023; see Crawford 2021). The hiring of crowdworkers who label content is the responsibility of Western corporations.

As the research conducted by Luccioni (2023) has shown, these technologies reinforce an imaginary evoked by a single culture, which interprets and imposes its own values and models instead of allowing the self-representation of identities. The above, together with the "overfitting" process, describes part of the complexity that contributes to strengthening stereotypes and discrimination, through processes of

cognitive distortion. Relying on heuristic models similar to "mental shortcuts," algorithms choose the most economical and simple solutions that are often the least accurate or are rude, racist, ableist and ageist, based on restrictive models of the binary gender (O'Neil 2017; Crawford 2021). Distortions produced can be analyzed and measured, because biases are useful indicators to understand the accuracy of the

model (see Luccioni et al 2023; Nicoletti, Mass 2023). Mapping the distortions also means taking into account the constant updating and differences in style of the different LLMs. From this point of view we take the perspective of digital methods (Rogers 2013; Caliendo Gandini 2019), which frame algorithms as "epistemological machines" that is, entities not only capable of describing reality but of effectively creating an imaginary starting from classificatory practices that distinguish them. In this contribution we will analyze a large number of pictures generated by stable diffusion, each of these will be generated by using a combination of a name of job or occupation (eg. Doctor) plus some adjectives qualifying the subject of the image (woman, black, native etc.) we will do several iterations of this prompting technique each time adding a further qualifying adjective (black

woman, asian man, black muslim woman etc.) with a mix of computational techniques and traditional content analysis we will label the content of images and then measure how much the images are “hallucinating” (i.e. producing visualizations that do not match the prompt or contain wrong features like extra hands or similar). This will allow us to estimate a) what is contained in baseline prompt (eg. A dentist) how much deviation from the norm (a black muslim dentist) results in hallucinations.

Keywords: LLM; Artificial Intelligence; Digital Methods.

*Evaluating Campania: Digital Transformation Developing a
in Regional Digitalization Index with DESI and PNRR Insights*

Teresa Cante, Anna Coppola, Giuseppina De Cristofaro & Amalia Caputo,
University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

The study analyzes the impact of digitalization in Campania using the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI), introduced by the European Commission in 2014 to measure the progress of European countries in terms of the digitalization of the economy and society. DESI synthesizes various indicators into four main dimensions: human capital, connectivity, integration of digital technologies, and digital public services. The objective is to assess how Campania compares to the rest of Italy by creating an alternative index that highlights the effects of digitalization in the region, also considering the funds provided by the PNRR (National Recovery and Resilience Plan). The research involves collecting data on the population, businesses, and demographic data of Campania's municipalities to verify the existence and accessibility of online services. Subsequently, baseline indices will be calculated to create a new composite indicator.

Through trend analysis, the study will identify the changes between the national DESI index and the regional index for Campania.

Market trends, which are sustained movements upward or downward, are crucial for effective market analysis. Identifying the beginning and end of a trend allows for the development of innovative products, services, and content that can leverage the growth and sustainability of the trends. Various technical analysis tools will be used to determine potential trend reversals, providing essential context to better understand the performance of KPIs and facilitate data-driven strategic decisions.

The study is based on a quantitative analysis of data provided by ISTAT and other official sources. The alternative DESI index was developed to specifically measure digitalization in businesses, territories, public entities, and among citizens in Campania.

Preliminary results indicate that Campanian businesses have a lower level of digitalization compared to the national average, although the adoption of digital technologies is increasing due to PNRR funds. Connectivity is higher in urban areas compared to rural ones, suggesting the need for targeted interventions to bridge the digital divide. The digitalization of public entities is ongoing, but the adoption of digital services by citizens remains limited, mainly due to a lack of digital skills.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that, despite progress, Campania faces significant challenges in improving digitalization. PNRR funds are having a positive impact, but a more targeted strategy is needed to improve access in rural areas and digital training for citizens. The new regional indicator provides a more precise view of the needs and progress of

digitalization in Campania, offering a useful tool for planning future interventions.

Keywords: Digitalization, DESI, Campania, PNRR, Digital Technologies, Digital Divide, Trend Analysis, Regional Indicator.

The use of artificial intelligence within social research: A Classification Proposal

Viviana Capozza, Institute of INVALSI (Italy); Michela Cavagnuolo, University of Rome Foro Italico (Italy) & Alfredo Matrella, University of Milan (Italy)

Artificial intelligence (AI), understood as a field of study concerned with the development of "thinking" machines and related technologies (McCarthy, 2007), has only recently been applied to different areas of behavioral and social sciences (Robila & Robila, 2020). Nowadays, AI software are increasingly recognized as a powerful tool in the field of social research, offering significant benefits at various stages of the research process (Grossmann et al., 2023). Recently, several authors (Alowais et al., 2023, Li, 2023; Markowitz et al., 2024) focused the attention on the ways in which AI can be leveraged to make social research more efficient, especially with regard to the use of digital technologies. To date, after all, it is difficult to find studies or research that have not included, at least in one of the research phases, the support of digital technologies – just think of querying online databases or using the main analysis software systems.

On the other hand, the current socio-technological context is the result of a society completely immersed in the digital world (Lupton, 2014), where the distinction between online and offline social life has become increasingly porous (Pink, 2009) and where the "digital world" (Rogers, 2013; 2019), configured as an interdisciplinary dimension, a meeting point between all scientific sectors that question human behavior (Cavagnuolo, 2022), consists of the so-called Open and Big Data.

It should be noted that until a few years ago, AI was talked about mainly from a theoretical point of view (Huang, 2023; Prather et al., 2023); only in the last period, thanks to the increase in intellectual and financial investments by researchers and major technology companies, the AI revolution is underway and has captured the collective awareness also from an instrumental point of view (Markowitz et al., 2024).

Starting from these considerations, the aim of this study is to construct a classification of AI software used within social research thanks to a survey of AI software identified online through a multi-channel strategy: in addition to the scraping of scientific articles and channels related to the artificial intelligence, it was decided to also analyze the content (videos, posts, etc.) published by AI experts and users (engineers, marketing researchers, etc.) on the main social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.) in order to extrapolate the types of software that have been used and their functionalities.

The extrapolated contents have been analyzed and classified thanks to the construction of a content analysis form that follows the strategy of content analysis as a survey (Losito, 1993; Faggiano, 2022). The following variables

have been inserted into the form: name of the software, site, intended purposes, type of access to the software, language, type of assistance, use of the software within social research phases. A key point of this paper is indeed the study and placement of AI software within the different phases of social research (Dave & Patel, 2023; Tovar, 2023; Ali, 2024; Khalifa et al., 2024), in order to construct a first classification and return a reflection on possible limitations and opportunities.

Keywords: Social Research; Digital Social Research; Mapping AI.

From Text to Voice: Methodologies and Technological Prospects

Laura Caroleo, University of Catanzaro (Italy)

The proliferation of voice-based communication online presents novel challenges and opportunities for understanding human communication in the digital age. It offers a compelling perspective on the interaction between society and emerging communication channels. While scholarly research has largely concentrated on text-based platforms facilitating surveillance capitalism (Zuboff, 2019), the transition to oral communication necessitates new methodological approaches. Text-based models enable easy user knowledge acquisition through metadata analysis; however, the fluid nature of oral content complicates this process, limiting accessible data primarily to metadata. Despite being in its early stages, there is a clear demand for industrial technology to support oral networks. Investments in advanced language models, machine learning, and text-to-speech technologies indicate a future where voice-based social interactions become essential. Natural Language Processing (NLP) has become a crucial tool for analyzing social media data, offering insights into user behavior and sentiment. Recent advancements in NLP technologies have enabled the processing of various forms of social media content, including text, speech, and live audio streams (Hirschberg & Manning, 2015; Boucheham, 2023). Researchers have developed methods for hate speech detection in voice-based platforms like Clubhouse (Mansourifar et al., 2021) and created integrated systems for multilingual media monitoring (Germann et al., 2018).

NLP techniques have been applied to qualitative public health research, demonstrating potential as an adjunct to traditional analysis methods (Leeson et al., 2019). The field of SocialNLP has emerged, focusing on the intersection of NLP and social computing (Li & Ku, 2023). While social media data presents challenges for NLP, such as informal language and real-time processing requirements, it also offers opportunities for enhancing model robustness through non-textual data sources (Baldwin, 2012). However, the dynamic nature of oral communication poses distinct challenges, including speaker diarization, emotion recognition, and context preservation. This study addresses methodological questions and proposes a high-level proof-of-concept pipeline for NLP and the comprehension of voice-based social media, applicable to platforms such as Clubhouse, X Spaces, and various live streaming services. The methodology encompasses three primary activities: continuous search, audio processing, and NLP. By integrating advanced NLP techniques with ASR technologies, this approach enables robust analysis of oral content, including speaker recognition, topic modeling, and sentiment analysis. This methodology underscores the potential of integrating

advanced NLP and ASR technologies in developing robust oral communication networks, paving the way for significant advancements in social interaction technologies. By tackling the complexities of analyzing oral content, this approach contributes to the evolution of communication methodologies, enhancing our understanding and utilization of emerging communication channels. Furthermore, this study explores the ethical implications of processing oral communication data, addressing privacy concerns and the potential for bias in AI-driven analysis (Mittelstadt et al., 2016). The research also considers the socio-linguistic aspects of voice-based platforms, examining how these technologies influence language use and social dynamics in online communities (Androutsopoulos, 2013). In conclusion, by addressing the challenges of analyzing oral content, this methodology contributes to the evolving landscape of digital communication research.

Keywords: Voice Methodology, Computational Social Science, Human Computer Interaction.

Digital Society and the Labor Market: a Mixed Methods Approach in Five Departments of the University of Naples Federico II

Marica Castaldi, Stefano Cesare, Manuela Letteriello & Marco Melucci,
University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

This article aims to examine the employment dynamics within the context of the University of Naples Federico II, with a specific focus on five key departments: Agriculture, Economics, Electrical Engineering, Economic and Statistical Sciences, and Social Sciences. Drawing on the World Economic Forum's Future Jobs Report 2023 and some more relevant research, the study analyzes the trends in the employment status of graduates from Federico II in the selected five departments from 2017 to 2022.

The aim is to highlight employment trends on the grounds of the rapid changes that have shaken societal norms over these five years, such as the advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the worsening of the climate crisis. These events have profoundly altered occupational segmentation, increasingly converging towards digitization. Using a mixed methods approach with a sequential research design, the initial quantitative analysis provided a contextual overview, while the subsequent qualitative section delved deeper into the subject, which was conducted on the annual reports of individual departments (schede SUA) to understand the narrative regarding the missions, objectives, and offerings that the departments provide. The goal is to understand whether the educational offerings align with the emerging needs of the labor market. This approach provides a comprehensive and nuanced view of the relationship between the academic offerings of these departments and the dynamic requirements of the current job market.

Keywords: Labor Market, Mixed Methods, Digital Work, Digitalization.

*Gender Biases in Language-Vision AI Models'
Representation of Occupational Categories*

Dario Chianese, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

Language-vision Artificial Intelligence (AI) models can generate high-fidelity images starting from arbitrary natural language instructions, and widespread usage of downstream applications call for both research and scrutiny on the biases embedded in these models. A growing body of research now points to gender, ethnic and intersectional biases across language-vision models, learned by poorly curated and automatically collected datasets. Understanding these generative models as “sociotechnical assemblages”, combining both technical and social elements in data production and transformation, is key to grasp the reach of these biases and how to mitigate them. Building on similar research on representational biases, in this work a diffusion model is tested in an experimental setting against a prompt sample based on categories from the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) and generated portraits of individuals are automatically labelled according to gender. Men are predominant across all major occupation categories, being generated 75% of the time over women. Gender is significantly associated with all ISCO-08 classification levels ($p < 0.05$) with both men and women being systematically generated in association with specific occupations. When taking the International Socio-Economic Index (ISEI) into account, occupation with high and low scores appear overwhelmingly male-dominated, with more balanced, but still predominantly male, proportions for scores in the middle range. This is suggestive of a curvilinear relation between ISEI scores, and the likelihood of a male individual being generated. Such a relation is supported by polynomial regression analysis, despite a highly unbalanced dataset. These results are discussed considering the representational harms that these models can cause and call for more scrutiny over data selection and model training. The peculiar apparent ethnic makeup of the collection is also discussed, with tentative explanations on the matter, and more broad considerations about the relevance of social science methods and tools in examining AI model’s knowledge representation are put forward.

Keywords: Gender, Gender Biases, AI Models, Occupation.

*Navigating Ethical Boundaries and Methodological Biases
of Netnography: Insights from the Dull Women's Club*

Jitka Cirklová, Czech Technical University (Czech Republic)

As social media becomes an increasingly influential space for the construction and contestation of societal norms, it is crucial to critically examine the ethical boundaries and methodological biases inherent in digital social research. This paper delves into these dimensions through a case study of the Dull Women's Club (DWC), a Facebook group created in 2024, now boasting over 1.1 million members. The DWC is a digital community where women resist the pressures to present images of constant success and perfection, embracing ordinariness and authenticity instead.

Employing netnography, this study explores how DWC members reclaim their voices and digital spaces, challenging traditional female roles, beauty standards, and the performative nature of social media self-presentation. The analysis is rooted in Henri Lefebvre's concept of urban space, positioning the DWC as a digital urban space where power dynamics, lifestyles, and forms of communication intersect.

The research underscores the ethical considerations in studying online communities, such as privacy, consent, and potential researcher bias. It emphasizes the importance of ethical transparency and reflexivity in digital social research to mitigate biases and respect the autonomy of online participants.

The paper demonstrates how the DWC provides a counter-narrative to the highly curated images prevalent on social media, promoting authenticity over perfection. Members share their struggles, poor decisions, personal defeats, and minor vices, creating a supportive environment that validates their everyday experiences. This openness counters the pervasive success narratives on social media and offers a more relatable and inclusive representation of women's lives.

By examining the discursive practices within the DWC, this study illuminates how members construct their identities, support each other, and navigate the virtual public space. It discusses the methodological challenges of using netnography to study online interactions and the need for continuous ethical vigilance.

The findings provide insights into how the DWC serves as a site of resistance and empowerment for women navigating social media pressures. This case study highlights the importance of authenticity and mutual support in fostering a resilient and inclusive online community, while critically reflecting on the ethical boundaries and methodological biases in digital social research.

In alignment with the conference theme, this paper addresses the epistemological and methodological implications of using digital traces for social research. It considers the unique challenges posed by the dynamic, natural, and unsolicited nature of digital data, including issues of trustworthiness, generalizability, and validity. Furthermore, it discusses the ethical dilemmas of privacy, consent, and potential harms, calling for a balanced ethical framework that protects individuals and communities in the digital age.

Keywords: Netnography, Digital Ethics, Methodological Bias, Online Communities, Authenticity, Social Media, Identity Construction.

Bad News: AI-LLMs and Digital Traces in Journalism, the Bias of Copyright Protection

Viviana Condorelli & Fiorenza Beluzzi F., University of Catania (Italy)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) models are widely used, and their biases and limitations are now studied (Bender et al., 2023; Bommasani et al., 2022; Sheng et al., 2021; Weidinger et al., 2021). Despite this, they continue to be used by billions of users to access knowledge in various fields (Brandl & Ellis, 2024). This contribution focuses on the use of AI models to access knowledge regarding news. Specifically, it researches the quality of the information—and therefore of the sources—conveyed by these models.

A significant debate has emerged in global journalism, exploring the advantages and dangers that generative AI can introduce into the news industry (Cecil, 2023; Iannuzzi, 2024; Adami, 2023). From this ongoing debate, which spans from legal matters to practical aspects of newsroom reorganization, new journalistic practices are emerging, ranging from including such technologies to defensive practices (Bianchi, 2024; Forni, 2023). While the possible distorting effect on information quality caused by generative AI through the generation of fake news (Pan et al., 2023; Zellers et al., 2019) is now well-studied, a new form of distortion is also emerging: that one linked to the mechanisms of blocking the free circulation of content adopted by major news outlets. We are, therefore, facing a second-level bias, not directly attributable to the models but to the protection mechanisms adopted by these outlets. Thus, we question the perverse effects of lawful copyright protection mechanisms in a landscape where generative models increasingly assume the role of new information portals, namely, the distortions introduced by bans on the free circulation of digital traces.

The method consists of a parallel analysis of the quality of information sources conveyed by the major AI models with Internet access (OpenAI GPT-4/4o, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, Meta LLAMA). The study has a diachronic perspective, monitoring daily for at least a month the sources from which the models derive the top five daily news for the four major journalism genres (news, fashion, music, sports) at a national level (Italy). These sources (the media outlets' websites) will then be evaluated using two different methods: the NewsGuard plugin (available under a subscription), already used by major news outlets as a reliability index (for example Open: Puente, 2022), and a custom GPT created for the occasion through the OpenAI GPT Builder, which uses the Whittaker Grid as an evaluation method (Boretti, 2000; Gardois, 2000). This GPT will be released for free in the OpenAI store at the end of the analyses. Additionally, further verification of the accessibility of journalistic data from the major Italian news outlets on the web is conducted, checking for the presence of

the "robots.txt" file, which manages web crawler tools' access to online resources, specifying which parts of the website can or cannot be visited by bots, including the AI models' ones.

Preliminary results indicate that most major news outlets in Italy have robots.txt files that prevent access to AI models. Furthermore, the data obtained so far shows that the sources referenced by the models have a medium to low average reliability score on the scales used. Finally, the social impacts of the obtained results will be discussed.

Keywords: AI-LMM Bias, Copyright Protection, Media Outlets, Information Quality, AI and Journalism.

Visitor Experiences in Science Museums in Italy: An Analysis of Tripadvisor Reviews

Noemi Crescentini & Antonio Rubin, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

Science museums, science centres, and discovery centres (SMC) represent fundamental arenas of dialogue between science and society (Schiele, 2011; 2014), thanks to their long tradition of public outreach through objects, collections, and exhibitions (Cain & Rader, 2017). SMC are crucial spaces for engaging the public in social conversations around science (Achiam & Mortensen, 2011; Wagensberg, 2006; Bucchi & Trench, 2021). The recent evolution of SMC has integrated scientific and social perspectives, and the digital revolution has profoundly transformed this process, directly and indirectly influencing science communication in museums. This change is evidenced by the increasing number of reviews written by museum visitors and published online (Alexander, Blank & Hale, 2018).

Several studies have explored visitors' motivations and experiences in various tourism contexts, with museum experiences remaining among the most relevant (Merzagora & Rodari, 2011). Moreover, museum experiences do not end with the visit itself but persist in visitors' memories and post-visit online discussions, such as on social media or platforms like TripAdvisor. These platforms not only guide visitors' decisions on whether to visit specific places (O'Connor, 2008) but also represent a significant source of data for analysing user narratives in real-time (Burtch & Hong, 2014).

This exploratory study adopts a science communication perspective, starting with the research question: what is TripAdvisor users' narrative about science museums in Italy?

How do reviews reflect the effectiveness of Italian science museums in public engagement?

To answer these questions, the Topic Modelling technique will be used to analyse reviews on TripAdvisor regarding Italian science museums, in order to identify the themes and sentiments expressed by visitors (Fileri et al., 2015). The results will help outline the main factors influencing visitor satisfaction, such as the educational value of exhibitions, the interactivity of exhibits, and the quality of customer service (Chiu et al., 2014). This research aims to improve understanding of how digital feedback influences cultural consumption and provide practical insights to enhance museum practices and audience engagement strategies (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

Keywords: Science Museum; Science Communication; TripAdvisor Reviews.

Redefining the Online Mafia Narrative: An Empirical Investigation of the Mafiosphere

Valentina D’Auria, Francesco Notari – University of Salerno (Italy)

For many people, online social platforms have become an essential tool for practicing and nurturing social relations through digital activities such as sharing news, photos, and videos with friends and family, or meeting new people with similar interests (Ulo & Akpumuvie, 2023). However, massive exposure to these interactions and representations can reinforce certain socialization processes (self-socialization) both positively (e.g., self-help groups) and negatively (e.g., deviant behavior). A significant risk of this mechanism is the potential polarization of opinions trapped in echo chambers – spaces of singular thought that confirm and reinforce existing opinions, interests, and representations. Repeated exposure to polarizing and violent content promotes the radicalization of thoughts online (O’Hara & Stevens, 2015). Furthermore, this process can be facilitated by online social interactions in which groups of like-minded people reinforce each other’s beliefs. In this context, social networking platforms have become fertile ground for criminal gangs or deviant subjects to spread provocative messages and reinforce their social identity both online and offline. In Italy, "subdigital mafias" are viewed as the result of a continuous blending of real-life deviant experiences and media appearances (Ravveduto, 2023). This paper aims to reconstruct the criminal imaginaries and representations that develop in digital spaces by classifying criminal attitudes and activities through user-generated content shared online (e.g., images, texts, comments, etc.). Using content analysis, we examined videos posted on TikTok by users who present themselves as criminals and regularly spread deviant content. The study aims to deepen the understanding of criminal symbols, myths, representations, and the potential dangers to which users are exposed. The research implements network analysis to evaluate connections within criminal networks and document the composition of criminal ties among suspected individuals. In particular, we seek to shed light on relationships, community roots and ties, and assess the possible existence of a rhetorical bubble – the "Mafiosphere" – in which the constant interplay between "visible" and "veiled" forms the narrative basis of the so-called "transparent mafia".

Keywords: Echo Chambers, Criminal Representations, Content Analysis, Network Analysis, Mafiosphere.

Gender Discrimination in Gaming, Digital Experiment in a Pluralistic Approach Applied to Investigate the Phenomena

Mattia De Angelis, Serena Abbatiello, Maria Grazia Cerreto, Roberta Croce, Lorenzo De Stefano, Alessia Iodice & Maria Lionetti, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

Gender discrimination in video games encompasses all forms of unfair or prejudicial treatment based on gender within the gaming environment. This phenomenon can manifest in various ways, such as in the representation of characters, gaming experiences, access opportunities, perceptions, and attitudes. These forms of discrimination can impact the quality of women's gaming experiences, influencing their participation in the gaming community.

This study aims to contribute to the understanding of gender dynamics in video games by identifying the tacit ways in which gender discrimination manifests. Specifically, it provides a sociological analysis of people's behavior regarding gender discrimination in video games, with the objective of exploring and understanding this phenomenon through gamers' responses to including a female component within their team.

To this end, the study employs multiple methods: digital experiments, web scraping, and web surveys. The research was conducted between October 2023 and January 2024 on the gaming platform Valorant. The main findings show that no significant discriminatory behaviors towards female gamers were observed. However, it is crucial to highlight that forms of sexualization and personal interest did occur, often manifested through inquiries about the gamer's origin, age, and name. Despite the absence of overtly discriminatory behaviors, these interactions reveal underlying biases and stereotypes that women face in gaming.

Keywords: Gender Studies, Videogame, Digital Methods.

Responding to an Emergency: the Bradyseismic Phenomenon and "Quelli della Zona Rossa"

Fabio De Filippo, Alisa Bragari, Alessandra Crispino, Giorgia di Micco & Marianna Flagiello, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

This paper addresses the field of risk communication and the necessity for it to increasingly adopt a person-centered approach. Indeed, the hierarchy of expert-social media-user communication has thinned considerably in recent times. Individuals, through social media, project online what occurs in the offline environment, thus contributing to the spreading of emotions via the sharing dynamics. The objective of this exploratory study is to examine a particular emergency context, the one of the bradyseismic emergency in the Phlegrean area of Naples. The aim is to compare the perceptions of risk from the point of view of the people themselves and to investigate how these are transferred to the online environment. After the concepts of subjective and objective perceived risk have been operationalised, a mixed approach was used, in particular, combining longitudinal, cross-sectional and textual analysis. The results will provide insight into the emergency communication in the Phlegraean context between August and October 2023, and potential strategies for improvement in interventions that follow a bottom-up approach.

Keywords: Risk Communication, Risk Perception, Emergency, Bradyseism.

Understanding Cyberbullying in the Alpha Generation: a Qualitative Study on Pre-Adolescents

Erika De Santis, Barbara Sonzogni, University of Rome La Sapienza (Italy) & Gabriella D'Ambrosio, ISTAT (Italy)

The “Digital Revolution” is a phenomenon that has determined several changes in both social and cultural life of people, especially in the so-called “Alpha Generation”, which includes preadolescents from 11 to 13 years old. Indeed, early digital literacy - simple, rapid, and intuitive - makes them as skilled as they are exposed to deviant behaviors resulting from the misuse of new technologies.

Therefore, the present research aims to understand, more in detail, the phenomenon of Cyberbullying, considered as a “social pathology”, and the sensitivity of the preadolescent age group, around which there is a lack of studies. In fact, the different forms of Cyberbullying (flaming, harassment, cyberstalking, denigration, impersonation, outing and trickery, exclusion, and cyberbashing) are expressions of the bias of social undesirability, which occurs when people express their dissent, resulting in offensive language.

In this respect, the research objective was to gather the opinions, perceptions, attitudes, and evaluations of preadolescents on the topic of Cyberbullying. This was possible by adopting a qualitative approach, with the focus group being deemed the most appropriate tool and online the most strategic mode. The target group - identified through “snowball” sampling - was subjected to a more or less structured interview guide. Then, all the collected data were processed through content analysis and reported in a theoretical-empirical table organized into five thematic areas (knowledge, perceptions of behaviors and attitudes, personal and others’ experiences and emotions, socializations, reflections, and solutions). The research revealed a certain correspondence between the reference literature and the research’ findings: in this regard, key points that emerged include the sharing of experience by a Cyberbullying victim, the severity of the consequences, and the disagreement over the usefulness of seeking help. Therefore, it is possible to state that, despite the epistemological and methodological limitations, the research objectives were achieved, and the results provided insights for future studies.

Keywords: Digital Revolution, Cyberbullying, Qualitative Research.

At-risk Gaming Among Adolescents and Services Addressing Gambling Disorder in the Lazio Region: the Role of Digital in an Intervention Research

Maria Paola Faggiano & Sergio Mauceri, University of Rome La Sapienza (Italy)

As part of an intervention research project, in progress, on at risk gaming among adolescents and services dedicated to gambling disorder in Lazio, Digital Social Research has already provided and, presumably, will continue to provide essential support on several fronts, which are explored in depth in the proposed paper.

Building on what has already been achieved, a first line of research involved the completion of an online questionnaire by a sample of 6,293 adolescents enrolled in the entire school cycle from 33 secondary schools in the Lazio region, focusing on the risks associated with certain play activities and the propulsive/protective factors (such as life skills) associated with them. The online collection made it possible to protect the privacy of respondents (no recording of sensitive data and identifying IP address), and anonymity was a very relevant factor with respect to reducing the risks of social desirability of responses on such a sensitive issue. There was, for example, evidence of this in relation to the question on gender, which included the option "I prefer not to answer": among those who did not indicate gender, the percentage of at-risk individuals was almost twice as high as among male students and about five times higher than among the sub-sample of female students. Moreover, online self-completion of the questionnaire made it possible to reach remarkable percentages of at-risk adolescents in relation to all play activities (13.6 percent for gambling, 18.8 percent for gaming, 25.6 percent for binge drinking, 11.9 percent for dangerous challenges). In addition, an essential digital support for the implementation of the survey in schools was the use of the electronic register, which was suitable for quickly collecting informed consent for

participation in the project from parents of underage students. With reference to the future development of the project, it is possible to anticipate that, starting from the next school year, a qualitative in-depth phase and in-presence training activities for teachers will be launched in the 5 institutions with the highest incidence of at-risk adolescents, focusing on prevention and risk reduction strategies among students. The use of digital media will also make it possible to organize remote training meetings extended to teachers and parents of all institutions involved, in order to extend the scope of the intervention.

On the other hand, the objectives also include carrying out the monitoring and evaluation of services deputed to the rehabilitation of individuals with

gambling disorder in the Lazio region, as well as reconstructing the network of active forms of cooperation. Service supervisors will be asked to participate in a closed web survey, presumably safe from excessive risk of sample mortality, aimed at collecting detailed information on the measures implemented. Finally, digital technologies will also play an essential role for the purpose of in-depth study of best practices by conducting three case studies, within which will be carried out respectively: 1. focused online interviews aimed at service supervisors and 2. online focus groups with operators.

The many expressions of Digital Social Research recalled are and will be combined by paying the utmost attention toward ethical issues, as toward optimizing data quality, including through the active participation and involvement of all stakeholders.

Keywords: Digital Social Research, Social Desirability Bias, Risky Games, Gambling, Adolescence.

How to Choose a Car Ride. A Digital Experimental Approach to Testing the Role of Authority in BlaBlaCar's User Decision-Making

Cristiano Felaco, Angelo Cristofaro, Michela Castaldi, Gaia Guarnieri, Silvio Lamonaca, Sirio Nadir Restucci & Sabrina Prima, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

This study addresses the role of authority and trust in the choices made by BlaBlaCar users when selecting drivers. Authority and trust may play a crucial role in understanding users' preferences in light of their interdependence: the former relies on trust for legitimacy, while the consistent and fair exercise of authority reinforces the latter. In practice, we conducted a digital experiment on the BlaBlaCar app from December 2023 to January 2024, where we created two similar driver profiles with multiple features (route availability, driver skills, driver characteristics, feedback, etc.). The only difference between the two profiles is that one driver is a member of the army, while the other is an ordinary person. The hypothesis is that people mostly choose the soldier's profile because the authority he represents may communicate greater trust and reliability than an ordinary person. The main results show that the military driver's profile received more bookings than the other driver's profile, suggesting a positive influence of authority. Moreover, the analysis reveals that the role of authority varies based on users' socio-demographic characteristics.

Keywords: Digital Experiment, BlaBlacar, Authority, Digital Methods.

Hybrid War Experiences: Netnographic and Semiotic Analysis of Onlife Russian-Ukrainian Narratives Through Life Story Research

Luigi Giungato, University of Calabria (Italy)

The paper will present the intermediate outcomes of the doctoral research entitled "The Narratives of Conflict, the Conflict of Narratives. For a critical analysis of the social-media information wars. The Russian-Ukrainian War (2022-24)". The research focuses on a netnographic sweep and a semiotic-narrative examination of the content and communicative processes that occurred during the current conflict, mainly in the digital environment, with particular focus to the Italian social-media Telegram and YouTube platforms.

Specifically, this paper details the methodological procedures and objectives of a precise section of the research conducted at the University of Finance and Administration (Vysoká škola finanční a správní - VŠFS) in Prague. This section included an initial phase of covert participant observation (November - December 2023) followed by overt observation (January - February 2024), as well as in-depth, one-to-one personal interviews (February - March; June - August 2024) with members of the Russian-Ukrainian student community residing and partially cohabiting in Prague.

The research aimed to collect life stories and segments of the interviewees' experiences regarding their hybrid war experience – composed of a coalescence of direct and mediated experiences typical of the "onlife" existence of new generations. The objective was to perform a comparative investigation of what emerged from the observation of social-media environments and communication processes. This has also made it possible to gain more information on the ways in which the interviewees appropriate the content disseminated on the web, transpose it, integrate it and welcome it into their perceptual, personal and relational dimension and their imaginary.

The interviewees, belonging to both genders, range in age from 18 to 25. In the case of the male subjects, their stay in a foreign state during wartime was on the borderline of renunciation of conscription or resistance to general mobilisation, assuming, for some, the features of a status they themselves compared to that of a refugee or exile. The research methodology employed therefore had to adapt dynamically in the face of more or less obvious forms of resistance on the part of the interviewees. Indeed, they often proved reticent to provide sensitive and potentially dangerous information about their legal status and personal safety, thus raising interesting ethical challenges with respect to the researcher-interviewee relationship and the way autobiographical material is collected.

The results suggest several interpretations indicating unexpected complexity in certain dynamics, such as systemic distrust by the subjects towards institutional channels while recognizing greater reliability in the authenticity and shared values of certain social media gatekeepers or "news-influencers." There is also a complex stance towards media polarization, which impacts but does not necessarily determine "in-person" relationships; dynamics of self-censorship and/or avoidance of publicly relevant topics in social interactions; and a complex and unpredictable relationship with falsehoods and fake news, often consumed knowingly for their entertainment value and to reinforce emotional and/or identity bonds. Finally, the paper presents the interpretative and methodological challenges uncovered during this specific phase of the work, attempting to contextualize them within the broader theoretical framework anchoring the doctoral research.

Keywords: Netnography, Information War, Hybrid War, Onlife, Russo-Ukrainian War.

The Digital Space as Aggregation Context and Definition of Identity: an Exploratory Investigation on the Polyamory Community in Italy

Antonio Gnazzo, LUMSA University of Rome (Italy) & Gabriele Oliva Centro Clinico per la formazione sull'identità di Genere ITER (Italy)

Polyamory represents a complex aspect of contemporary relational dynamics, very significant in queer communities. In the literature, polyamory refers to a consensual form of non-monogamy, in which it is possible to have intimate and sexual relationships with multiple partners simultaneously. Although polyamory has been extensively studied in parts of Europe and the U.S., little is known about the social implications of polyamory in the Italian context in general and in the Italian LGBTQ+ community in particular. This study aims to explore how it manifests itself, what the challenges are, and the socio-cultural implications of polyamory in the Italian LGBTQ+ community. With the aim of exploring the motivations, practices and experiences of queer people involved in polyamorous relationships we used a mixed methodology of data collection. A semi-structured interview, proposed to participants, in order to conduct a qualitative analysis and an anonymous survey to conduct a quantitative analysis. Participants were selected through targeted sampling, providing representativeness of queer identities and their connections to polyamory. Results show the different motivations behind the relational choices of queer people involved in polyamorous relationships, such as seeking authenticity, expressing identity, and building supportive communities; the link between non-binary identification and the choice of polyamorous relationships, the management of jealousies, the negotiation of commitment, and the social perception of polyamory. This study contributes to the literature providing a deeper understanding of unconventional relational dynamics in the queer communities and suggesting guidelines for socio-cultural interventions aimed at both supporting and enhancing these relational experiences.

Keywords: Polyamory, Sexuality, Intimacy, Monogamy, Non-Monogamy.

End of Life in the Digital Age: Navigating New Spaces for Grieving and Ethical Dilemmas

Edmondo Grassi & Marianna Coppola, University of Molise (Italy)

The digitization of society has deeply involved and transformed contemporary society, changing and reworking many dimensions of social reality, including an individual and social experience such as death.

The end of life and the experience of mourning represent, even today, social issues that, on both the analog and digital levels, provoke extensive debate and counter space for reflection and crossing ethical and epistemological thresholds.

While, however, in the society mistakenly - anachronistically - considered offline we witness the persistence of an invisibilization of death, in digital society death would seem to reappropriate broad spaces of argumentation, narrative and explicitness, shared and regulated by internalized social and moral norms.

The purpose of the present research work was to analyze the social, emotional and imaginary aspects of the end of life and the experience of mourning mediated by digital tools. These aspects, within the framework of digital ethnography, were explored through content analysis of living people's interactions with the profile of the deceased on three major social media (Facebook, Instagram and Whatsapp) with the aim of identifying a typology of users and the different narrative and elaborative modes of mourning and

interactions with the digital identities of the deceased by introducing the terms of Digital Gravestone and the remembering time.

The concluding part of the paper will address the ethical aspects that can be investigated both on the level of the real and the imaginative projection, reflecting on the possible scenarios of the end of life and the experience of mourning with the introduction of intelligent algorithms and their interactions with the human entity.

Keywords: Digital Death; Grieving; Algorithm; Ethics; Digital Gravestone.

Investigating the Forms of Reproduction of Gender Inequality on Tik Tok Through a Qualitative Approach: the Case Study, The "Malessere" Phenomenon

Roberto Graziano, Sabrina Bellafronte & Guo Jianpeng, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

This contribution analyses the aspects of cultural reproduction, of dispositions to act (Bourdieu, 1978), in the Neapolitan 'hybrid' context between Tik Tok and 'everyday' life through the study of the forms of representation of the intimate relations of young Neapolitans on this platform (Eryc Eryc, 2022), between aesthetic practices, expressive languages and communicative forms (Willis, 1977). Tik Tok as a digital form (Arvidsson), lays the foundations for a social of light entertainment that fosters the creativity of young people in particular, but in which the lightness of content does not prevent the enjoyment of a dominant imaginary that is perpetuated through forms of symbolic violence and embedded subordination (Bourdieu, 1979). This work aligns with the study of (Schellewald 2022) who adopts a contextualist approach whereby the popularity and virality of phenomena on the platform are not determined by chance, and the Tik Tok algorithm, promotes certain videos rather than others in certain areas and contexts. The focus of the research is on how the momentum placed on the re-presentation of gender stereotypes is functional to gender inequalities in the structural and superstructural dimensions. The case study is the phenomenon of the 'Malessere' as an ideal-typical boy with precise aesthetic-behavioural characteristics, to be retrograde, macho and homophobic and to personify the role of an overly possessive boyfriend who enacts patriarchal stereotypes of petty male despotism. Specifically, the contribution focuses on the unprecedented ways in which gender inequality is represented on the Chinese platform, unfiltered, and how masculinist cultural dimensions are emphasised and legitimised. The methodology chosen to collect and subsequently process the empirical material is oriented by a qualitative methodological approach that adopts a mix of methods involving the use of both digital ethnography, (Caliandro, Gandini 2019) and more traditional social science methods such as direct observation, focus groups and in-depth interviews (Amaturo, Punziano, 2016). The empirical basis was obtained through: manual extraction of meaningful videos from TikTok; creation of new TikTok accounts free from algorithmic alteration of user preferences. Subsequently, it was decided to 'train' the algorithm (Airoldi, 2021) in giving the user only similar content with the same theme, and to insert the keywords: (relationships, sentimental relationships, couple, malaise, Neapolitan love) in the search bar. To explore the most influential and productive actors, a

mix of qualitative analyses was used, from digital ethnographic analysis to the analysis of empirical material collected from fieldwork. In conclusion, the research offers a contribution to understanding how the use of content on the TikTok platform among Neapolitan youth subcultures contributes to the reproduction of gender inequalities functional to the symbolic order and the economic system. It follows that the concept of the causal 'algorithm' of mainstream narrative is not exhaustive in describing the communicative forms on Tik Tok, since it is the practices already widespread in certain contexts that perpetuate and self-nourish themselves. Bourdieu's lesson is useful in understanding how these more or less durable systems are always subject to the cultural and local dimension.

Keywords: Gender Inequality, Cultural Reproduction, Intimate Relations.

Affect of Social Media Influencer Culture on Cultural and Economic Capital of Youth in Indian Society

Mahmudul Hasan Laskar & Dheeman Goud, University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya (India)

Social media influencers have become pivotal agency of consumerism in the current digital age. Consumerism strategy of capitalist economy got advanced by algorithm of social media as smartphone and internet penetrated into people's everyday life. Social media such as Instagram, Facebook and YouTube are having largest user base in India. Influencer culture is growing in fast pace, which has varied implications such as trend of becoming influencer, adaptation of lifestyle portrayed by influencer and increasing leisure time. Since, youth is largest section of population in India, influencer culture is a challenge to their economic and cultural capital.

Instagram, Facebook and YouTube have cultivated an influencer culture, which portrays life in a highly curated and superficial manner. Influencers meticulously craft their online personas, presenting an idealized version of reality that is often far different from actual daily experiences. It has raised the question of true and false influence on life. The false portrayal of life fosters a societal pressure among users to conform to these unrealistic standards, perpetuating an unhealthy and unsustainable cycle of comparison and consumption. The portrayal of an ideal lifestyle by influencers creates a false sense of necessity among young individuals to replicate these standards. This compulsion drives many to focus solely on crafting a lifestyle identity that mirrors the superficial glamour showcased online. Others may find themselves working tirelessly just to sustain a specific kind of lifestyle that aligns with these unrealistic portrayals, leading to financial strain and emotional burnout. Instances such as individuals picking jobs and working only to sustain a particular lifestyle or just to pay for an iPhone which was bought on EMI have become common place.

These influencers are very often perceived as independent and relatable personalities, who in contrast primarily function as marketing agents for brands and corporations. Their primary role therefore revolves around promoting consumption, leveraging their personal appeal to sell products and lifestyles to their followers. The commercialization of everyday life through influencer culture reflects deeper issues related to consumerism, power of digital media and socio-economic upliftment of youth. As influencers continue to shape trends and behaviors, understanding their role and impact becomes crucial for comprehending the evolving landscape of digital consumerism.

The proposed study aims to examine how influencer culture is giving rise to true and false lifestyle trend through consumption; and to examine the

impact of influencer culture on the upliftment of youth in terms of their cultural and economic capital.

Methodology: Methods of digital ethnography and content analysis will be applied for the collection of data. Data will be collected from Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. Influencer, contents in their channel and user engagement will be studied.

Keywords: Social Media, Influencer Culture, Digital Consumerism, Cultural and Economic Capital, Youth.

The Communication Strategies of Italian Oncology Fund Raising Campaigns: A Mixed Analysis Through GPT Integration

Vincenzo Laezza & Francesco Amato, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

Communication strategies plays a crucial role in making oncology research accessible and comprehensible to the general public, thereby fostering fund raising campaign and community engagement (Davis et al., 2002). Effective communication of complex information is essential for raising public awareness about the importance of medical research and the need for its support (Fischhoff & Scheufele, 2013). Science communication theory highlights the importance of employing diverse strategies and channels to reach heterogeneous audiences (Kotler & Lee, 2008). Social marketing emerges as a pivotal tool in promoting pro-social behaviours, such as donations to cancer research, by segmenting audiences, understanding their motivations and barriers, and deploying persuasive messages (Andreasen, 1995). Additionally, the territorial approach underscores the local and cultural nuances influencing message reception and effectiveness (Bucchi & Trench, 2016).

This study aims to compare communication strategies employed by Italian institutions and organizations, such as hospitals, foundations, and research institutes, in oncological research in 2024. The Italian Internal Revenue Service's list of ONLUS accredited to receive the 5x1000 donation enabled the identification of these subjects. Communication strategies were extracted from websites and social media channels, encompassing images, videos, activities, brochures, and textual descriptions through Octoparse. The analysis combined machine learning and qualitative methods to enrich interpretation and facilitate comparison of these campaigns. We used GPT to transcribe and categorise data from visual materials such as images and videos. The data corpus was analysed through LDA and hermeneutic analysis.

Findings reveal two primary communication strategies. The first, deeply rooted in local contexts, utilizes printed visual materials with a strong regional identity. Conversely, the second strategy leverages digital platforms, featuring cinematic videos with celebrity endorsements and shareable promotional posts on social media to target a broader and more diverse audience. This comparison underscores how economic and social characteristics shape communication strategies adopted by institutions and organizations involved in cancer research, treatment, and prevention to attract funding.

Keywords: Communications Studies, Machine Learning, Oncology.

Youth Sport: a Web Survey on Family Sport Culture in Italy

Francesca Romana Lenzi & Michela Cavagnuolo, University of Naples
Federico II (Italy)

The fast-paced and time-constrained nature of daily life in our modern era significantly impacts our daily behaviors (Bauman, 2009). This influence is also evident in the realm of sports participation and activities involving children, adolescents, and families. While sports play a crucial role in socialization, shaping of gender roles, instilling values, and overall education of children (Fredricks & Eccles, 2004), its importance is often undervalued within families, leading to limitations in their children's participation (Mennesson, Bertrand, J., & Court, 2019). According to Strandbu, Bakken, and Stefansen (2019), the family's sports culture significantly shapes the extent and nature of children's involvement in sports. In addition to parental influence, sports participation is also often hindered by exogenous or social barriers, such as a lack of economic resources (Walters et al., 2009), logistical barriers, time conflicts and health problems (Somerset and Hoare, 2018). These factors, together with cultural factors, represent a significant part of the complexity of the phenomenon under analysis.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the significance that parents place on sports in their children's lives. Specifically, we aim to analyze the factors, as identified in key studies (Fredricks & Eccles, 2004; Walters et al., 2009; Heinze et al., 2017; Somerset and Hoare, 2018), that have the greatest impact on parental encouragement of sports participation in their children's lives. Our research will address the following questions: 1. What value do parents place on sports in their children's lives? 2. What influences parental encouragement of sports participation?

To address these inquiries, a quantitative research approach was utilized (Corbetta, 1999). This method is well-suited for investigating a wide range of attributes of a social subject involving many individuals. Consequently, a descriptive-explanatory research design was developed (Agnoli, 2004), employing an online survey (Lombi, 2015) as the primary data collection tool. This not only revealed the characteristics of the investigated phenomenon but also provided a measure of the significance of these factors on parental proactivity.

The focus of this study is on individuals, specifically parents with underage children, who were selected through a sampling of Facebook groups (related to sports practice and parenting). Facebook was chosen as it is the most widely used social media platform by the target audience, as reported by Audiweb (2024). Given that one of the objectives of this study is to examine the link between parental proactivity and children's participation in sports, the decision was made to exclusively involve parents with underage children. This assumes that parents directly influence their children's

opportunities to engage in sports, in addition to participation through school programs. Key findings of the study include insights into the relationship between family sports culture and children's involvement in sports and the significance of economic and geographic factors as influencers of parental proactivity.

Keywords: Web Survey; Youth Sport; Family Sports Culture.

Researching what, Researching who? Data Nature, Quality, and Ethical Implications in Digital Social Research

Francesca Romana Lenzi, University of Rome Foro Italico (Italy); Angela Delli Paoli & Maria Carmela Catone, University of Salerno (Italy)

Digitalization has substantially affected the traditional social research process from research design to analysis especially due to the extreme availability of digital information. This has driven digital social research toward a data-driven approach and a new empiricism based on the idea that large masses of data represent humanity (objectification) and can speak for themselves (dataism).

To recognize the role of individuals and human interpretations at various levels of digital social research, it is important to avoid the assumption of data objectivity and the tendency to equate digital behaviors with their real-life counterparts.

At the data collection stage, understanding the technology, algorithms, capabilities, and the way people present themselves online is crucial.

During data analysis, interpreting individuals' data makes the researcher's role challenging in both computational and narrative analysis. There are also ethical considerations related to the impact of digital social research. Unique ethical dilemmas must be addressed. Just because digital data is accessible does not mean it can be used for research. A strategy that balances privacy and accuracy should be implemented to prevent potential breaches of privacy or the promotion of racial, socioeconomic, or gender-based profiling.

The paper critically examines the assumption that large amounts of data can provide objective, representative, and reliable insights into human behaviors, motivations, feelings, values, norms, and meanings.

Keywords: Digital Social Research, Ethics, Digital Data, Person.

The Czech Vikings: Navigating Social Desirability and Undesirability Biases of One Online (and Offline) Community

Giuseppe Maiello, University of Finance and Administration of Prague (Czech Republic)

In our interconnected digital world, users actively contribute to online spaces through crowdsourcing, collaborative wikis, and open-source projects. Algorithms play a pivotal role in shaping our online experiences by curating news feeds, recommending content, and personalizing ads. However, this algorithmic curation can create filter bubbles—echo chambers that reinforce our existing views. Despite the illusion of a truly global network where ideas flow freely and collective intelligence drives innovation, these echo chambers persist. The tension between personalized content and unbiased information remains a critical challenge. Striking a balance between convenience and privacy proves elusive. Researchers studying digital phenomena grapple with ethical considerations, including informed consent, privacy protection, and transparency. Considering how different identities intersect—ethnicity, gender, and sexuality—in shaping digital experiences, we employ netnography to understand the dynamics of a specific Czech community known as the "Czech Vikings". Our focus lies in examining their online and offline expressions, emphasizing their dissent from normative discourse, and uncovering their online self-presentation strategies.

Keywords: Online Communities, Filter Bubbles, Netnography, Identity Construction, Norse Mythology, Czech Vikings.

*What a Machine Can Do. The Impact of Artificial Intelligence
on the World of Work*

Elvira Martini, University Giustino Fortunato (Italy); Alessia Sabatini,
University of Foggia (Italy) & Erika Lese, University of Pegaso (Italy)

Artificial Intelligence (hereafter AI) is revolutionizing the world of work by transforming processes, redefining our bodies, social roles, and professions, creating new opportunities and challenges, while also highlighting the lack of neutrality now associated with terms such as «machine» and «technology», which have entered a high level of dominance tied to financial capitalism.

The issue of technological development of machines – digitalization, big data, changes in forms of work, as the frontier of capitalistic innovation – cannot be considered outside the social relations of production, «the tension of subjectivity, value extraction, and its accumulation». Regardless of one's view of the relationship between innovation, social knowledge, and the nature of new capitalism, it is hard to deny that the development of digital machinery has been decisive in recent decades not only for creating new goods but also for reformulating modes of control over society.

AI – first defined in 1950 by John McCarthy, who suggested that describing any characteristic of human learning in detail and then providing this information to a machine built to simulate it would suffice – is a branch of computer science that deals with the development of systems capable of performing tasks requiring human intelligence. It uses advanced algorithms and machine learning models to analyze data, recognize patterns, learn from past experiences, and make autonomous decisions.

Once relegated to science fiction, AI is now a pervasive reality that is redefining the boundaries of everyone's life, both publicly and privately. Its use is now trans-operational, and its application extends to even the simplest and most routine practices of daily life.

This article explores the evolution of AI and its impact on various types of work, from production to intellectual innovation. We will analyze how AI is automating repetitive tasks, increasing efficiency and productivity, and influencing the structure of the labor market. Additionally, we will discuss the social and economic implications of these transformations, including concerns about technological unemployment and socio-economic inequalities. Indeed, a critique of technological innovation aimed at building an antagonistic political project must consider various levels of reasoning and reality when examining the relationship between machines, technology, capitalistic subjectivities, and potential counter-subjectivities.

Finally, we will explore future trends and the skills needed to adapt to an increasingly AI-dominated work environment: a hypertrophic brain without a body or a hypertrophic body without a brain?

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Work, Transformation, Ethics.

Ethical Considerations in the Use of Artificial Intelligence for Image Generation and Art

Vittoria Mascellaro, University of Milan Bicocca (Italy)

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into the realm of art presents a complex and multifaceted ethical landscape. This paper explores the ethical implications of AI in art, considering aspects such as authorship, creativity, cultural impact, and the potential for exploitation. The relationship between AI and art is evolving, challenging traditional perceptions of artistic creation.

Goals and research methods

This research aims to:

1. Investigate the ethical challenges posed by AI-generated art.
2. Assess the impact of AI on traditional notions of authorship and creativity.
3. Explore the cultural implications and potential biases in AI-generated art.
4. Evaluate the potential for exploitation and commodification in AI-driven art production.

The research methodology includes:

1. Literature review: Analyzing philosophical insights from thinkers like John Berger and Walter Benjamin on art, creativity, and technology.
2. Case studies: Examining the work of artists incorporating AI into their processes (e.g., Francesco D'Isa, Roberto Fassone, Andrea Meregalli) and art exhibitions featuring AI-generated works (e.g., Villa Reale in Monza).
3. Ethical analysis: Identifying and discussing ethical concerns related to authorship, cultural impact, privacy, and exploitation.
4. Interviews and surveys: Gathering perspectives from artists, curators, and AI developers.

Main Findings

Authorship and originality: AI's ability to generate art raises questions about authorship and originality. While AI-generated works challenge conventional ideas of authorship, human intention remains crucial in artistic creation.

Cultural impact and bias: AI systems often draw from extensive cultural and historical data, leading to potential perpetuation of biases and stereotypes embedded in the source material

Privacy and consent: AI systems often utilize vast amounts of data, some sourced without explicit consent, raising questions about data privacy and ethical use of personal information. Artists and developers must ensure transparency and obtain proper consent when using personal data for artistic purposes.

Conclusion

The integration of AI in art presents significant ethical challenges, including issues of authorship, cultural impact, exploitation, and privacy. A framework

that prioritizes respect for human creativity, cultural sensitivity, and responsible data usage is essential. The goal should be a symbiotic relationship between human artists and AI, where technology enhances human artistic expression. AI should be viewed as a tool that offers new innovations, allowing artists to push the boundaries of traditional practice and create works that challenge conventional expectations. This nuanced understanding of AI's role in art emphasizes the importance of human agency and creativity, encouraging further exploration of AI's possibilities within the art world.

Keywords: Ethic, Artificial Intelligence, AI-generated Images, Bias, Authorship.

Generation Z and Influ-Environmentalism: a Netnographic Perspective

Martina Masullo & Alfonso Amendola, University of Salerno (Italy)

The aim of this contribution is to understand how much and how environmentalist practices are spreading among young Italians through social networking platforms, generating a trend that can be defined as influ-environmentalism. Through the new technologies, the construction of those 'media-worlds' takes place, which are transformed into new spaces for the creation of languages, territories of negotiation between old and new subjectivities, places where the different forms of communication and their various interweavings are observed (Boccia Artieri, 2004). Nowadays, social networks (from Facebook to Instagram to TikTok and Twitch) no longer represent only the 'digital reflection' of society, but have become spaces where discussions on major social issues come to life and where digital communities are born and grow, channelling public discussion and enabling users to create value around sensitive issues, such as concern for climate change. According to research by Ipsos (2022), GenZ is one for which environmental sustainability, climate change and the green economy are priority issues that politics should put on the agenda. At present, preliminary results show that influ-environmentalism and interest in environmental issues and climate change are growing strongly and that, in most cases, the political initiation of young people takes place, or will take place in the coming years, precisely through these platforms. To understand this, a netnographic perspective will be adopted based on the combined use of various research techniques: from direct observation of online communities to content analysis of digital traces left by users. The platforms that will be examined will mainly be Instagram, TikTok and Twitch because they are the ones most used by Generation Z.

Keywords: Platform Society; Netnography; Activism; Environmentalism; Social Networks.

*Women and Modernity: Motherhood Becomes a Choice, the
Childfree Phenomenon*

Angela Mirello, Annabel Alfano, Anna Senatore & Cristina Ugliano,
University of Salerno (Italy)

In a society based on puerocentrism and pronatalism, Childfree subjects stand out among all for not really positive notes. The concept of Childfree is a question influenced by a multitude of factors, from economic to social and cultural.

This article will try to analyze the concept of Childfree following an interpretative paradigm, going to understand and analyze this decision in the subjects involved. The choice to use the interpreted paradigm was dictated by the fact that it is precisely on this that the ethnographic approach is based both in its classical and digital form, the latter field of study of this research, through the analysis of the posts of a web community. The research methodology is therefore descriptive and qualitative, having carried out a targeted study of literature.

Recall that, the term Childfree is used to indicate the voluntary absence of children, which denotes a free choice by individuals to abstain from having children; this differs from the involuntary absence of children, called with the concept of Childless.

The results reveal that for some, choosing not to have children, represents a stance, a more mature and conscious choice than those who have decided to have children right because "everyone does it, it is a thing to do because society asks for it". Deciding not to have children for these people is a mature, good, honest, just and respectful choice for future children who may find themselves growing up with immature parents not ready to assume the parental role. Not having children is an ethically responsible choice not dictated by the blind pursuit of social expectations. Fundamentals are the social representations of the female gender that determine a form of discrimination and exclusion towards those women who choose or decide not to have children, that therefore on the basis of a strongly sexist model they are seen as women who do not respect what social expectations are. All this has been confirmed also in this research work, in which it has been strongly found that Childfree women live a life in balance between the disappointment of being the object of attacks and discrimination, and the anger for not accepting their being and their choices.

Keywords: Childfree, Childless, Web Community, Personal Freedom and Autonomy, Social Deviance.

*Questions of Reliability and Validity of Research Based on
Social Media-Scrapped Data*

Mirela Moldoveanu, University Roma Tre (Italy)

The Internet of Things (IoT) has become the most prominent medium of disseminating data, information, and knowledge, or even proclaimed wisdom. Cultural and scientific knowledge, in all their forms and shapes are now finding channels online to get distributed further to parts of the world without any historical connection with the originating point of transmission. Moreover, given the rapid technological advancement in connectivity, and the fast spreading of online communication, thanks to its time and financial efficiency, increasingly more individuals and groups find their voice/content on various social media, influencing the economic and political life, generating new cultural trends, and making visible opinions so diverse and remote that increase the visibility of our cultural richness like never before. Thus, it was a matter of time until the scientific community would start using this rich content to depict new cultural trends and/or analyse the use of social platform for their research questions and hypotheses.

However, there is an issue of validity of the data scrapped off social media that needs to be investigated scientifically.

As part of an international Norwegian-Czech project, this study collected data from two social media platforms, TikTok and X (Twitter), using three coders and a list of key words in two languages, English and Romanian. The data analysis revealed there were quantitative and qualitative differences between the data files of each coder. Though the figures suggested there is a clear significant correlation between the number of posts returned in searches performed by individual coders, the similarity of content between data files of individual coders rarely rose above 50%. The figures indicate that there is core data pool accessed by individual researchers, but social platforms algorithms are applied to each user account and even to the same user for searches at different times. These differences resulted from the application of the platform's algorithm occur on both included platforms, but they vary in their extent. The study shows that research designs using data collected from social media platforms are affected by significant data quality limitations, and such research studies should be designed to overcome this limitation by using multiple data coders and data collection coordinated to be performed using fresh accounts and at similar times from similar devices/operating systems.

Keywords: Research Design; Digital Data Collection; Digital Biases; Social Media Algorithm.

*From digital traces to artificial intelligence: new boundaries
from representativeness*

Beba Molinari, University Roma Tre (Italy)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers a number of thoughts and opportunities that have been unexplored to date. While we may think of it as a very useful tool that will touch a large part of our lives, consciously and unconsciously, we are also unaware of the procedures and ways in which AI moves with great adaptive capabilities on our devices.

In the next seven years we will have a considerable amount of information coming from AI. This is because the European Programme 2021-2027, in particular the Euromed and Alcotrà programmes, focus much more than in previous projects on Technological Innovation, with a clear interest in the inclusion of AI and the direct consequence of a series of increasingly broad experiments both at national and international level.

The abstract aims to highlight what contribution artificial intelligence can make in the field of social research by setting as a fixed point the tools that have been consolidated to date in research methodology, whether they are traditional or closely linked to e-methods.

It is necessary to stop and think about how and what data AI provides us with, we must therefore ask ourselves: are we in the same field of analysis as e-methods? Can we instead continue to handle such data through traditional analysis techniques, or should we think of AI as totally new data/information?

Does the data that is 'released' to us by AI fall entirely within the well-established definition of Big Data? Or are they 'other' data because they pose us a series of more purely technical questions (format, size, etc.)? These are just some of the questions to which we shall attempt to give a series of answers, without any claim to exhaustiveness of course, but aimed at discussing representativeness, not only statistical, but understood in a much broader sense.

It will be an opportunity to discuss data matrices, software for AI analysis, the amount of information and collaterally research designs and what strategies can be used to better 'adapt' artificial intelligence to social research.

Keywords: Social Research Methodology, Statistical Representativeness, Social Representativeness, Artificial Intelligence.

Social Research in the Era of the Metaverse: Innovations, Implications, and Ethical Challenges

Salvatore Monaco, Free University of Bozen (Italy)

The advent of the Metaverse, an integral component of Web 3.0 alongside Artificial Intelligence (AI), blockchain, and other digital innovations, marks a significant shift in the landscape of digital society. This paper explores the impacts of the Metaverse on social research. Specifically, it aims to analyze the potential benefits and challenges of integrating the Metaverse into various fields of social research, assess the implications for research methodologies, investigate ethical considerations and data management issues.

One of the primary benefits is the enhanced research capabilities that the Metaverse offers. Its highly interactive and immersive environment allows researchers to simulate and study complex social phenomena in unprecedented ways. This has the potential to significantly enhance the depth and scope of social research, providing new opportunities for exploration and understanding. Additionally, virtual simulations in the Metaverse can help reduce biases inherent in traditional research methods, offering a more accurate and nuanced understanding of social dynamics. The ability to create controlled environments and manipulate variables in real-time provides researchers with powerful tools for conducting experiments and observing behaviors. Furthermore, the Metaverse enables researchers to work on simulated situations to collect data about potential scenarios. However, the study also identifies several challenges associated with the Metaverse. One of the primary issues is social acceptance. There is considerable variance in the social acceptance of Metaverse technologies, with some individuals expressing reluctance due to unfamiliarity or skepticism about their benefits. This presents a barrier to the widespread adoption and utilization of the Metaverse in social research. Affordability and access are also significant concerns. The cost of accessing and participating in the Metaverse remains a barrier for many, raising issues of inclusivity and equal access to research opportunities. Ensuring that the benefits of the Metaverse are available to all researchers, regardless of their financial resources, is a critical challenge that must be addressed. Additionally, the (re)construction of immersive environments, goods, and services may mislead users or challenge the validity of results due to their lesser sense of reality. Finally, managing sensitive data within the Metaverse poses significant ethical challenges. Issues related to privacy, consent, and data security are paramount, requiring careful consideration and the implementation of robust safeguards to protect research participants and their data.

Keywords: Metaverse, Social Research, Digital Innovation, Research Methodology, Data Collection.

Trend Analysis and Mixing of the Impact of the ‘Cucine da Incubo’ Programme on the Restaurants Involved

Ilaria Nardiello, Teresa Cante & Fabiola Ingenito, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

This study aims to delve into the sociocultural dynamics evident in TripAdvisor reviews and TikTok comments about the television show "Cucine da Incubo," known globally as "Kitchen Nightmares." The research examines user reactions before and after an episode featuring a specific restaurant to explore how media exposure shapes public perception and social dialogue about dining establishments. By using a representative sample of reviews and comments, the study investigates whether online ratings and opinions change significantly after exposure and how these changes mirror broader societal trends and attitudes towards dining experiences. By comparing TripAdvisor reviews with TikTok comments, we gain a comprehensive view of user reactions, revealing the different ways these platforms influence and reflect public opinion. TripAdvisor, which is traditionally associated with detailed reviews and ratings, provides insights into how viewers' perceptions of restaurant quality and service evolve after media exposure. Conversely, TikTok, known for its short, engaging videos and rapid interaction, captures immediate emotional and narrative responses. This divergence highlights the multifaceted nature of social media engagement and its role in creating and spreading cultural narratives. Preliminary findings show significant changes in TripAdvisor reviews, with notable shifts in ratings and detailed feedback often referencing specific elements of the television episode.

These reviews frequently mention the restaurant's transformation, food quality, and service improvements, suggesting that viewers see a tangible impact from the show's intervention. On the other hand, TikTok comments reveal different trends, focusing more on the entertainment value, dramatic elements, and personal stories presented in the episode. These comments often highlight emotional reactions, such as empathy for the restaurant owners or amusement at the host's interactions, illustrating TikTok's role in fostering a different type of engagement. The study also considers the broader context of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has significantly altered consumer behavior, expectations, and the restaurant industry's landscape. The pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges to the hospitality sector, reshaping dining practices and increasing public sensitivity to issues like hygiene, safety, and economic survival. By analyzing reviews and comments during this period, the research provides insights into how the pandemic affects consumer perceptions and how media representations resonate with these new realities. To ensure the robustness and reliability of the results, the study considers various factors such as sample size, the

geographical diversity of the restaurants analyzed, and the time period covered, including both before and after the "Cucine da Incubo" episode aired. By applying a sociological lens, the research aims to understand the interplay between media representation, consumer feedback, and the socio-economic challenges faced by restaurants during this time. Ultimately, this research seeks to enhance our understanding of how television programs like "Cucine da Incubo" influence and reflect societal attitudes towards restaurants, particularly during significant events like the Covid-19 pandemic. The findings offer a critical perspective on the role of media in shaping public discourse and the social construction of dining experiences. They highlight the importance of considering multiple platforms to gain a holistic view of public sentiment and cultural trends.

Keywords: Tiktok, Comments, TripAdvisor, Online Ratings, User Reaction, Covid-19.

The Hidden Face of Discrimination: Gender Bias in LinkedIn Recruitment Processes

Francesco Notari, Felice Addeo & Valentina D'Auria, University of Salerno (Italy)

Cultural gender stereotypes continue to disadvantage women in the workplace. These biases include the belief that women are less competent than men in many fields, leading to higher performance standards for women, more rigorous selection processes, and penalties in terms of workplace rights (Isaac et al., 2009). In this context, online platforms are changing job search and selection processes, offering new opportunities but also perpetuating potential biases (Chmiel, 2015). This study examines the role of LinkedIn, one of the leading professional platforms, focusing on gender biases emerging during the selection process. The aim is to analyze how gender stereotypes influence both jobs posting formulation and candidate evaluation. The empirical research combines textual and visual analysis. The textual corpus comprises job advertisements published on LinkedIn across various sectors. Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques will be used to examine potentially gendered linguistic patterns, such as the use of stereotypically masculine or feminine adjectives and the presence of exclusive language (Hosain & Liu, 2020). The visual component will focus on candidates' profile pictures, evaluating how appearance influences the perception of suitability for certain positions (Simon et al., 2023). Using these analytical techniques, the variation in profile adherence threshold will be quantified. The study contributes to the literature on gender bias in digital recruitment, highlighting subtle mechanisms through which stereotypes manifest online. Practical implications include recommendations for platforms like LinkedIn to mitigate these biases, such as implementing neutral writing tools for job postings and promoting "blind" selection processes.

Keywords: Online Recruitment Stereotypes, Gender Bias, Natural Language Processing (NLP), Labour Market, Online Labour Market Relation.

Digital Tools to Promote Social Innovation in Tourism: A Systematic Literature Review

Rafael Oliveira & Jonathan Pratschke, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

Tourist destinations face various challenges, from overcrowding, the need for innovations, more excellent social representation, and the growth of virtual platforms for tourism services (Farsari, 2023). It involves the interaction between tourists, the market, and citizens, profoundly altering social dynamics. Moreover, the tourism industry includes numerous informal relationships among its actors, including those across different geographical locations, making governance management more complex than in other areas (Bock et al., 2021).

This complexity causes studies on these processes in tourism to focus more on formal structures, particularly the market, resulting in the local community's perspective being underexplored (Bichler, 2021; Farsari, 2023). Tourism is a complex activity, and inter- and transdisciplinary studies are essential to identify new forms of governance for the sector (Farsari, 2023) encouraged by social innovations. Social innovation is understood as a set of ideas and actions by individuals or groups that contribute to changes in social relations (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Pel et al., 2020), often driven by the social need to collectively alter a reality (Ayob et al., 2016). They focus on problems the government cannot efficiently solve (Galego et al., 2022; Mulgan, 2006), improving the population's quality of life and creating a better future (Pol & Ville, 2009).

The role of information and communication technologies has expanded the forms of empowerment for local networks. Furthermore, it enhances social participation in problem-listening and the co-creation of solutions (Bannister & Connolly, 2012; Heeks, 2001).

This research aimed to identify which existing digital tools foster social innovation in tourism. To this end, a systematic literature review was conducted based on the PRISMA model, aiming to collect initiatives and tools that can assist managers and local populations understand the topic. The research was conducted by searching for digital, technologies, social innovation, tourism, and local terms in the Brazilian international academic work aggregator Portal CAPES during January 2024. Initially, 123 results were found, and after using selection parameters for reading the articles, 21 were chosen for analysis.

The results showed that the analyzed initiatives were distributed among 15 technologies, the most relevant being digital mapping, social media, and mobile apps. Additionally, a significant portion of the initiatives are created by the government for communities (39%), followed by community-to-community initiatives (23%), universities for communities (19%), the private market for communities (16%), and NGOs for communities (3%).

The research identified consolidated and ongoing initiatives that can boost social innovations in tourism, enhancing local governance. The initiatives and technologies presented can serve as examples for developing new proposals based on best practices in the sector.

Keywords: Governance, Communities, Technologies, Good Practices.

How AI Will Transform Epistemology and Praxis of Social Theory and Research

Umberto Pagano, University of Catanzaro (Italy)

Artificial intelligence (AI) is profoundly transforming the field of social research, introducing new methodological opportunities while simultaneously raising crucial epistemological and ethical issues. This contribution explores how AI not only reconfigures sociological research methods but also impacts theoretical reflection and the understanding of social processes, themselves profoundly reshaped.

One possible outcome of AI development in the medium term is the emergence of sophisticated tools for assisted hermeneutic comparison. These tools could allow for the automated comparison of large theoretical corpora, generating new syntheses and perspectives through systematic comparative analysis. This “assisted hermeneutic comparison” could overcome the limitations (and time constraints) of traditional human work, offering new interpretive keys to understanding the evolution of social theories. While there is a risk of conceptual flattening or the reproduction of pre-existing biases, AI could instead promote greater depth and precision in theoretical and critical reflection, potentially enhancing the overall quality of academic production. Furthermore, AI, appropriately guided by researchers, could increasingly generate academic papers that are nearly indistinguishable from those produced by humans. Consider the potential impact of such functionalities on an academic system deeply focused on the quantitative production of scientific publications.

Another rapidly evolving field is that of complex simulation frameworks for social interactions, including their diachronic evolution. Multi-Agent Based Social Simulations (MABSS), such as NetLogo, GAMA, MATSim, AnyLogic and many others, have long enabled the simulation of complex social dynamics, but AI promises to exponentially refine analysis, allowing researchers to observe specific dynamics without the risks, costs, and time constraints of traditional field research. Moreover, it is possible to generate dangerous, risky, or extreme situations (such as riots, wars, repression, torture...) by analysing the behaviours of simulated agents and how they evolve over successive temporal cycles from a given starting point. These possibilities, once considered SF, are now within reach.

But what kind of reflections are we called to make in light of all this? What epistemological shift is underway? What are the risks of scientism and reductionism inherent in these trends? And what are the potential benefits? Are we witnessing an evolution in the role of the researcher? He may shift from being the primary generator of hypotheses and theories to being a sort of postmodern medium, whose main skill will be to interrogate powerful

systems of historical and hermeneutic analysis as well as of simulation and prediction. New oracles?

Keywords: Methodological Innovation; Social Research; Hermeneutics; Simulation; Ethical Considerations.

The Narratives of Quartieri Spagnoli of Naples. An Integrated Digital Research

Federica Palmieri & Marco Sallusto Palmiero, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

In the last decade, the area of Quartieri Spagnoli (QS) in Naples has undergone a process of redevelopment accompanied by an increase in the flow of tourists, made possible by the construction of a media and digital place-brand. The place-branding process has made it possible to make the neighbourhood known to a "distant" population, redirecting the collective imagination of the place characterised by heterogeneous identity, cultural and urbanistic features. This article aims to investigate the different spheres that contribute to the creation of the narrative of QS and its construction as a tourist destination. The investigation has chosen the digital as a privileged point of observation, starting from the assumption that digital data are nowadays fundamental in reconstructing the narratives of the place that feed a specific collective imagination. Through digital data, the voices contributing to the creation of the imaginary over the last decade have been identified: journalistic

storytelling on the one hand, and accounts of tourists' experiences on the other. Since these web-based narratives are in any case inseparable from the real existence of the place, the voice of the neighbourhood itself is taken into consideration, linked to the way in which it represents itself on the territory. With the help of Google Street View, it was possible to collect digital images depicting the neighbourhood at different historical moments. The use of these digital traces raises ethical issues related to both epistemic and normative concerns. Specifically, if the images acquired from Google Street View present privacy and informed consent issues, which intertwine with the platform's policies, in the case of TripAdvisor reviews, significant methodological issues are related to the generalizability and representativeness of the tourist population.

The analysis of the three voices incorporates a mixed social science approach, which allows the complexity of the neighbourhood's narrative as a tourist destination to be restored over time. Following an analysis developed for each narrative, an integrated narrative is proposed, bringing to light previously unseen aspects that would otherwise have remained hidden. The analysis returns a narrative of QS characterised by different souls. QS today attracts different types of tourism that intertwine to form a tourist destination capable of attracting visitors for the variety of its offers. The digital place-brand has been generated both unconsciously and spontaneously by the actors actively participating in the area, with the common aim of moving further and further away from an imaginary that focuses on marginality, delinquency and organised crime.

Keywords: Quartieri Spagnoli, Iconographic Analysis, Digital Narratives, Tourism, Mixed-Methods.

Translating Online Discourse Into Networks. A Proposed Protocol for Qualitative Digital Data Collection

Ilenia Picardi & Marco Serino, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

Web-ethnography is now well acknowledged as a suit of qualitative strategies for data collection in online fields. It enables the researcher to observe and take part in online activities and gain insights into meaning making processes of web-based communities. When discursive patterns are at issue, online contents are subject to analysis aimed to grasp the meaning inherent to discourse as well as information on the agents performing it. Moreover, utterances may consist of statements that involve other agents or objects, both constructed discursively and “enrolled” to give substance and credibility to that statement, as is the case with scientific claims or persuasive arguments of different sorts. These elements compose a structure that can be formalised in network terms, preserving the qualitative nature of the source and tracing all meaningful associations (also in a Latourian sense) between such elements. The present paper aims to provide a codified strategy to pursue the above and thus transform (translate) discourse into networks by applying coding schemes to online content (posts, videos, comments etc.) in order to trace the linkages between its constitutive parts and build a network that can be subject to interpretation by recalling the qualitative nature of its constituents. In this way, the relations between statements and their contextual embedding are investigated by giving due relevance to any agent participating in the discursive assemblage observed, and with minimal loss of meaning. The meaning structure of discourse is, indeed, caught by this strategy by seeking a due balance between formalisation and “thick” description. The strategy is applied to an empirical case concerned with online discourse about current space exploration programmes.

Keywords: Data Collection; Online Discourse; Networks.

The Digital Data Double Standard: Economic Value Extraction Versus Scientific Knowledge Limitation and the Opportunities of Data Donation

Dario Pizzul & Alessandro Caliandro, University of Pavia (Italy)

In the spring of 2024, we conducted a study on older adults and digital literacy. The study consisted of a 10-class peer-education digital literacy course for people over 65 years old. Among other objectives, we aimed to measure the effectiveness of the course on participants' smartphone habits. To do so, we asked the participants to install an app (Stay Free – Screen Time) on their smartphones that would monitor which apps they used and for how long, associating the gathered data with pseudonyms. Initially, participants agreed to the research strategy, but the academic ethics committee that reviewed our study considered it too invasive. They asked us to significantly reduce the amount of gathered information, focusing exclusively on app categories rather than specific apps (i.e., gathering information on usage time for the category “social media” rather than on the usage time of Instagram, Facebook, or TikTok). Our research is certainly not the first example of an initial mismatch between the perspectives of researchers and ethics committees (Brown et al., 2020). While we clearly recognize that proper ethical evaluations are necessary in scientific research, social sciences included, the aim of this contribution is to reflect on the double standard applied to researchers and commercial actors when dealing with digital data. It is widely known how digital traces left by people through various online practices hold significant informative power and opportunities for granular knowledge (Caliandro, 2021). Nevertheless, the vast majority of these traces are accessible exclusively to private digital platforms, and researchers have been progressively more consistently excluded from this source of information (Caliandro, 2021). We aim to reflect on the fact that limits on economic value generation from mobile data are generally softer than limits, understood as technical, legal, and ethical (Araujo et al., 2022), on knowledge generation from the same sources. To find a possible solution for better opportunities for knowledge production from digital data, we do not advocate for a reduced role of ethics committees but suggest greater participation of the actual owners of the data: namely users or participants. Co-production with respect to digital data for research has been considered a valuable risk-mitigating approach (Facca et al., 2020). More precisely, the concept of data donation (Araujo et al., 2022) seems a valuable solution for achieving better opportunities for knowledge production from digital data.

Keywords: Digital Data; Data Donation; Ethics Committee; Digital Platforms; Scientific Knowledge.

Research On and Through Generative AI? An Inevitable Entanglement

Elisabetta Risi, IULM University (Italy) & Riccardo Pronzato, University of Bologna (Italy)

Over the past two decades, Internet research scholars have considered the Internet – and thereafter social media, streaming services and other types of algorithmic media/digital platforms – both as an object of research (research “on the Internet”) and as a source of methodological tools for collecting data regarding users’ behaviours (research “through the Internet”, see Risi, 2021). Thus, on the one hand, scholars have considered networked technologies as an object of research and investigated how they are produced within corporate environments (Seaver, 2022; Pronzato, 2023), how individuals relate with them (Lomborg and Kapsch, 2020; Markham, 2021), as well as the social narratives around their implementation and functioning (Beer, 2018; Natale, 2021); on the other hand, methods “embedded” in online devices have been repurposed for the analysis of social and cultural change (Rogers, 2013; Gandini and Caliandro, 2016; Venturini et al., 2018).

Similar scenarios emerged in relation to AI systems. While AI systems (machine and deep learning techniques) were analyzed both as an object of research and also as methodological tools (e.g., Gefen et al., 2021), the diffusion of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) models newly raises questions about how to investigate these human-machine interactions (Esposito, 2022), as well as whether and how the features and affordances of these technologies can be repurposed within sociological methodologies. GenAI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Bard, Midjourney, DALL-E, Gen-2, etc.) entails several opportunities and challenges for social research (Salah et al., 2023). For instance, the advanced capabilities of these technologies to efficiently and rapidly analyze data from social media platforms can lead to a deeper understanding of social phenomena (Elmas & Gül, 2023; Haluza & Jungwirth, 2023). However, it also raises several ethical and authorial concerns (Vincent, 2023).

Given this scenario, our contribution focuses on two interrelated realms, i.e., “research on generative AI” and “research through generative AI”, and argues that the latter is inevitably intertwined with the former. Specifically, our paper examines four areas of interest for what it concerns the research on GenAI: a. How individuals employ generative AI systems in their work and everyday life; b. How these AI models are produced and enacted within corporate environments; c. How the outputs of generative AI reflect and construct the social world and - more particularly - the forms of bias and discrimination (re)produced within the processes; d. The social narratives and imaginaries developed around them.

Then, we analyze how research through GenAI tools can be conducted. Drawing on empirical examples and showing areas of future research, we argue that each research endeavor through these technologies is necessarily also an examination of GenAI itself. Indeed, the generative, socio-technical features of these systems, as well as their discursive-material characteristics, make the content generated inseparable from the artifact.

Keywords: Generative AI, Social Research Methods, Generative AI Usage, Generative AI Production, Generative AI Biases, Social Narratives.

Exploring the Integration of Social Network Analysis and Agent-based Modelling: A Bibliometric Analysis

Vanessa Russo, University G. d'Annunzio Chieti-Pescara (Italy)

This study intends to present the results of a bibliometric analysis (BA) on the applications of Social Network Analysis (SNA) to Agent-based Modelling (ABM) techniques.

Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative method used to describe and analyze a specific research field by examining the scientific output within a data cataloging database (Donthu et al., 2021).

From a sociological and methodological perspective, BA belongs to the field of the sociology of science, aiming to study the reciprocal relationship between society and science. Science is understood as an ongoing social activity that produces cultural and civilizational products and influences social structure (Merton, 1949).

Using this premise, the present contribution seeks to explore both the landscape of studies and applications related to the synergy between SNA and computational social simulation, and to conduct a methodological focus on the characteristics of bibliometric analysis as a computational research technique.

Therefore, in the first part of the presentation, the research results will be illustrated from a semantic-social approach.

Specifically, starting from the data mining of bibliometric data from Scopus, the following steps will be undertaken: 1) Data processing and analysis using the Bibliometrix software (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017); 2) Identification of application areas and key research themes through Text Mining and Semantic Network Analysis; 3) Identifying research groups and influential actors by analysing the academic co-citation network. (Al et al., 2012; Sin, 2011; Leydesdorff, 2015; Van Eck & Waltman, 2014); 4) Identification of spheres of influence (Matthew effect) and scientific elites by combining textual analysis and identified social networks (Merton, 1968; Larivière & Gingras, 2010).

Building on the results obtained, the second part will discuss the characteristics, opportunities, and critical issues of this methodology, as well as the role that bibliometric analysis plays within the frame of Social Data Science.

Keywords: Bibliometric Analysis, Social Network Analysis, Agent Based Modelling.

Service Learning and Social Research: Challenges and Opportunities

Maria Carmina Sgambato, University of Foggia (Italy) & Elvira Martini,
University Giustino Fortunato (Italy)

Integrating Service Learning into digital research represents an innovative approach that combines community engagement with the collection and analysis of digital data. This approach offers new opportunities to enrich educational experiences, promote civic responsibility, and produce more valid and applicable research results. Digital traces, which include both intentionally and unintentionally generated data by Internet users, offer vast potential for social research. However, the reliability, validity, and representativeness of these data can be affected by algorithmic selection biases, access disparities, and differences in user participation levels. Implementing service learning allows researchers to engage directly with communities, improving the quality of collected data and enhancing the understanding of local contexts. Students, by participating in research projects that address real community needs, gain practical skills and a greater awareness of the social and ethical implications of digital research.

This approach also addresses normative concerns related to privacy and informed consent, as active community involvement facilitates more ethical and transparent data collection. Service learning, combined with digital methodologies, offers a framework for co-creating knowledge, where participants are not just subjects of study but active collaborators in the research process. Through an analysis of current practices and literature, this paper highlights how integrating service learning into digital research can help overcome methodological and ethical challenges while promoting meaningful learning and positive community impact.

Keywords: Service Learning, Social Research, Data analysis.

*Open Science and Ethical Concerns: Exploring Controversies
Building the Italian Online Probability Panel*

Luciana Taddei & Michele Santurro, CNR - National Research Council (Italy)

“Improving longitudinal and panel data infrastructures in Italy” is an ambitious endeavor, developed within the project ‘Fostering Open Science in Social Science Research’, that engages researchers and academics of different fields in the formation, enactment, and co-construction of new research infrastructure (Neumann & Star, 1996; Ribes & Baker, 2007). This constitutes a major challenge (Edwards et al., 2013), that compels us to address various issues (Leonelli, 2023), among which ethical concerns (e.g. the risk of reinforcing conservatism, discrimination, commodification, and inequalities).

The project brings together a network of Italian and European Research Infrastructures to produce high-quality data on Italy’s population. It connects the Italian Online Probability Panel (IOPP), the Survey of Health, Ageing, and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS), and the Growing Up in Digital Europe survey (GUIDE).

In particular, the Italian Online Probability Panel (IOPP) is an innovative tool under construction, and we aim to critically assess the impact of our choices (Bowker & Star 1999) to better methodological results and strategies in open science survey research. As we know, methods’ practices are performative, and they help to enact the world that they describe (Law, 2009).

Through cartography of controversies, in the framework of Action Network Theory (Latour, 2004, 2005), this contribution wants “just observing and describing” (Venturini2009), how we are building open science in Italy and how dispute resolution impacts the structuring of a potentially open – but fundamentally discriminatory –system.

This contribution shows how competing discourses, based on sociotechnical imagery (Star & Ruhleder, 1996), influence data infrastructure development and interact in the final research infrastructure we set out to create.

Keywords: Data Infrastructure, Open Science, Italian Online Probability Panel.

Digital Technologies and Value Co-Creation in Social Policies: Public Service Logic from the Perspective of AI Innovation

Domenico Trezza, Evelina Bruno, Giuseppe Luca De Luca Picione & Carmine Sergianni, University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

In recent years, public services have undergone a radical transformation, increasingly integrating with new digital technologies (Kattel et al., 2020). This shift has highlighted the need to adopt new approaches to manage the growing complexities that public service organizations face. In this context, service research, particularly Public Service Logic (Osborne, 2018), has proposed a new theoretical development. Unlike theories inspired by New Public Management, Public Service Logic (PSL) places value creation at the center of public services (Osborne et al., 2021), emphasizing the importance of user and third-party involvement in the value creation process within an ecosystemic context. This logic supports the necessity of considering digital technologies in describing the value creation process, assuming that these tools find in public services one of the widest and most ambitious fields of application (Musella and Reda, 2024), also in terms of digital social innovation according to the well-known European framework (EU, 2015). The spread of generative AI technology systems has the potential to go further and radically transform public services, aligning not only with the principles of Public Service Logic but also involving, in its promotion of social value, the technology itself, which becomes, thanks to next-generation AI approaches, an important interlocutor for supporting public policies. This contribution therefore aims to answer the question: how are new AI technologies contributing to creating social value from a PSL perspective? It intends to explore whether, and how, public policies and services operate in AI technology contexts and how this enables the production of social value in different forms compared to the public actor-user relationship. The study is designed according to a sequential plan that combines elements of context analysis with qualitative insights. The design includes an analysis of the European scenario that involves mapping local public policy actors operating in PSL and AI technology contexts. Additionally, a regulatory scenario analysis is conducted to regulate the actions of these institutions and especially the use of AI technology in the public sphere. Finally, an analysis of certain practices is conducted regarding the potential impact that AI implementation has on social value creation. The results are expected to converge on defining an ideal PSL proposal in terms of AI Innovation, which is potentially applicable in the current panorama of social policies in Italy, thus becoming a relevant tool for policy makers.

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Keywords: Digital Technologies, Public Service Logic, Generative AI, Social Policy, Social Value Creation.

Awaken in Dreams. Old and New Inequalities in the Fashion of the Future

Michele Varini, Università of Milan Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Italy)

Fashion and technological progress have always been two linked fields. The role of fashion in the formation of class distinctions, of imaginaries, the co-production of self-awareness, of gender stereotypes and the formation and construction of bodies has long been studied. With the rise of new digital technologies, these dynamics have increased more and more. At the same time, the forms taken by the fashion supply chain tout court have multiplied, starting from production, and arriving to creative and communicational works. It is well known that fashion has played a powerful role in its history in determining physical stereotypes and gender imaginaries: its role in the formation of imaginaries, the co-production of self-awareness, and the formation and construction of bodies has long been studied.

This work questions the issues of body representation where the digital increasingly challenges the boundary between materiality and non-materiality, reality and imagination. From this point of view, virtual play environments are the frontier fields, on the one hand increasingly the object of interest for brands, and on the other increasingly popular and widespread, especially among the younger generations.

The relation between fashion, gaming and traditional medias is hybrid, straddling online and offline, material and "non-material", reality and fiction. Here, the research question is to see if the dynamics of construction of imaginaries, definition of stereotypes of aesthetic beauty, actions on bodies both "mechanical" and cultural, instances of gender, attributed to fashion by the existing literature are also replicated in the digital context, or whether these dynamics are changing with and because of the action of this new type of fruition of the fashion product, both as a "material object" and as a "cultural object". Indeed, on the one hand, fashion brands are increasingly interested in experimenting with the use of new technologies; on the other hand, changes due to the pandemic have modified the ways and meanings of consumers' use of digital fashion.

To do so, this research employs netnography and visual ethnography, which were used to construct and analyze a data set composed of advertisements and images of video game characters. This methodological approach responds to the very nature of the object of study: both fashion and videogames have a distinctly visual nature; both of them depend on and live within digital, interconnected and global media contexts.

Official visual materials of video games with three defined peculiarities have been sampled: 1. the possibility of being played online in multiplayer mode; 2. the popularity of the chosen platform; 3. the presence of

anthropomorphic characters. The presence of human (or anthropomorphic) characters is therefore crucial for the purposes of this work. The game platforms that correspond to these three characteristics are: 1. League of Legends; 2. Apex Legends; 3. Overwatch 2; 4. Valorant. The choice to focus the analysis on the advertising and 'official' content of these platforms is linked to the desire to explore which meanings, representations and images of the body and gender are conveyed by the producers in a top-down mode, thus tracing the communication mode of traditional fashion channels.

Keywords: Fashion, Representation, Body, Gender, Digital Environment, Gaming, Inequalities.

What's the Role of Male Issues? Institutional Challenges and Ethical Dilemmas

Alessandro Vetrano, Università of Rome La Sapienza (Italy)

This research aims to understand how practices around the production of knowledge in gender issues have stratified over time, particularly male issues, investigating the “taxonomy - gender equality - moral” interpositivity (Foucault, 1969). Enunciative discontinuities between actors populating different arenas, including transepistemic ones (Knorr-Cetina, 1982) are fundamental to understand the kind of control (White, 2008) exercised over moral order (Mohr, 1994) in gender issues: priority, truthfulness and even the thinkability of problems.

This study aims to answer three main research questions, studying organizations and institutions dealing with gender equality and their role as moral entrepreneurs (Becker, 1963).

- 1) Quantitative approach: how much governments and organizations talk about male issues?
- 2) Taxonomic emergence: what discursive hierarchy do they follow before talking about male issues, since they are usually controversial?
- 3) Ethical dilemma: what are the risks that arise from comparing feminist and masculinist discourses, since the latest are usually perceived as more problematic, or even dangerous?

Through the content analysis as a survey, this proposal focuses on exploring both ethical and methodological issues. In fact, some men’s rights movement discourses are explicitly problematic, particularly when it comes to unmasking (Hacking, 1999) feminism’s hierarchy of priority on policies and communication. Nonetheless, this state of the gender debate is partly tied to the well-known reticence in giving male issues enough space as well as a proper framework (Stoet & Geary 2019; Reeves, 2022; Schaerer et al., 2023). This approach may lead a representation void, sometimes filled by interesting communities dealing with male issues with a non-feminist but moderate perspective, like the popular “The Tin Men” page on Instagram. However, the debate on male issues is frequently addressed by reactionary and misogynistic communities.

Results from a first observation of official documents, operational definitions and other online content, from the last 12 years, suggest that discourses on men’s problems don’t really reach a stable threshold that allows them to emerge at an institutional level; therefore, activists try to force this topic by using whataboutism. This dialectical expedient is so salient that, in this work, it’s referred as “men-aboutism”, because it offers a discontinuity useful to find and analyze the most popular men’s rights discourses, but it also manifests itself as an ethical dilemma. Asking “what about men?” is the shape in which the most innovative discourses on men’s

issues occur; however, the second aim of this implicit question is to deconstruct the importance of female problems.

Therefore, it's crucial to address the ethical responsibility of every study on men's issues, regardless of the will to follow or challenge feminist epistemology. Doing so will prevent the development of a methodological approach that relies on a reductionist viewpoint (Worsdale & Wright, 2021) or trivial conclusions.

Keywords: Men's Studies, Feminism, Content Analysis as a Survey.

Algorithmic Feedback Loops in Soft Science Disciplines. An Application of the Systematic Literature Review on the Evolution of Definitions from 2000 to 2023

Gabriella Punziano, Giuseppe Michele Padricelli & Antonio Vettori,
University of Naples Federico II (Italy)

In the contemporary digital society, consumer cultures and practices have been deeply re-mediated and re-configured by the complex sociotechnical systems of digital platforms. In particular, the consumption of cultural entertainment products such as movies and music has almost entirely been re-mediated by the platformed infrastructures of Netflix, Spotify, YouTube, and the like (Poell et al., 2021). These feature AI models and algorithms that “learn” from users’ consumption patterns in order to recommend, filter and rank content in dynamic and highly adaptive ways (Airoldi 2021). Since platform users largely rely on recommender algorithms to decide what to watch, listen or read next, and recommender algorithms analyse users’ datafied behaviour to produce automated recommendations, such digital platforms see the proliferation of “feedback loops” – that is, recursive systems whose outputs affect the inputs of a new iteration (Wiener 1989).

Keywords: Systematic Literature Review, Algorithmic Feedback, Feedback Loop, Recommendation Systems, Soft Science.

Integrating Node Features and Structure: Distance Measures in Social Network Comparison

Farhad Yousaf, University of Naples Federico II (Italy), Antonio Balzanella, University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli (Italy), Cristiano Felaco, University of Naples Federico II (Italy) & Mahdi Shafiee Kamalabad, Utrecht University (Netherlands)

The study of networks has gained significant momentum due to their relevance in both natural and human-made systems. This field offers crucial insights into the evolution and functioning of these systems, driving advancements in numerous areas. For instance, social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook utilize network science to understand information spread, recognize influential users, and identify communities, aiding advertisers and social scientists alike. Similarly, emergency response teams use network science to optimize communication and coordination during critical situations, ensuring efficient resource allocation and timely decision making. Specifically, interest in Social Network Analysis (SNA) has grown significantly, with modern SNA providing formal methods for studying social, political, and economic interactions. Significant advancements include community detection, impact dynamics, fake news identification, privacy preservation, temporal dynamics, graph neural networks, and sentiment analysis. Comparing social networks is essential for uncovering principles that govern user behavior, community dynamics, and information exchange across platforms. By comparing network structures, dynamics, and functional roles, researchers can reveal unifying principles and key differences in network behavior, valuable in various fields. Structural comparison of networks identifies fundamental patterns governing the formation and evolution of complex systems.

Quantifying similarities and differences using distance measures is crucial for understanding network evolution, impact of interventions, and cross domain comparisons because it provides precise metrics to analyze changes and relationships within and between networks. Effective distance measures uncover hidden patterns, guide knowledge transfer, and enhance clustering, anomaly detection, and recommendation systems. However, existing literature faces challenges, especially when incorporating both structural topology and node specific features. Limited progress has been made in addressing the challenges of integrating both structural topology and node specific features in the existing literature. Traditional methods focus on topological properties without capturing the full complexity of networks or node attributes. Recent advancements include feature aware graph kernels and attributed graph matching, but these often struggle with scalability and capturing the interplay between structure and features. Additionally, many

real world networks evolve over time, and current methods often overlook dynamic aspects. Complex networks with structural and feature information are essential for a comprehensive understanding across domains. Integrating connectivity patterns with node specific attributes enhances analysis, such as user profiles in social networks . These multi view perspectives are crucial for applications like user categorization, disease pathway analysis, and resource allocation. This work focuses on comparing complex networks with structural and feature information, treating networks as probability distributions. Our proposed approach captures similarities and differences in network structures and node features unlike the other methods , enabling accurate modelling and analysis. This study also involves clustering networks using optimal transportation distance measures, enhancing the accuracy and comprehensibility of clustering results. We utilize optimal transportation (OT) distances, which effectively account for both the distributional and topological aspects of networks, enabling more accurate and nuanced comparisons for tasks such as network clustering, embedding, and anomaly detection. By examining networks as probability distributions and applying hierarchical clustering to these distance measures, this study aims to improve understanding and predictive modelling of complex systems.

This research highlights the importance of distance measures for networks , aiming to uncover similarities by integrating both node features and structural information.

Keywords: Social Networks; Network Similarity; Network Comparison; Clustering.

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