

Introduction to the Minitrack on Culture, Identity & Inclusion in Digital and Social Media

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Abstract

Technology-facilitated social media present opportunities for new frontiers of research as they interact with cultures, identities, and diversity. As digital inequalities are on the rise globally, the ongoing pandemic related challenges make understanding the internet and the related myriad divides more vital than ever. Recognizing the kaleidoscope and intersectionality of culture, gender, and identity, this minitrack presents innovative research across a wide range of methods and topics. Exploring how social media technologies become interconnected with and embedded in existing socio-cultural contexts is essential to assess how these platforms affect key power and systems dynamics in society. The work here sets the scene for analyzing better how digital and social media can foster (or serve as hindering factors for) diversity and inclusion in multiple settings, especially in a world coping with renewed calls for social justice and a pandemic likely to have long-term impacts. In sum, this minitrack highlights papers from a range of disciplines and methodologies that focus on the three I's of internet, identity, and inclusion as they intersect with transformational social media and perhaps now more than ever impact human lives.

1. Introduction

The study of Digital and Social Media today can overlook its relation to culture(s), identity(ies), access, and inclusion. As digital and even quantum technologies continue to emerge, pandemic effects make them increasingly central to many aspects of life including work, education, and politics. The interrelationships among such technologies and identities at the individual, group, and additional levels as well as cultures must be recognized and analyzed. There is the nuanced potential for both inclusion and exclusion.

2. Minitrack Topics and Themes

The papers presented here serve as exemplars of this cutting-edge research community and reflect a range of methodologies and regional foci. These works incorporate and highlight the voices of groups and individuals whose lives have been profoundly impacted by technology but are less heard in research. Potential topics for this minitrack include:

individuals whose lives have been profoundly impacted by technology but are less heard in research. Potential topics for this minitrack include:

- Inter-cultural and Cross-cultural use of Social Media
- Crowdsourcing Processes and Inclusion Issues
- Designing Social Media for Inclusion
- Social media, identity and collective action • Gendered Social Media
- The construction and circulation of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion and disability through the use of social media
- Online Harassment
- Identity Enactment, Adoption, and Policing
- Reproduction of biases
- Governance and Rules in Action
- Aging and Social Media
- Inter-generational use of Social Media
- Impact and influence of social media on diversity
- Social Media, MOOCS, & Inclusion
- Social Media & Implicit Bias
- Social Media, Culture & Change/Social Innovation
- Social Media & Intersectionality
- Social media, Access and E-Learning
- Social media, accessibility, and digital disability
- Social media and regulation
- Social Media, Disruptive Innovation, and Capacity-Building For All

3. Sessions and Papers At A Glance

As co-chairs of the HICSS minitrack on Culture, Identity and Inclusion, which is part of the Track on Digital and Social Media, we are delighted to share this year's papers with you. Having received many submissions for this year's edition of the minitrack, we are able to present seven papers that highlight various key dimensions of our dynamic research community.

Three papers focus directly on gender aspects and social media, each providing a different yet significant perspective. In "Hey Beautiful: Race and Gender on

Tinder", Chwe, Williams & Robertson craft a fascinating experiment using a dating application to examine the impacts of race, ethnicity and gender in online actions. With a focus on China and recognition of Chinese culture, Zhou, Wang and Zimmer analyze opportunities for women on Weibo and anonymous expressions of their own experiences. Their work, "Anonymous Expression in an Online Community for Women in China", recognizes cultural constraints on women's roles and the possibilities of anonymity in expressing opinions online.

Another aspect of gender, this time in the context of the professional development of women in computer science or information technology, is the subject of research by Sengupta and Tacheva. This research reported in "Digital Sanctums of Empowerment: Exploring Community and Everyday Resilience Building Tactics In Online Professional Communities for Women" explores three women's professional development communities on Reddit and highlights what they call 'collaborative empowerment' and resiliency development through participating in such online communities.

Underlining racial diversification outcomes in creative industries, Ling, Yang & Han in "The Impact of Social Movement on Racial Diversification Initiatives: Evidence from the Movie Industry", examine evaluations of movies with increased actors from underrepresented minorities both before and after the Black Lives Matter social movement. Their research begins to answer the question of awareness raising through social media facilitated social movements.

Rahrovani adds a platform governance dimension to diversity and the analysis of culture and gender. The Rahrovani paper, "Governance In Social Media Platforms of Minority Organizations" examines minority community-based organizations and their platform governance patterns. Another perspective on culture utilizes Hofstede's research findings on dimensions of culture. Using a set of these dimensions, Moqbel, Bartelt, Alam, Shaik, Montoya & Larson turn to smartphone addiction. In "Smartphone Addiction and Cultural Dimensions", they apply attachment and coping theories to the investigation of data enabled wireless phone dependency. Finally, Rychwalska in "I am no number: Humanizing Digital Identities" highlights end user perspectives regarding digital identity systems and underscores the complexities of online identities.

These papers, taken together, along with the extraordinary context we continue to experience both locally and globally, set the scene for crafting a powerful research agenda ahead for this minitrack and our field. Selective Internet shutdowns in autocratic

countries yield special challenges regarding inclusion and social media. As Co-chairs, we encourage vibrant discussion and, indeed, co-creation of our community's research opportunities ahead and have reserved part of a session for our joint discussion. This is a particularly compelling time, one marked by growing inequalities and divides, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and by tragic events like the war in Ukraine, which highlight the role of social and digital media in providing a channel for witness accounts that would otherwise not be accessible. The interactions with social media related to culture, identity and inclusion are becoming even more central as is the concomitant need for rigorous research and analysis. Crucially, several papers in this year's minitrack focus on culture and on gender, yielding data-informed insights and opportunities.

4. Amplifying a Research Community on Social Media and Social Inclusion

This minitrack continues to have tremendous potential to catalyze the creation of a robust, interdisciplinary research community within HICSS focused on the intersection of identity, culture, access, and inclusion. There are many opportunities for continued expansion and for serving as a valuable resource for the broader HICSS community.

We need to remember (as do papers in this minitrack) the culture kaleidoscope (the myriad levels of culture from small group, community and occupational to organizational, interorganizational and national) as well as the intersectionality of culture, gender and identity. Similar to the culture kaleidoscope, there are also multiple and complex identities including cultural, age, generational, racial, ability, and gender identities and experiences. Most importantly, the intersections among social media and the culture and identity kaleidoscopes presage additional research agendas, as we examine social media usages, related emerging technologies, and their outcomes in a broad range of contexts. The papers in this minitrack amplify our understanding of how digital and social media can foster (or sometimes hinder) diversity and inclusion in multiple settings in a world that is increasingly more local and global at the same time.

Emerging technologies including blockchain, the Internet of Things, Quantum, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, or Virtual and Augmented Reality present cutting edge opportunities for new social-media related research, as these technologies interact with cultures, identities, and diversity or inclusion over time. What shapes will these interactions take in the future; and what are the implications including the ethical of such trajectories for research and practice? We look forward next year to more submissions grappling with these challenges and exploring related trends stemming from emerging technologies.

The overall future trajectory of our field itself is also open and provides plentiful research challenges. The likely continuation of technology-facilitated collaboration processes in a post-pandemic future and the trends of multistakeholder participation in policymaking pose significant research questions for those studying identity, inclusion, and social media. Can social media foster information flow in multistakeholder settings? Who has access? Equitable access remains an issue. Motivation and its relationship with culture is also a key factor: among those who do have access, who is motivated to use digital and social media and who is not? How does this impact online content and interactions? Emerging technologies implicate further challenges. As noted earlier, developments in media-related technologies as well as the interstices among internet, social media, and network neuroscience highlight rich research arenas for future work. More attention needs to be focused on rigorous yet appropriate research methodologies. As we have argued over the years in this minitrack, to truly understand the implications of new technologies we must also focus on and work with people. Here, there are opportunities to use experimental methods, indigenous research methods, and participatory research. These developments presage increased collaboration across disciplines with a focus on internet, identity, and inclusion as they intersect with transformational social media and, indeed, impact systems and human lives.

