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Intro to CCT

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Synthesizing Research Methods

In the movie, Inception is done by the machines, and in real life, influencers arrange that Inception. The Two-Step-Flows theory proved the influencers' effectiveness in between the mass media and the users, and the French and Raven's (1976) Bases of Power theory categorized the power used in the process of Inception. Yet, there is no answer to how influencers proceed to the Inception. This paper will separate this problem into four questions: identify the network, find the technique, ask for the response, and seek the flaws and improvements.

The primary research is Social Network Analysis (SNA), freshly learned from research method class. The primary purpose is to plot the influencers' networks. From those networks, we will be able to identify the influencers, discover how they construct their influencer network, and measure their performance to interview them after. Moreno (1953) first used this graphic model to illustrate people's relationships (Moreno, 1953). In this research, nodes represent influencers and users, and the edges between states their relationships. For example, followers on Instagram or subscribers on the New York Times.

After putting every influencer and followers into a single plot, we can test many hypotheses to discover how to form an influencer network. For example, if several followers follow the same influencer and have a relationship like friends or family, the influencer expands

the system by word of mouth. Plus, we can measure an influencer's performance by counting followers or setting a KPI: whether the product's sales will increase after the influencer makes a marketing campaign. For instance, Zack King and other Instagram influencers held a remarkable advertising campaign for Subaru to boost car sales by over 15% (Influencermarketinghub, 2020). This research method can plot the data clearly and make the following research much more manageable. However, data collection can be challenging, like naming the relationship between users and finding all the influencers, including individuals and organizations.

After selecting the top performance influencers, we will arrange interviews to find out what technique they would typically use to expand their influence network. The talks will be qualitative research so we can draw objective conclusions from the study. In this set of interviews, we will develop the questions based on the previous influencer interviews from Mattr Marketing (2020). we will let influencers tell a related memorable story and then use it to lead to the questions. For example, if the influencer mentioned the social media platform, we will ask how they will feel about social media manipulating likes (Mattr, M). The central theme of the questions should be: "How do you construct your influence network." However, we will not ask directly but use other questions to lead to this central question. On the other hand, questions need to be open-ended so interviewees can share more information without constraining.

With the interviews, we will get the first handed information directly from the influencers. Interviews help to find out influencers' techniques, and with the comparison of their performance, we can conclude which approach is most useful in attracting followers. The list of interviewees is easy to find because of the SNA research. And if having trouble contacting them,

we can reach out to the most related followers and ask them to establish the connection. However, these interviews can barely interpret the media's technique because it is an organization rather than an individual. To solve this problem, we can hold talks with editors in the press, but they can not fully represent the whole media.

Also, using the same list of popular influencers, we will provide a survey to the followers, asking them about their favorite influencers and the reason. Because we provide close questions and would like more samples, this research will be a quantitative survey form. According to the Survey Monkey help page, it is necessary to choose the demographic before conducting any survey because it will make the study more precise (Survey Monkey, 2020). Thus, we want to allow people who have social media accounts to take the survey. Plus, we can separate surveys for people age 16 to 24 and 25 to 34 because Statista shows they are the most users on social media (Statista, 2014). To eliminate the bias, we will list several influencers in the same category for choosing. For example, people can choose CNN, New York Times, or Fox News in the news category. The result of the data will show follower's respond to influencers in a numeric form. If an influencer has more support than others, it will prove the influencer has a better technique.

We will use Mturk to release the surveys because, according to Claire Downs (2018), it has a population of 500,000 survey takers worldwide, so that the result will be more convincing. Plus, it allows users to set the restrictions of who can take the survey. Most importantly, users can pay a small amount of money to promote their survey and finish research quickly (Downs,

2018). Nevertheless, if using Mturk, the study population will be all the users in Mturk, so it can not represent the whole population and generate bias.

After completing all research, we will cross-compare the result of each study. The testing hypothesis will use correlation, T-test, and regression analysis. If an influencer shows popularity on SNA and a follower's survey, there will be a strong correlation between the two results, which means that the follower's technique is useful. If correlation and other indicators show weak relationships, the hypothesis is rejected, or some factors are not included in the research, such as sample size being too small. Either result, we will generate suggestions for future research. For example, develop better research targeting media instead of individuals or increase sample size to make the survey unbiased.

Reference

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Downs, C. (2018, Jan 3).The pros and cons of Amazon Mechanical Turk. Retrieved from

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The introduction of Mturk, the author provides steps showing how to sign up accounts, release

surveys. She also evaluates the advantages and potential bias of using Mturk.

Raven, B., & Rubin, J. (1976). Social psychology: people in groups. Wiley.

5 types of power of influencers was illustrated in the book, by comparing with recent influencers,

we can know which power was enhanced and which is undermined as forming a certain group.

Influencermarketinghub. (2020, March 27). Retrieved from

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customer loyalty.

Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. (1955). Personal influence; the part played by people in the flow of

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Arthur states the public has limited trust with mass media and raised the hypothesis that

opinion leaders are required. This argument can help wo discover the formation of influencer

Mattr, M. (2019, Nov 27). Interview with an Influencer. Retrieved from

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Interviews with the two famous social media influencers asking about the payment, how they feel

about social media.

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Interviews with famous social media influencers with followers of 140k. Many questions are

open-ended and can be used to develop interview questions.

Moreno, J. (1953). Who shall survive? Foundations of sociometry, group psychotherapy and

  sociodrama. ([Rev. ed]). Beacon House.

In this book, Jacob first used graphic social network chart to interpret problem, and after years

of evolution, methods are changed but concept described in the book remains

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Statista. (2014).Age distribution of active social media users worldwide as of 3rd quarter 2014,

      by platform. Retrieved from

      https://www.statista.com/statistics/274829/age-distribution-of-active-social-media-users-

      worldwide-by-platform/

Data showing which age group of people use social media the most. This data provide

information of how to set restrictions on survey.

Surveymonkey. (2020).How to conduct a survey in 4 simple steps. Retrieved from

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The help page of the survey monkey. States four advice to make a perfect survey. The website

itself is an online survey maker.