Effects of Social Network Sites on Social Capital and Awareness of Privacy: A Study of Chinese and U.S. College Students’ Usage of Social Network Sites

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This thesis titled

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ABSTRACT

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Effects of Social Network Sites on Social Capital and Awareness of Privacy: A Study of Chinese and U.S. College Students’ Usage of Social Network Sites

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This thesis examined the effects of social network sites (SNS) on users’ social capital and privacy awareness and tested if differences existed in intensity of SNS usage and its relationship with students’ social capital and privacy awareness between Chinese and the U.S. college students. An online survey conducted among Chinese Renren Network users and the U.S. Facebook users showed that the usage of SNSs was positively related to users’ social capital (both bridging and partially bonding) and privacy awareness. Significant differences were found in the intensity of SNS usage and bridging social capital between the users of Facebook and Renren Network.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Today, the total number of world Internet users almost reaches three billion (Internet Users, 2014). With the Internet, people can search information, transfer data and communicate with other users. The origin of Internet can be traced back to 1969, when the predecessor of the Internet, ARPANET, was developed. The first time that the word “Internet” was used was in 1982 (Internet Timeline, n.d.). In 1984, the number of hosts in ARPANET reached 1,000 for the first time (Hobbes’ Internet Timeline, n.d.). The creation of NSFNET in 1986 made high speed connection possible. Since then, the number of participants started a fast growth, and one year later the total number of hosts first broke 10,000 (Hobbes’ Internet Timeline, n.d.). The introduction of the World Wide Web in 1992 made the Internet user-friendly and opened it up to large audiences outside of academe. One year later in 1993, the total number had already reached 14 million hosts. Since 2000, the so-called web 2.0 applications have led to yet another popularization of the Internet and to the creation of online social media. In August 2014, then number of users in United States had reached almost 280 million, and the number of Chinese Internet users was at 641 million. This number is constantly growing and now the Internet users from these two countries make up over 30 percent of the World Internet users (Internet Users by Country, 2014).

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) enable users to publish their ideas and personal information on profiles; SNSs have created channels for people to communicate with other users, both known and unknown (De-Miguel, Oltra & Sarabdeen, 2010). On these
sites, users can present themselves, maintain communication with old friends and establish a new friendship circle (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007).

According to Statista (2013), Social Networking Sites, such as Facebook in the United States and the Renren Network in China, have won popularity among 63.1 percent of Internet users, and this number has been growing constantly. Statistics show that the total number of SNS users worldwide in 2013 reached 1.61 billion, and based on the current growing rate, the total number will possibly reach 2.33 billion in 2017.

Meanwhile, various kinds of problems have emerged, such as addiction to SNS and invasion of privacy, related to the websites and users’ online behaviors (Brown, 2004; Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn, & Hughes, 2009; Haythornthwaite, 2005; Joinson, Houghton, Vasalou & Marder, 2011; Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009). This raises the question, why can SNSs have these effects? And are these effects negative or positive? These questions are hotly debated among researchers.

Motivations for using SNSs might vary among different users, but most of them use SNSs to maintain connections with friends and family members and to establish new connections with others sharing similar interests (Smith, 2011). A users’ social capital refers to this “connection”, which reflects the relationships between an individual and other people, and allows him to obtain resources from others (Ellison et al., 2007). Depending on the “tightness” of the connection, social capital can be categorized into bridging (loose) and bonding (strong) (Putman, 2000). Some researchers found that users can obtain higher levels of social capital by using SNSs, while some found that the obsession with SNSs alienated users from their family members (Kraut et al., 1998).
As exposure to the Internet increases, users also face increasing risks to their privacy. Though both users and SNSs are increasingly taking protective measures, some users are still confronted with unwanted revelation of their private information due to system leaks, personal negligence, or because of the SNS architecture that systematically allows for the collection and usage of personal data. Recent studies show that SNS users are now paying more attention to online privacy (Ellison, Vitak, Steinfield, Gray, & Lampe, 2011). However, researchers found that information revelation still takes place frequently. Data collected in 2006 and 2012 (Madden et al., 2013) indicated that while teens showed more confidence in controlling the availability of their private information, they were also sharing more information about themselves compared to the past.

Additionally, differences exist in the usage of various SNSs among different countries. For example, unlike the college students in the United States, South Korean students are less likely to express their own ideas online (Cho, 2010), and Japanese users are more likely to use cute icons or cartoon images when chatting with friends or setting up their profile photos (Marcus & Krishnamurthi, 2009).

The primary objective of this study is to explain the relationships among intensity of SNS usage, social capital and awareness of privacy. Facebook and Renren network were chosen for the study, because they are the most popular SNSs among college students in the United States and China respectively (Qiu, Lin, & Leung, 2013). Using an online survey distributed among users of Facebook and Renren in these two countries, this study measured students’ SNS behaviors, social capital and privacy awareness, and examined if students’ usage of SNSs would be associated with their social capital and
privacy awareness. The similarities and differences in SNS usage patterns and their relationship with other variables of interest between SNS users from the two countries were also explored.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Built upon existing research, this study presents hypotheses regarding kinds of interrelationships exist between the usage of SNSs and the Internet users’ social capital and privacy awareness. A research question about how SNSs affect the users’ life is also proposed.

Social Network Sites

Social network sites, as Boyd and Ellison (2007) claimed, can be defined as a platform on which individuals can generate their own profiles in a public, semi-public or private environment, communicate with other users whom they have already known, and get in touch with people they have never met before.

The first recognizable SNS, SixDegrees.com, was created in 1997. It was designed to allow users to upload articles, photos, videos, and audio files (Vitkauskaitė, 2011). Since then, various forms of SNSs, catering to users’ desire of presenting themselves and communicating with friends, have been launched.

The explosion of SNSs was first observed in the early 2000s (Giacomazzo, 2014). The “mother” of all modern SNSs, MySpace, was launched in August 2003 and quickly grew to one million unique U.S. users by April 2004 (MySpace, n.d.). In China, the SNSs boom seemed to start overnight. Collected data show that the significant growth of Chinese SNSs occurred in 2009, when the total number of users rose from less than a million in 2008 to almost 200 million in 2009 (CIC, 2011).

Online social networking enables people who share the same interests to overcome financial, political and geographical boundaries. Based on different motives,
these websites can be categorized as being oriented towards job-seeking, dating, networking among college students, and general interests (Ellison et al., 2007). SNSs are now widely adopted by people across the globe, especially among young adults, because these websites allow users to speak one’s mind, making friends with different people and, presumably, keeping their secrets in their private spaces (Livingstone & Brake, 2010).

This paper focuses on the intensity of SNS usage, which can be measured by the users’ online activities, including their time spent on the SNSs per day and their statements about how much they rely on SNSs.

Among various kinds of SNSs, Facebook and Renren Network were selected for this study, as they both primarily catering to and are most popular among college and high school communities (Qiu et al., 2013).

Launched in 2004, Facebook originally allowed only Harvard students to register. Later, it gradually became open to all people who claimed to be older than 13. Ten years later, in 2014, total number of active Facebook users reached 1.28 billion (Facebook Newsroom, 2014). It is safe to say that Facebook is the most popular SNS across the world. In the U.S., Facebook was also the dominant SNS, and in 2011, nearly one-fifth of U.S. citizens’ total time was spent on Facebook (Davis & Angelova, 2011). More than two-thirds of U.S. Internet adult users were also Facebook users (Rainie, Smith & Duggan, 2013). Similarly, considered the “Facebook of China”, Renren Network is the leading Chinese SNS. In 2010, it had more than 160 million users and the majority of its users were college students (Qiu et al., 2013). The total number of users on Renren Network now has reached 210 million (Digital Marketing Ramblings, July 2014).
Literally meaning “Everyone’s Website”, the website was formerly known under the name “Xiaonei”, which means the “on-campus network”. Just as the name indicated, the website was originally open to university students, and only those students with a school email address or IP address were authorized to register, just as Facebook once required (“Renren Network,” 2014).

Besides the registration requirements, it seems that Renren Network has “copied” every detail of Facebook’s design. Renren Network has nearly the same functionality and user interface as Facebook, including the timeline, friend list, the Like button, public pages, headline, registration requirements, etc. (Qiu et al., 2013). Both websites suggest users register with their real name, which indicates that users know the identity of their friends, or at least, they know each other’s name (Joinson et al., 2011). With this function, users can achieve their goals of getting connected with friends they know.

SNSs and Social Capital

The concept of social capital is commonly discussed in cultural, economic and political fields of human community (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Dolfsma & Damnreyther, 2003). Based on sociological network analysis, Granovetter (1973) found that “interpersonal ties” could help an individual achieve useful information, for example, new job opportunities. He defined the strength of a tie as “a combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie” (Granovetter 1973, p. 1361). While he considered strong ties as relevant for local cohesion, he also found that weak ties were important for the individual’s integration into different communities and the creation of opportunities
(p. 1378). However, at the time of his research, the more general concept of social capital did not yet exist.

As a sociological concept, social capital was first introduced in 1980 by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and then further developed by James S. Coleman (Portes, 1998). According to Portes, Bourdieu’s definition emphasized the relationships that produce access to the capital, as well as the quality and quantity of the capital, while Coleman focused on the common function of social capital, which was closely associated with the “social structures” of the society (p. 5) and the facilitation of the actions of individuals and communities. Overall, Portes also defines three main elements of social capital, namely individuals or communities desire social capital (recipients), individuals or communities with useful social capital (donors), and social capital itself.

According to Field (2005), theories of social capital can be explained on two levels. On the micro level, personal relationships can help people to overcome their own shortcomings, just as the saying goes, “it is who you know, not what you know”; and on the macro level, relationships can promote stability of the society (Field, 2005). In the area of online communication, Ellison defined social capital as a link between individuals and communities that allows individuals to obtain resources from other individuals and organizations in their network (Ellison et al., 2007).

With regard to the tightness (or strength) of the relationship, Putman (2000) categorized social capital into bridging social capital and bonding social capital: Bridging social capital refers to the loose connections established upon general friends and acquaintances, with whom individuals can obtain some general information, but would
seldom seek further help, such as borrowing money and asking for emotional support. Bridging allows individuals to get in touch with people from different social backgrounds.

Haythornthwaite (2005) generalized the characteristics of bridging social capital as comparatively weak ties that are established on an individual’s connection to some casual contacts and acquaintances. Information that individuals obtain from these people, as Haythornthwaite pointed out, is not urgent, mostly at the primary level and usually limited to a few types, such as information about new place to shop and general information about the world. In brief, bridging social capital enables individuals to broaden social horizons and to gain more opportunities for general information, but cannot offer further emotional support (Williams, 2006).

By contrast, bonding social capital represents strong connections, such as family members, close friends and teammates, on who people rely, especially when confronted with serious problems (Putman, 2000). Bonding social capital is usually established between people with similar backgrounds and it can provide individuals with multiple types of support, including instrumental, emotional and financial support (Haythornthwaite, 2005). Moreover, bonding social capital highly motivates individuals to share special, limited and scarce resources (Williams, 2006).

Bonding social capital is closely related to an individual’s friendship, which is cultivated through “voluntary interaction” (pp. 306) over time between two individuals and usually involves affection, intimacy and emotional support. Chan & Cheng (2004) found that bonding capital is typically generated through face-to-face communication
and, at the same time, that online friendship that was initiated and cultivated through computer-mediated communication had few possibilities to develop further into a closer and consistent relationship.

Researchers have noted that if people use SNSs more frequently, they are more likely to establish new connections with more people online (Valkenburg, Peter & Schouten, 2006). In their study about new forms of friendship among children and adolescents, Amichai-Hamburger, Kingsbury and Schneider (2012) analyzed in detail that the online networking platform established a more convenient channel for users to find potential friends with similar interests. Based on these interests, users could then move onto more topics quickly and further their relationships. The authors concluded that online communication, with its absence of geographical boundaries, provides users with more choices when setting up friendship and thus stimulates the process of friendship formation. However, in most cases these quick-established relationships were not compatible with offline friendships especially when it comes to mutual reliability, relationship repair and stability. Thus, they could not create social bonding capital.

Various studies show that SNS usage facilitates the development of social capital (Ellison et al., 2007; Zúñiga, Jung & Valenzuela, 2012). With their many communicative functions, Online SNSs, constructed by individuals or organizations (formal or informal), provide multiple ways for users to exchange information and enhance their connections. In Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe’s (2011) view, the benefits of online social networking lie in fewer boundaries, which enable users to maintain existing connections and establish new interactions with virtually anyone on earth. In addition, the Internet is beneficial to
individuals with lower face-to-face communication skills or lower psychological well-being, and they are more likely to speak out online and present themselves through their profiles (Bargh & McKenna, 2004).

Studies related to the effects of SNSs on bridging social capital tend to come to the result that a positive relationship exist between SNS use and bridging social capital (Burke, Marlow, & Lento, 2010; Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2011; Ellison, Vitak, Gray & Lampe, 2014; Haythornthwaite, 2005; Zúñiga & Valenzuela, 2010). A study done by Ellison et al. (2007) drew the conclusion that bridging social capital got greatly enriched as people got involved in SNSs. The authors explained that joining Facebook and other SNSs and spending time on them could help the users to keep in touch and strengthen bonds with friends offline; moreover, as users met new people in an online environment mainly based on the “rich collection of social context cues” (Ellison et al. 2011, pp. 15), new bridging social capital occurred.

Similar results were reported in a later study by Ellison et al. (2014), on 614 participants from a Midwestern U.S. university. The researchers measured bridging social capital with the general benefits users obtain from interaction with both Facebook friends and their whole social network. They discovered that bridging social capital was statistically positively associated with both users’ engagement in “Facebook relationship maintenance behaviors” (Ellison et al., 2014, p. 5), such as writing birthday celebration notes on friends’ timeline, and number of Facebook friends they have met offline.

Burke et al. (2010) found in their research on 1193 Facebook English speakers that users’ bridging social capital was positively associated with their Facebook activity,
including the time they spent on the site and the number of Facebook friends they had. Moreover, Burke et al. also claimed that users who produced more content on the site, such as status, photos, and their usage on Facebook applications, would be more likely to gain higher levels of bridging social capital.

According to Burke et al. (2010), users’ bonding social was also positively associated with their directed communication on Facebook, including “Likes”, wall posts, and messages received and given. In research on 286 participants from Michigan State University, Ellison et al. (2007) found that intense Facebook usage was important for bonding social capital. However, this study was set in a college environment only, and it focused on people within this environment, from whom participants could borrow money, ask for advices and emotional support. The authors also proposed that the impact of Facebook usage on participants’ bonding social capital was comparatively low compared to bridging social capital.

However, other studies regarding the effects of social network on bonding social capital came to very different results. Some researchers, such as Haythornthwaite (2005), found a statistically insignificant relationship between the usage of SNSs and bonding social capital. As she explained, maintenance of “strong” ties with close friends and family members was not restricted to only one specific channel of communication and did not rely on online communication.

Further research re-examining on bonding social capital by Ellison et al. (2011) found comparatively significant relationships when they calculated the users’ bonding social capital in a more generalized environment, including universities, home cities, etc.
Detailed regression analysis on three aspects of bonding social capital (guidance, reliable alliance and attachment) also indicated that SNS behavior, especially commenting on other users’ updates, would predict more bonding social capital; having close friends and family members on Facebook was also positively correlated with level of users’ reliable alliance provision of bonding social capital, because Facebook provides a low-cost channel for close friends and family members to provide guidance and emotional support for users.

Thus, based on previous research, it is proposed in this study that the intensity of SNSs use would be positively related with individuals’ social capital, specifically bridging capital. SNS usage will promote connection to maintain relationships with others, and the more active the users are on SNSs, the more linkages they will establish with acquaintances and casual contacts and the more easily they will obtain certain information. Intensity of SNS usage, meanwhile, may also help in strengthening existing relationships they have with their close friends. Based on the above research, I propose the following hypothesis and research question:

**H1**: Intensity of SNS use is positively associated with an individuals’ bridging social capital.

**RQ1**: What is the relationship between intensity of SNS usage and individual’s bonding social capital?

**SNSs and Privacy Awareness**

In modern society, privacy is considered as a basic human need of integrity, autonomy, and identity in interpersonal relationship (Debatin, 2011) and the desire for
privacy has been constantly growing (Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn, & Hughes, 2009). It reflects a person’s desire to protect their bodily and psychological integrity, and to protect himself or herself from being controlled by others. With the precondition of ensuring communication, people also want to share certain levels of personal information with certain people (Margulis, 2011).

Privacy is a controversial concept. It is widely discussed in sociology, psychology, behavioral sciences and other fields. For example, Stone (1990) explained privacy as a condition in which people have control over the range of the spread of their information, and where they can also “exclude” themselves from unwanted information and people, and thus control the amount and dimension of interaction. In her book discussing privacy in technology context, Nissenbaum (2009) broadened the concept of privacy from the right to control an individual’s personal information to a situation in which personal information flows appropriately. “Appropriateness” describes a situation in which an individual is satisfied, required, or eager to disclose his or her information (with certain types and certain amounts) within a given context (Nissenbaum, 2004, p. 120). Examples include revealing financial information to banks and health information to physicians.

This definition is consistent with Debatin’s (2011) view about privacy when focusing on how to properly protect it. He pointed out that privacy does not simply mean that individuals can arbitrarily control personal information. More precisely, privacy refers to the practices that people use to share and restrain information which is contingent on its sensitiveness in physical, psychological, social and informational...
contexts. When focusing on protecting individual from invasion of privacy, it can also be defined as the absence of privacy violation by third parties, the government or other groups. In this study, privacy on SNSs is mainly discussed within dimensions of personal information and social interaction; considering privacy violation by other SNS members and third parties, protection of privacy was also considered.

Privacy awareness in SNSs largely depended on a person’s perception of whether others would receive his or her information, what kinds of information they would receive, how much information they received and how the information would be used (Pötzsch, 2009). Defined as the perception and understanding of specific physical or fictional objects, a person’s awareness is consistent with users’ notice of stimulus in the environment, and if the stimulus no longer exist, awareness would also fade away. With high levels of privacy awareness, individuals could make right decisions and, to a large extent, avoid privacy invasion, when disclosing information on SNSs (Pötzsch, 2009).

A user’s awareness of privacy consists of several aspects, such as their awareness of the information displayed on the websites and of the privacy settings (Govani & Pashley, 2005). Several studies have attempted to identify different types of an individual’s awareness of privacy and then measure the awareness in more detail (Buchanan, Paine, Joinson, & Reips, 2007; Fogel & Nehmad, 2008; Pötzsch, 2009). In this study, the definition of privacy awareness is mainly derived from Westin’s (1967) control-based theory of privacy, which defines people’s decision on certain range of information being disclosed to certain group at certain times. According to Westin, privacy originated from people’s desire of “temporarily and voluntarily withdrawing” (p.
7) themselves from society, and intrusion of privacy mainly lies in three aspects: self-disclosure, voyeuristic curiosity, and surveillance by authorities (p. 52). In detail, this study concerns users’ personal judgment of online behavior, comprehensions of privacy related issues and potential risks online, and their attention to privacy settings and disclosure of information online (Bryce & Klang, 2009; Fogel & Nehmad, 2008; Malhotra, Kim & Agarwal, 2004; O’Brien & Torres, 2012; Pötzsch, 2009).

In recent years, online privacy has received increasing attention, not only because of a growing amount of information uploaded to the Internet, but also because of the potential risks that come with this boom. These reasons, especially the latter one, require users to focus on privacy, whether they are willing to or not.

Both empirical and theoretical studies have analyzed different aspects of privacy-related problems. Brown (2004) concluded that users’ personal information might be leaked due to system vulnerability, data theft for commercial purposes, and sometimes also because of careless behavior of users and their friends. Privacy invasion on SNSs can be classified systematically along a horizontal and a vertical dimension (Debatin, 2011). The horizontal dimension represents the interactions among users, when information about users would be disclosed to other users, while the vertical dimension, which is usually invisible to the users, represents the systematic collection of data by the SNS owners and its usage by third parties.

Moreover, the sites themselves, such as Facebook, stipulate various rules that lead to the instant revelation of the identity of the users. Joinson et al. (2011) concluded several characteristics of Facebook that push users to disclose personal information: First,
the “real name” policy, which has created a non-anonymous and almost transparent online environment for users. This implies that to protect privacy, the only choice for most users is to rely on the privacy settings. Second, games, applications and unsecured login links via Facebook may lead to exposure of private information to third parties. And finally, apart from users’ self-disclosure of private information, their friends’ online behavior, visible comments, location, or photo tagging, may also result in information leakage.

Protection of privacy, according to Debatin (2011), can be categorized in three aspects; legal regulation, ethical self-regulation, and privacy-enhancing technology (p. 49). Legal protection refers to government laws and rules, because privacy is regarded as a basic human right across many countries that should be protected under the laws. While legal protection is objective and obligatory, that is all people should obey it, ethical self-regulation of privacy is voluntary and established through informal social norms and policies. Privacy-enhancing technology in an online environment mainly refers to technical means, such as firewalls, filters, passwords, access controls and other privacy settings, which are provided to minimize privacy invasion.

As mentioned above, privacy settings are the main choice for users to manage the level of out-group accessibility of their profiles on online social networks. Most SNSs provide three levels of settings: open to the public, which is the default privacy setting for new users, friends only, and only myself. Switching to the friends only level, according to Stutzman and Krammer-Duffield (2010), means both controlling the boundary of users’ personal information and keeping users unreachable from people who are not on their
friend list. Lewis, Kaufman and Christakis (2008), also contend that with the profiles visible to only friends and users themselves, users would encounter fewer privacy related risks, especially when providing location updates and uploading photos on their profiles. However, this “friends only” setting is not always effective, because users might accept friend requests from complete strangers, the data collection process from third parties still exist, and friends on sites might forward the users’ information to others, which can hardly be controlled (Debatin, 2011).

Disclosure of information online, it was once assumed, was negatively associated with users’ knowledge and concern on privacy (Young & Quan-Haase, 2009). However, many studies came to different conclusions (Fogel & Nehmad, 2008; Govani & Pashley, 2005; Lo, 2010; O’Brien & Torres, 2012). These researchers found that though participants were formed increasingly concerned about privacy, most of them continued uploading personal information on sites, and some participants, compared to what they had done in the past, disclosed even more information on their profile (Madden et al., 2013).

This disparities between observed privacy behaviors and privacy behavior statements was called the privacy paradox (Pötzsch, 2009; Stutzman & Krammer-Duffield, 2010). However, this “paradoxical” phenomenon can be explained, because users’ intention of continuing their communication with friends on social media motivates them to include their personal information. This intention is probably rooted in the perception among college students that no engagement in social media is equal to “social death” (Debatin et al., 2009, p. 101). Interactions with friends, as Pötzsch (2009)
asserted, together with other benefits, were more outstanding and easier to estimate than the potential risks, thus users are more likely to disclose information with only a few clicks.

Moreover, users’ perception of potential danger would be largely attenuated by their trust on the environment and others (Dutta, Dutton & Law, 2011; Liao, Liu & Chen, 2011; Metzger, 2004; Urban, Amyx & Lorenzon, 2009), and their level of trust could be evaluated by the information users disclosed on sites (Zimmer, Arsal, Al-Marzouq & Grover, 2009). Liao et al. (2011) concluded that trust can be defined as the willingness and confidence to be vulnerable to another person or party, and the expectation that the receiver would treat the information responsibly. With higher levels of trust, individuals are more convinced that the information they disclosed would be properly used or managed by the receivers (Young & Quan-Haase, 2009).

In their study on trust in companies, Knijnenburg and Kobsa (2013) found that if an individual is comparatively satisfied with and shows more trust in the company, he or she would be more likely to disclose more private information to the company. This finding can also be applied to the online environment. Related studies have found that users tend to disclose more private information on Facebook than on MySpace, because they put more trust in Facebook when dealing with private information, mainly due to the non-anonymous atmosphere that Facebook has created for users (Dwyer, Hiltz & Passerini, 2007; Fogel & Nehmad, 2008). Other research on Facebook (Young & Quan-Haase, 2009) also discovered that disclosure of information is positively associated with intensity of Facebook usage, including the time spent on the site and the number of
friends on Facebook. This positive relationship, as Pötzsch (2009) explained, results from the more trustworthy environment that is created when users have more friends on this SNS.

Studies on whether users are becoming more aware of online privacy or not have not reached a consensus. Some studies, such as the one by Lawler and Molluzzo (2010), found that users underestimated the importance of online privacy. In their study, many participants stated they had no idea that information on their own page could also be shared and used. Meanwhile, other research observed an increase in privacy awareness. Users have gradually become more and more aware of online activities to better protect their privacy (Madden & Smith, 2010).

Interviews with users in a both qualitative and quantitative study by Debatin et al. (2009) showed that many participants understand the potential danger of uploading personal information online. However, the same study showed that users also upload private information despite their awareness of the privacy risks this behavior poses. O’Brien and Torres’s (2012) study on 285 Facebook users also found that over 50 percent of the participants have a correct judgment on privacy-related issues of SNSs. According to a survey of 1032 teenagers by Thomas (2010), these users’ comprehension of SNSs risks and privacy is increasing, compared with teens’ related knowledge in 2007. Thomas also found that 80 percent of the surveyed teens had formed an anticipation that their online posts would have an effect on their privacy.

Users are becoming more familiar with privacy setting to manage the availability of their private information. According to Govani and Pashley (2005), over 80 percent of
participants had the basic knowledge of the functions of privacy settings, though only half of them would put this knowledge into practice. However, later studies done in 2006 and 2012 indicated that users’ knowledge of privacy has been, to a large extent, put into practice (Madden et al., 2013). About 60 percent of teenage Facebook users claimed to be confident in managing the settings, and they have changed their privacy settings to make their page only available to friends and themselves. A survey of 119 American Facebook participants in the quantitative and qualitative study by Debatin et al. (2009) revealed that an overwhelming majority of participants declared to be familiar with Facebook privacy issues. Nearly 80 percent of the participants claimed to be likely to adopt privacy settings to restrict the accessibility of their profiles. Almost 70 percent made actual changes on settings and about half the participants have set the openness level at “friends only”. Most of the users who experienced privacy invasion would change their settings. However, this study also found that friends on list were not the one that users know before, because ten percent of participants would agree friend request from anyone and only half of the participants would add friends they actually know. Users also tended to be oblivious of the systematic usage of their data by Facebook and third parties. It can’t be denied that this increasing awareness of online privacy is, at least to some degree, associated with the booming of SNSs and users’ intensive usage of SNSs. Research focusing on the relationship between SNSs usage and privacy awareness often shows a positive correlation. Being more active on Facebook, according to Lewis, Kaufman and Christakis (2008), predicts a higher possibility that the users have changed their profiles to “private” (accessible to friends or themselves only). Research on adults and young SNS users
found that users, especially young ones, become more experienced in using SNSs (Brandtzeg, Lüders & Skjetne, 2010). Even though parents might underestimate this, young users have a rich knowledge about privacy related settings.

Thus, based on previous studies, it is hypothesized in this study that higher intensity of Facebook and Renren Network usage would, to a large extent, help users in better establishing knowledge of online privacy. Meanwhile, as high-intensity users may become more likely to trust and disclose more personal information on SNSs; they may also be more likely to use and be familiar with privacy settings. Hypothesis H2 is proposed based on above reasoning: H2: Awareness of privacy is positively associated with intensity of SNS usage.

SNSs across Cultures: Similarities and Differences

Defined by the culture they belong to, people’s behaviors and thoughts tend to vary in different communities (Park & Jun, 2003). For example, research focusing on Italy’s economic dualism found from historical records that people in South Italy tend to be less likely to trust others and to be more likely to avoid social engagement, and at the same time, their social capital, together with annual income, and other evaluation of life condition, was comparatively lower than the North (Galassi, 2000).

Compared to South and North Italy, there are obviously more differences between the United States and China, which belong to the Western and Eastern culture respectively.

Hofstede (1984) summarized four dimensions of national culture, including “power distance”, “uncertainty avoidance”, “individualism versus collectivism” and
“masculinity versus femininity” (p. 212). As people from different countries would respond to these dimensions in different ways, these four dimensions allow researchers to make comparison among cultures and to explore cultural differences.

Power distance focuses on the power and inequality of the society, and it suggests that inequality in the society is accepted by members with different levels of power, i.e., both leaders and followers. For example, in societies with small power distance, governments are usually pluralistic and established with elections among political parties, while in societies with large power distance, governments are usually autocratic and established by potentate or heredity (Hofstede, 2011). Uncertainty avoidance evaluates how members feel when confronting ambiguous and unusual situations. Members from societies with weak uncertainty avoidance are usually comfortable in these situations and curious about the differences, while members from strong uncertainty avoiding societies tend to be upset with ambiguity and intolerant of difference.

Individualism versus collectivism represents the extent to which members are integrated in societies, and members with high individualistic values are likely to focus on self and privacy, while members with high collectivistic values more typically focus on the group and their sense of belonging. Masculinity versus femininity focuses on gender and evaluates the social status of men and women. In masculine societies, obvious differences in social roles and emotions exist between the genders, and women’s values are different from men’s. In feminine societies, there are not many differences in emotional and social roles between genders, and women have the same values as men.
Individualism versus collectivism index is selected to evaluate the differences between users from two countries, because this study mainly focuses on social capital and privacy awareness, which is closely related to users’ definition on self, relationship with others, and privacy. Hofstede’s cultural dimensions theory states that developed and Western countries, such as North America, have strong individualistic values and achieve higher scores on this dimension; less developed countries, such as many countries in Africa and Asia, are more collectivistic focused and have comparatively lower scores.

A study related to individualism in American and Chinese culture (Lin, 2001) found that Chinese people usually put collective interests above personal interests and think highly of their families and clans; American people tend to be more individualized and focus more on individual personality.

As Facebook is blocked in China for political reasons, Sina Weibo and Renren Network have become the choice for most “web citizens” in China. The SNSs in the U.S. and China share many similarities as discussed earlier. This is partly because the Chinese social network industry, like Renren Network, imitates SNSs in U.S., which is mostly based on people’s desire of being connected to others, despite geographical, cultural and other kinds of boundaries (Park & Jun, 2003).

However, no matter how similar the social media are, users’ actual behaviors on different SNSs from different countries may have some differences. Values and behaviors, including online behaviors, tend to vary as a function of culture (Wang, 1999). Though globalization has closed some gaps between the cultures, people from different cultural backgrounds still maintain some of their original values, thoughts and behavior
patterns (Chu & Choi, 2010). For example, compared to students in Asian countries, American students are more likely to spend more time online (Park & Jun, 2003). Ur and Wang (2013) found that reasons for people using SNSs also vary in different countries. U.S. users employ SNSs to perform their selves while Chinese users tend to use SNSs for playing games on sites and decorating their pages.

A survey done by Jackson and Wang (2012) found that U.S. participants spent nearly twice as much time on SNSs than Chinese participants (52 min per day as opposed to 28 min per day). Apart from the economic reasons, which allow Chinese family to have only one computer, they also found that cultural differences play an important role in SNS usage. Jackson and Wang explained that Chinese spend less time on SNSs than U.S. people, because SNSs is less important in their opinion. They are more likely to focus on actual connections with family and close friends in the real world, rather than spending more time on SNSs. In other words, they may be more interested in bonding capital than in bridging capital. As seen above, bonding capital can be realized easier in real life environments than in online social networks. U.S. Americans, as individualists, focus on the self, and the functions of SNSs provide an ideal channel to them for building themselves up online to win reputation through weak tie networks, i.e. bridging capital.

It thus is no surprise that differences also exist in the quality and distribution of social capital between Chinese and U.S. people. Though no consensus exists on whether U.S. people have higher levels of social capital, Markus and Kitayama (1991) found that individuals in China and Japan tend to have closer relationships with their parents (strong ties), while U.S. people tend to have more bridging social capital (weak ties), and these
loose connections to other people show higher levels of diversity. A study on young generations from two countries also found that young people in the U.S. have a visibly larger extension of social networks than Chinese, and they have obtained exceedingly more bridging social capital on SNSs (Chang & Zhu, 2012).

Another study found that the intensity of SNS usage is positively associated with bridging social capital but there is no significant difference between young generations from two countries with respect to bridging social capital (Chu & Choi, 2010). The authors found that younger people from both China and the United States were engaged in building and maintaining bonding and bridging social capital. Moreover, they also observed a higher level of bonding social capital among U.S. users, which appears to contradict Jackson and Wang (2012) and Markus and Kitayama (1991)’s findings. Chu and Choi proposed that the reason may lie in the rapid economic reforms and the higher divorce rate in China. Chinese young users thus quickly switched to computer-mediated communication, and they became more likely to use SNSs to express their own opinions and create more bridging social capital.

Focusing on the privacy difference, research conducted by Wang, Norcie, and Cranor (2011) on U.S., Chinese, and Indian SNS users indicated that users of the three countries have different levels of privacy concerns. According to Hofstede’s individualism index on measuring cultural difference, U.S. is a more individualistic society and U.S. people concern more about personal privacy. Wang et al. found that U.S. users tended to be most concerned about privacy, followed by Chinese users. Indian users were least concerned about privacy. U.S. users reported to be more uncomfortable with
the disclosure of information than Chinese and Indian users, while paradoxically, U.S. users show the least concerns about restricting their information.

A survey by Dutta, Dutton and Law (2010) also came to similar results. Data was collected from 5,400 users in 13 different countries and they were asked evaluate statements related to users’ perception of potential online risks and privacy protection. Results showed that there were about ten percent more U.S. users than Chinese users (63 percent as opposed to 53 percent) that support the statements.

A study on online shopping experiences also found that Chinese Internet users tend to have lower concern of potential online risks than U.S. users (Zhang, Chen & Wen, 2002). Chinese users are more likely to trade their personal information for free goods, and worry less about how the personal information they disclosed will be used.

Ur and Wang (2013) analyzed people’s actual perception of privacy and found that it was largely affected by certain norms for privacy in their respective cultures. The authors explained that privacy concerns in China resulted from a mix of the native collectivistic Eastern family tradition and the individualistic Western ideas of the self.

Thus, based on the discussed research, the following research question is proposed:

**RQ2**: How will SNS usage and its relationship with users’ social capital and privacy awareness vary between users of Facebook and Renren Network?
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

An online survey was designed based on previous research and was used to collect data for this study. The survey was originally created in English and then translated into Chinese for students in China. The data were collected with a snowball sampling technique on social media.

Sample

The data were collected using an online survey. Researcher’s friends and acquaintances on Facebook and Renren were asked to fill out the survey and forward the survey to people in their networks. Overall, this study got 246 responses from undergraduate students, with 110 Facebook users from the United States and 136 Renren Network users from China. Due to its nature, it is a non-representative convenience sample.

Measurement

Intensity of SNS Usage

Intensity of SNS usage was measured using a four-item questionnaire based on items used by Ellison et al. (2007) in their study on The Benefits of Facebook ‘‘Friends: ’’ Social Capital and College Students’ Use of Online Social Network Sites. The first two items in the questionnaire sought response about the number of Facebook friends and average duration of Facebook use. The items were, “how many total Facebook friends do you have at school or elsewhere,” and “in the past week, on average, approximately how many minutes per day have you spent on Facebook”. The last two items measured responses on a five-point Likert Scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree);
these items were, “Facebook has become part of my daily routine” and “I feel out of touch when I haven’t logged onto Facebook for a while”.

*Intensity of SNS usage* (Cronbach’s alpha = .771) was computed by calculating the mean for all the items in the scale. Correlation analysis was adopted to examine the relationships between variables.

*Social Capital*

Individuals’ social capital was measured using a questionnaire with 28 items with a five-point Likert Scale (*1* = *Strongly Disagree* to *5* = *Strongly Agree*); the questionnaire was based on the instrument used by William (2006). The instrument has two dimensions; *bridging social capital* and *bonding social capital*. More details about the instrument are provided below.

*Bridging Social Capital*

A questionnaire with 17 items was used to measure the bridging social capital. The 17-item survey scale had five subscales: 1) Linkage to external assets / Information diffusion, 2) Outward-looking, 3) Contact with a broader range of people, 4) A view of oneself as part of a broader group, and 5) Diffuse reciprocity with a broader community. Overall, bridging social capital was computed by calculating the average of all the 17 items scores (Cronbach’s alpha = .903).

*Linkage to external assets/ Information diffusion*. Participants were required to respond to three items which were measured on a five-point Likert Scale (*1* = *Strongly Disagree* to *5* = *Strongly Agree*). These items involved statements such as “based on the people I interact with, it is easy for me to hear about new job opportunities,” and “the
people I interact with help me to stay in touch with what is new and popular” (for more details, see Appendix A).

*Outward-looking.* A four-item, five-point Likert Scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*), reflected the participants’ perception of interacting with people, which involved statements, such as “interacting with people makes me interested in what people unlike me are thinking,” and “interacting with people makes me interested in things that happen outside of my town” (for more details, see Appendix A).

*Contact with a broader range of people.* Participants responded to three items which were measured on a five-point Likert Scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*). These items included statements about background of friends like “I interact with people who are from different educational, cultural, and economic backgrounds than me” (for more details, see Appendix A).

*A view of oneself as part of a broader group.* It had three items with a five-point Likert Scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*), which reflected the participants’ statement about the effects of interpersonal interaction on personal belongings. The three items included statements such as “interacting with people reminds me that everyone in the world is connected,” and “interacting with people makes me feel like part of a larger community” (for more details, see Appendix A).

*Diffuse reciprocity with a broader community.* A four-item questionnaire, five-point Likert Scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*), involved statements such as “I won’t help out someone unless I get something for it,” “I am happy to help out
a stranger,” and “I am willing to spend time to support general community activities” (for more details, see Appendix A).

**Bonding Social Capital**

Bonding social capital was measured with an 11-item questionnaire. The 11-item survey scale had three subscales: 1) Emotional Support, 2) Access to Scarce or Limited Resources, and 3) Out-Group Antagonism.

**Emotional Support.** The subscale had four items, which were measured on a five-point Likert Scale (*1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*). These items involved statements such as “when I feel lonely, there are several people I can talk to,” “there is someone I can turn to for advice about making very important decisions,” and “there is NO ONE that I feel comfortable talking to about intimate personal problems” (for more details, see Appendix A). Negative words and reversed meanings were adopted when arranging the questions to ensure the quality of the responses.

**Access to Scarce or Limited Resources.** Participants responded to a five-item questionnaire on five-point Likert Scale (*1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*). Items included statements such as “if I needed an emergency loan of $500, I know someone I can turn to,” “the people I interact with would put their reputation on the line for me,” and “the people I interact with would be good job references for me” (for more details, see Appendix A).

**Out-Group Antagonism.** Out-group antagonism subscale had two items, which were measured on a five-point Likert Scale (*1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree*).
Agree). These items were, “I do not trust people who are a different race than me,” and “I do not trust people who are part of other generations” (for more details, see Appendix A).

As reversal items were also included in this part, the response value for each of these items was reversed coded before computing bonding social capital. Overall bonding social capital was computed by calculating an average of all the 11 item scores (Cronbach’s Alpa = .793).

Privacy Awareness

Users’ privacy awareness was measured using a 24-item questionnaire based on the items used by O’Brien and Torres (2012) in their study of social networking and online privacy. The 24-item survey scale had four subscales: 1) Information Disclosure, 2) Privacy Setting and Policy, 3) Comprehension on facets of privacy, and 4) Online Privacy Behavior Statement.

Information Disclosure

Participants completed a nine-item questionnaire with Yes/No choice. Those items, including “date of birth”, “political view”, “hometown”, “family members” (for more details, see Appendix A), check the personal information that users had uploaded onto their SNS profiles and timelines.

All yes answers were coded as 1 and all No answers were coded as 0 before adding them. The level of information disclosure was computed by adding all the nine item scores. A higher score indicated that the user disclosed information for a higher number of fields.
"Privacy Setting and Policy"

A four-item questionnaire related to general settings and privacy information about SNS measured participants’ overall understanding of privacy setting and policies. Questions like “privacy settings are currently at which level” were included (for more details, see Appendix A).

The item examining the levels of privacy settings was first recoded, with open to everyone coded as 0 and open to friends or users themselves as 1. The Overall evaluation of users’ privacy settings was computed by adding all four item scores. A higher score indicated that the users were more skilled in control of privacy and more concerned about privacy policies.

"Comprehension of facets of privacy"

Comprehension of privacy subscale had 6 items (True or False) which measured participants’ personal judgment on statements like “whenever you share information on Facebook you can control exactly who can see it”, and “information set to ‘everyone’ on Facebook in the privacy settings is available to everyone on the internet not just Facebook users” (for more details, see Appendix A).

All True answers were coded as 1 and all False answers were coded as 0 before adding them, except the first item mentioned above, which was coded with True answer as 0 and False answer as 1, because of the reversed meaning of the item. The participants’ privacy statement was computed by adding all the 6 item scores. A higher score indicates that the user has higher comprehension of SNS privacy.
Online privacy behavior statement

Seven items were measured on a five-point Likert Scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Statements such as “I am cautious in what I say and do on Facebook,” “I trust my Facebook friends with my information,” and “it is my responsibility to protect my information on Facebook” (for more details, see Appendix A) were included.

The online privacy behavior statement was computed by calculating the mean value of all the seven item scores (Cronbach’s alpha = .678). Items with negative words and reversed meanings were recoded first (choices were coded from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree to 1 = Strongly Agree to 5 = Strongly Disagree) before calculating the average.

SNSs across Cultures: Similarities and Differences

To examine if differences exist between users of Facebook and Renren Network, an independent samples t-test was made; a correlation analysis was done respectively on two SNSs to examine if the existing relationships among the variables differ between users of two SNSs.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Among 246 respondents, a small majority of the participants was female (52 percent), with ten more female than male participants. 85.4 percent (210) of the participants were already members of selected SNSs. In addition, as participants were not required to answer every question of the questionnaire, some responses were not complete. Nine answers were missing in the “year in school” item. Comparison among students in different grades showed that freshman (34.6 percent) occupied the highest percentage of the whole sample, while only 35 (14.2 percent) junior college students participated in this survey, occupying the lowest percentage of the whole (see Table 1 below).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breakdown of Sample Demographics (N=246)</th>
<th>Overall % (N)</th>
<th>China % (N)</th>
<th>U.S. % (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall distribution</td>
<td>100 (246)</td>
<td>55.3% (136)</td>
<td>44.7% (110)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48% (118)</td>
<td>41.9% (57)</td>
<td>55.5% (61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>52% (128)</td>
<td>58.1% (79)</td>
<td>44.5% (49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>34.6% (85)</td>
<td>54.4% (74)</td>
<td>10.0% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>22% (54)</td>
<td>30.9% (42)</td>
<td>10.9% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>14.2% (35)</td>
<td>8.1% (11)</td>
<td>21.8% (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>25.6% (63)</td>
<td>5.9% (8)</td>
<td>50% (55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no answer</td>
<td>3.6% (9)</td>
<td>.7% (1)</td>
<td>7.3% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook / Renren Members?</td>
<td>85.4% (210)</td>
<td>80.9% (110)</td>
<td>90.9% (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This study received 136 responses from college students in China, and a majority of them was female (58.1 percent). 54.4 percent of the participants were freshman, taking
the highest percentage of the group, and were followed by sophomore (30.9 percent),
junior (8.1 percent) and senior (5.9 percent). One participant didn’t answer the “year in
school” item.

The U.S. sample consisted of 110 college students, and a majority of them was
male (55.5 percent). Half the participants were seniors (55), taking the highest percentage
(50 percent) of the group. Only eleven (10 percent) freshman and twelve sophomores (11
percent) took part in this survey, occupying the lowest percentages of the sub-sample.
Eight values were missing in the “year in school” item.

This shows a remarkable difference in the two sub-samples: Chinese freshmen
and sophomores made up 85.4 percent of their sample, while conversely, the U.S. sample
consisted of 71.8 percent juniors and seniors. It can be assumed that the age difference
might have had an influence on the outcome of the survey. Similarly, the different gender
distribution, though less pronounced, may have had an impact, as well.

Intensity of SNS Usage and Social Capital

**H1**: Intensity of SNS usage is positively associated with individuals’ bridging social capital.

To test the first hypothesis, Pearson’s correlation was calculated between *intensity of SNS usage* and *social capital*. Results (shown in Table 2) indicated that *Intensity of SNS usage* \((M = 2.347, SD = .985)\) and *bridging social capital* \((M = 3.598, SD = .652)\) were positively correlated: \(r (244) = .364, p < .01\). Therefore, hypothesis H1 was supported.
In addition, correlation analysis between intensity of SNS usage and the five subscales of bridging social capital indicated that a positive relationship was also observed between SNS usage and the participants’ linkage to external assets / information diffusion \((M = 3.091, SD = .932; r(244) = .423, p < .01)\), participants’ assessment of outward-looking \((M = 3.660, SD = .887; r(244) = .324, p < .01)\), contact with a broader range of people \((M = 3.673, SD = .886; r(244) = .217, p < .01)\) and a view of oneself as part of a broader group \((M = 3.703, SD = .871; r(244) = .323, p < .01)\). Correlation test between diffuse reciprocity with a broader community and intensity of SNS usage was not significant: \((M = 3.779, SD = .624; r(244) = .116, p > .05)\).

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intensity of SNS Usage</th>
<th>Bridging Social Capital</th>
<th>Bonding Social Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intensity</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.364**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of SNS Usage</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridging Capital</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.364**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonding Capital</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.146*</td>
<td>.634**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: **p<.01. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).
* p<.05. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

RQ1: What is the relationship between intensity of SNS usage and individual’s bonding social capital?
Pearson’s correlation was calculated between intensity of SNS usage and bonding social capital. The results (shown in Table 2) showed an overall positive relationship between bonding social capital ($M = 3.547, SD = .561$) and the intensity of SNS usage: ($r (244) = .146, p < .05$).

However, the calculation of Pearson’s correlation between the intensity of SNS usage and the three subscales of bonding social capital indicated that the relationship between emotional support ($M = 3.720, SD = .701$) and intensity of SNS usage was not significant: ($r (244) = .124, p > .05$). Relationship between out-group antagonism ($M = 3.474, SD = .953$) and intensity of SNS usage was also not significant: ($r (244) = -.002, p > .05$). Only the third subscale item, access to scarce or limited resources ($M = 3.438, SD = .773$), was positively associated with the intensity of SNS usage: ($r (244) = .145, p < .05$). In addition, a positive relationship between bridging and bonding social capital was also observed: ($r (244) = .634, p < .01$).

One subscale item access to scarce or limited resources was positively associated with bonding social capital, which led to an overall positive relationship between intensity of use and bonding social capital. Thus, intensity of SNS use was positively associated with only certain aspects of an individual’s bonding capital, but its relationship with emotional support and out-group antagonism were not significant.

Privacy Awareness

As five participants left this section of the questionnaire incomplete, the total number of responses in privacy awareness was 241. According to the general questions about SNS users’ privacy settings and policy (See Table 3 below), the majority of the
respondents (65.6 percent) reported that they had changed their page settings, and 70.1 percent of the respondents reported that they had set their page open to their friends or to themselves only. Of all the 241 respondents, 73 claimed that they read the privacy policy, which constitutes about 30 percent of all the responses, while 64.3 percent displayed confidence in the privacy settings.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Privacy Settings and Policy</th>
<th>% (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changed settings?</td>
<td>65.6% (158)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy settings are currently set at</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Only Myself,</td>
<td>12% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Friends only,</td>
<td>58.1% (140)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Everyone.</td>
<td>29.9% (72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in settings</td>
<td>64.3% (155)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy Policy read?</td>
<td>30.3% (73)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H2: Awareness of privacy is positively associated with intensity of SNS usage.

To test the second hypothesis, a Pearson’s correlation test was conducted between Intensity of SNS usage and the four subscales separately because of different levels of measurement.

Results (Table 4) showed a positive relationship \( r (239) = .148, p < .05 \) between privacy settings and policies \( (M = 2.303, SD = 1.09) \) and intensity of SNS usage. Information disclosure \( (M = 4.896, SD = 2.330) \) was also positively associated \( r (239) = .353, p < .01 \) with intensity of SNS usage. Comprehension on facets of privacy \( (M = .776, SD = .375) \) was positively related to intensity of SNS usage \( r (239) = .353, p < .01 \).
A positive relationship was also observed between online privacy behavior statement and intensity of SNS usage ($r (239) = .191, p < .01$).

The second hypothesis was only partially supported, because the positive association between disclosure and intensity of use does not indicate privacy awareness.

**Table 4**

*Correlations between SNS Usage and Awareness of Privacy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intensity of SNS Usage</th>
<th>Privacy settings and policies</th>
<th>Information Disclosure</th>
<th>Comprehension of privacy</th>
<th>Privacy Behavior Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intensity of SNS Usage</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.148*</td>
<td>.353**</td>
<td>.134*</td>
<td>.191**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privacy settings and policies</strong></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Disclosure</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.148*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.219**</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td>.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehension of privacy</strong></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privacy Behavior Statement</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.353**</td>
<td>.219**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** **p < .01. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).**  
*p < .05. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).**
SNSs across Cultures: Similarities and Differences

**RQ2:** How will SNS usage and its relationship with users’ social capital and privacy awareness vary between users of Facebook and Renren Network?

An independent samples *t*-test (see Table 5) was conducted to compare SNS usage, bridging and bonding social capital, and awareness of privacy between Chinese Renren Network and U.S. Facebook.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levenes’ Test for Equality of Variance</th>
<th><em>t</em>-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>F</em></td>
<td><em>Sig</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNS Usage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not assumed</td>
<td>7.626</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumed</td>
<td>2.009</td>
<td>.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumed</td>
<td>1.298</td>
<td>.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumed</td>
<td>1.066</td>
<td>.303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy settings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumed</td>
<td>3.177</td>
<td>.076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>privacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy settings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not assumed</td>
<td>20.237</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy Behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not assumed</td>
<td>18.556</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There was a significant difference of intensity of SNS usage in the scores for Renren Network \((M = 2.13, SD = .87)\) and Facebook \((M = 2.61, SD = 1.06)\); \(t (244) = -3.79, p = .00\).

A significant difference also existed in bridging social capital between Renren Network \((M = 3.52, SD = .62)\) and Facebook \((M = 3.69, SD = .68)\) usage; \(t (244) = -2.17, p = .03\). There was no significant difference in bonding social capital between users of Renren Network \((M = 3.53, SD = .54)\) and Facebook \((M = 3.56, SD = .60)\); \(t (244) = -0.464, p > .05\).

Focusing on privacy awareness, a difference, nearly significant, was observed in information disclosure between Renren Network \((M = 4.64, SD = 2.21)\) and Facebook \((M = 5.23, SD = 2.44)\); \(t (239) = -1.96, p = .051\). A significant difference existed both in view of privacy between using Renren Network \((M = 3.54, SD = 2.01)\) and Facebook \((M = 4.35, SD = 1.57)\); \(t (239) = -3.63, p = .00\) and in the privacy behavior statement between using Renren Network \((M = 3.32, SD = 2.06)\) and Facebook \((M = 3.53, SD = 3.36)\); \(t (239) = -2.84, p = .01\). There was no significant difference in privacy settings between users of Renren Network \((M = 2.19, SD = 1.04)\) and Facebook \((M = 2.44, SD = 1.14)\); \(t (239) = -1.814, p > .05\).

Correlation tests were done separately on the two SNSs (see Table 6), and results indicated that a positive relationship between bridging social capital and intensity of SNS usage was observed both in usage of Facebook \((r (108) = .322, p < .01)\) and in usage of Renren Network \((r (134) = .366, p < .01)\), while the relationship between bonding social capital and intensity of SNS usage was not significant in comparison of the two SNSs.
Table 6

**Correlations of variables of interest with SNS usage for Renren and Facebook**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Renren</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bridging</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.322**</td>
<td>.366**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bonding</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.164</td>
<td>.086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linkage to external assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.398**</td>
<td>.413**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outward-looking</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.277**</td>
<td>.343**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact with a broader range of people</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.295**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A view of oneself as part of a broader group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.246**</td>
<td>.348**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diffuse reciprocity with a broader community</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.180*</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Out-group antagonism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.339</td>
<td>.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional support</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to scarce or limited resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-.083</td>
<td>-.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.337</td>
<td>.480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privacy settings and policies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.198*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.555</td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Disclosure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.229**</td>
<td>.440**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>View of Privacy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.756</td>
<td>.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privacy Behavior Statement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.226*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.602</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: **p < .01. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).  
*p < .05. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).
Table 6 showed that a positive relationship existed between index of contact with a broader range of people and of Facebook usage ($r (108) = .295, p < .01$) for U.S. students, while the relationship is not significant in usage of Renren Network. But a positive relationship was observed between diffuse reciprocity with a broader community and Chinese Renren Network usage ($r (134) = .180, p < .05$).

Results indicated a positive relationship between information disclosure and intensity of SNS usage was observed both in usage of Facebook ($r (108) = .440, p < .01$) and in usage of Renren Network ($r (134) = .229, p < .01$).

A positive relationship was observed between privacy settings and policies and Facebook usage ($r (108) = .198, p < .05$). A positive relationship was also observed between privacy behavior statement and Facebook usage ($r (108) = .226, p < .05$), while the relationship between privacy behavior statement and Renren Network usage was not statistically significant: $r (134) = .405, p > .05$. 
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Built upon existing research, this study measured three concepts, intensity of SNS usage, social capital (both bonding and bridging), and privacy awareness. There are mainly three purposes of this study: first, to examine the relationship between students’ SNS usage and social capital; second, to analyze the relationship between SNS usage and privacy awareness; third, to find if cultural differences exist in intensity of SNS usage between Facebook and Renren users and the respective relationship between usage and students’ social capital and privacy awareness.

The findings demonstrated that students’ bridging social capital, and to some degree, their bonding social capital, too, were positively associated with the usage of SNS (H1 and RQ1). An overall positive relationship was also found between their awareness of privacy and their usage of SNSs (H2). Results of independent samples t-test showed that there were significant differences in intensity of SNS usage, bridging social capital, and privacy awareness between users of Renren Network and Facebook (RQ2).

It was also shown that a student’s bridging social capital was positively associated with intensity of SNS usage, a finding consistent with the studies done by Ellison et al. (2007) and Burke et al. (2010). As Amichai-Hamburger et al. (2012) claimed in their study about online friendships, social network usage expanded users’ friend circles to a large extent. Results of the correlation analysis between SNS usage and bridging social capital also indicated that the more a student use SNS, the more he or she would be likely to contact with a broader range of people. It is surprising that no significant relationship was discovered between diffuse reciprocity with a broader community and intensity of
SNS usage. *Diffuse reciprocity with a broader community* measures if participants would like to offer help to others in society without expecting immediate payoff and this willingness originate from their comfort that someday others will give a hand in return (Williams, 2006). This can be explained, as social capital is also affected by the society the person belongs to (Whiteley, 2008), meaning if other people in the society were kind and threats, such as crimes, were not often taking place, social capital was easier to create. For example, people in southern Italy tend to be less likely to trust others and to be more likely to avoid social engagement, and at the same time, their social capital, together with annual income, and other life condition values, was comparatively lower than the North (Galassi, 2000). Because participants of this study came from different regions within two different countries, it is not surprising that there was no unanimous response. The thinking model of students in northern China is more westernized and they are likely to value their self more than others, while students in southern and central China think more comprehensively (Bower, 2014). According to a twelve-year study by Rentfrow et al. (2013), U.S. citizens in different areas have different personalities and backgrounds. For example, people in the north-central Great Plains and southern regions were more friendly and conventional and they paid more attention to their families and traditional values. Meanwhile, higher rates of social capital were observed in these regions. However, people in comparatively relaxed and creative regions, such as the west- and east-coast areas, usually have lower rates of social capital. This study paralleled the findings of Ellison et al. (2011) that using SNSs enabled students in two countries to maintain connection with their family members and close friends. A positive relationship
was discovered between *access to scarce or limited resource* subscale of bonding social capital (“strong ties”) and intensity of SNS usage in this study. Ellison et al. (2011) analyzed that if the close friends and family members were also on Facebook, users would naturally go on sites and ask them for help, especially when users were away from them.

However, intensity of SNS usage was not significantly associated with *emotional support*. In Haythornthwaite’s (2005) study, the relationship was also not significant. The researcher analyzed that bonding social capital mainly originated from family members and close friends and that it would endow the individual with emotional support. She explained that maintenance of “strong ties” (bonding social capital) was not restricted to only one specific channel for communication. In situations where people did not or could use social media, they would use other means of communication to connect with family and friends.

Similarly, the relationship between *out-group antagonism* and intensity of SNS usage was also not significant. Out-group antagonism was not an element of bonding social capital, but it is the most straightforward dimension for evaluation of bonding social capital (Putman, 2000). As separation of another group would easily lead to antagonism and this subscale went consistent with in-group closeness (Putman, 2000). This may indicate that, overall, SNS usage does not lead to the creation of new bonding social capital, as only a significant association between these two items would indicate that an SNS-specific in-group/out-group identity was created. Though no significant relationship was observed in this study, it is explainable as the subscale didn’t differ
online and offline values clearly. As Williams (2006) assumed, the low costs of entry online communities make connections easier, while the low costs of exit might make it easy to leave the community, because the costs of exit keep the community together.

Overall, these findings show that bonding social capital is not created through intense SNS usage. Rather, the communicative features of SNS can help members to make use of existing bonding social capital (such as access to scarce resources), but SNS do not create or provide bonding social capital in the form of emotional support or a specific in-group/out-group identity. Therefore, the result of an overall positive relationship between bonding social capital and intensity of usage is somewhat misleading, as it only reflects the positive relationship between the subscale item access to scarce or limited resource and intensity of usage. Not surprisingly, results showed that a person’s bonding social capital was also positively associated with the bridging social capital, as people who have more bonding social capital usually have more bridging capital, which was consistent with the findings of Williams (2006) and Ellison et al. (2007). Though differences existed in bonding and bridging social capital, these two capitals grow as long as there are appropriate communication platforms or means (Haythornthwaite, 2005).

It was discovered that the more a student used SNS, the more he or she would be aware of online activities to protect himself or herself from potential privacy related risks online, which paralleled the findings of Madden and Smith (2010), O’Brien and Torres (2012). Collected responses on six True or False statements on facets of privacy in this study indicated that 65.9 percent participants responded with more than four right
answers, and the result indicated that high accuracy was closely associated with users’ involvement in SNSs. Results showed that the more a student use SNS, the more likely he or she was to use privacy settings and read privacy policies. This was consistent with discovery of previous research (Lewis, Kaufman & Christakis, 2008) that changes on privacy settings are associated with intensity of SNS usage.

However, students’ overall awareness of privacy appeared to be compromised because of the trust in SNSs (Pötzsch, 2009). Results showed that when respondents were more active online, they would also be more likely to disclose personal information online, which is consistent with the findings by Young and Quan-Haase (2009). This study also found that 63.1 percent of participants disclosed more than four kinds of personal information online, and a positive relationship was found between the usage of SNS and information disclosure. The results were consistent with the results of a both quantitative and qualitative study done by Debatin et al. (2009), in which the authors found that individuals might be aware of the dangers of disclosing information on SNSs, but the desire of being involved in SNSs lowered their motivation to remain private, and thus led to more disclosure of personal information.

Differences were observed between users of Facebook and Renren Network. In this study, Facebook was more widely-accepted among U.S. college students than Renren Network in China. Besides, gender differences were also observed as the majority of participants in China was female, while the majority of U.S. participants was male. Participants in two countries were also in different years in school. A large majority of
respondents in China were freshman and sophomores, while a majority of U.S. participants were senior and junior students.

As the results showed, on average, the U.S. users of Facebook used the SNS more intensively than Chinese users of Renren Network. Chinese users tended to have fewer friends on SNSs than U.S. users (median range 51-100 as opposed to 101-150), and they spent less time per day SNSs than U.S. users (median range 10 min or less as opposed to 11-50 min). This finding is consistent with results of the survey done by Jackson and Wang (2013), which found that U.S. participants tended to spend more time on SNSs. Additionally, U.S. users rely more on SNS than Chinese users, as they agreed that Facebook has become part of their daily routine, and they might feel out of touch if haven’t use Facebook for a while.

The present study also found that compared to Chinese students, American students tended to have higher levels of bridging social capital. No statistically significant difference was found in bonding social capital between users of the two countries. This result was inconsistent with previous study done by Lin (2001), in which she claimed that Chinese are more collective and usually pay more attention to their families and clans. But this is explainable because Chinese people have gradually become more individualistic than they were in the past (Cao, 2009). Cao attributes this tendency to recent political reforms and changes in education and mass media in China. He specially mentioned the “post-80s generation”, who have “strong individualist attitude towards life”(p.47) and are more individual-centered. Participants of my study were exactly the generation that Cao mentioned in his study.
In addition, the independent samples t-test on Facebook and Renren Network revealed significant differences in the privacy behavior statement subscale, comprehension on facets of privacy and information disclosure, and on average, U.S. Facebook users obtained higher values in the three subscales. Similar results were found in research done in 2010 by Wang, Norcie, and Cranor on U.S., Chinese, and Indian SNSs users, in which researchers stated that American users were most uncomfortable with privacy disclosure.

Comparative findings on correlations of variables of interest with SNS usage showed both similarities and differences. Similarities includes: 1) In both networks, intensity of SNS usage was positively associated with bridging social capital. The correlation coefficients were not very different; both indicated a moderate association. 2) In both networks, intensity of SNS usage was positively associated with linkage to external assets. The correlation coefficients were not very different; both indicated a moderate association. 3) In both networks, SNS usage was positively associated with outward looking. The correlation coefficients for Renren Network show a weak association whereas the coefficients for Facebook show a moderate relationship. 4) In both networks, SNS usage was positively associated with a view of oneself as part of a broader group. The correlation coefficients for Renren Network show a weak association whereas the coefficients for Facebook show a moderate relationship. 5) In both networks, SNS usage was positively associated with information disclosure. The correlation coefficients for Renren Network show a weak association whereas the coefficients for Facebook show a moderate relationship. Overall, the results showed for users of both
Facebook and Renren Network, the more they use SNSs, the more bridging social capital they would obtain. Subscales of bridging social capital measured in this study, including *linkage to external assets, outward looking, and a view of oneself as part of a broader group*, would also increase as they use SNSs more intensely. Moreover, both Facebook and Renren Network users are disclosing more information, as they get more involved on sites.

Differences were also observed in comparative findings. 1) *Contact with a broader range of people* was positively associated with Facebook usage, while its relationship between Renren Network usage was not significant. The correlation coefficients for Facebook show a weak association. 2) *Diffuse reciprocity with a broader community* was positively associated with Renren Network usage, while its relationship between Facebook usage was not significant. The correlation coefficients for Renren Network show a weak association. 3) *Privacy settings and policies* was positively associated with Facebook usage, while its relationship between Renren Network usage was not significant. The correlation coefficients for Facebook show a weak association. 4) *Privacy behavior statement* was positively associated with Facebook usage, while its relationship between Renren Network usage was not significant. The correlation coefficients for Facebook show a weak association.

Differences observed in correlations of variables of interest for two SNSs indicated that for Facebook users, usage of SNS have wider range of effects. Their usage of SNS was closely associated with their motivation of *contact with a broader range of people*, which means that their Facebook use helped them create and maintain
interactions with people from different economic, educational and cultural backgrounds. In addition, the more they used Facebook, the more they would adopt privacy settings to protect their privacy, and they would become more considerate about online privacy-related behaviors, although they would also disclose more personal information. But these effects were not significant for Renren Network users, and their willingness to reach out a hand to help others in community would increase if they used the Renren Network more intensely.

Implications

The results of this present study show the impact of SNS usage on users’ social capital and awareness of privacy issues. This knowledge may help develop more awareness about online environments and may help develop culturally targeted awareness development interventions in the future.

The findings from the study suggest that people lacking bridging social capital may be able to create new bridging social capital by getting involved in SNSs. It was also found that SNSs may provide effective channels for people to maintain and strengthen “strong ties” with family members and close friends. However, this study, together with some other studies (Ellison et al, 2007; Ellison et al 2011; Haythornthwaite, 2005), emphasized that people should not absolutely rely on using SNSs to create new bonding social capital, because bonding capital can be realized easier in real life environments than in online social networks. Meanwhile, intense usage of SNS could not possibly help users obtain emotional support from close friends and family members.
This study indicates that intense SNS users, especially Chinese ones, need to be more aware of online privacy risks. Education about online privacy is in urgent need, because there are still many participants who fail to have a correct understanding of potential risks online. Despite the fact that users know more about potential risks online, they should also pay more attention to their self-disclosure behavior online, because the information disclosed could not only be broadcasted improperly by friends, but also be used by third parties.

Besides, as users’ privacy awareness increases, the sites owners and third parties on sites should also be more aware of protecting and respecting their users’ privacy. One solution, for example, could include that information users publish on sites could not be easily tracked by searching engines, or even sold to third parties, without permission from the affected users. Currently, for most users, the only way that they can protect the information they have posted on sites was to change privacy settings (Joinson et al., 2011), and it is necessary for the websites to develop additional tools to restrict the spread of information.

Additionally, the differences found in SNS usage between Facebook and Renren Network also suggest that these websites should learn from users’ online behaviors and introduce new functions. For example, because there is no significant relationship between Renren Network usage and range of students’ friend circles, if Renren Network developed new web applications that could set up a platform for users to make friends with other users from different backgrounds, the network could potentially attract more students, especially for students who want to make friends with others.
Future Research

Because this study only focused on college-age participants, studies could be done on users in different age groups to examine if a difference exists in motives for being involved in SNS and online behavior among different age groups.

Future studies could also focus on specific kinds of social capital and discuss the implications in more detail. For example, studies about the effects of SNS usage on bridging social capital could compare online and offline “loose” ties to test if SNS usage could strengthen bridging social capital both ways. Studies of bonding social capital could examine if the SNS usage affects their “ties” with family members and close friends differently, which can test the previous assumption that heavy Internet usage might decrease connection with family members (Kraut et al., 1998) and thus have a negative effect on bonding social capital.

Another possible area of future research could focus on non-SNS participants to have a control group that is not influenced by SNS. Some participants quit the survey because they didn’t have SNS accounts or they deactivated their accounts. Qualitative studies could be conducted with students who claim to have deactivated their SNSs accounts or who don’t have SNS accounts to find potential risks of and discomfort with using SNSs and to examine if their social capital and privacy awareness differ from that of other students.

Limitations

The primary limitation of this study is the use of a snowball sampling method that created a non-representative sample and may have also induced a bias within the sample.
It was also unclear whether participants from U.S. colleges were all native Americans or whether some international students, especially Chinese students overseas, also participated in this survey. If too many Chinese students in U.S. colleges participated this survey, the results, especially the independent sample $t$-test, would be affected.

Another limitation is the choice of SNSs for the study. Among various SNSs, this study chose Facebook and Renren Network as examples to measure the effects of SNS usage on social capital and privacy awareness. However, as new SNSs are launched rapidly, instead of restricting themselves to only one website, students might choose some other websites, such as Twitter and Instagram in the U.S. and Sina Weibo in China. Thus, if participants of this study that achieved high levels of social capital and privacy awareness do not use Facebook or Renren Network, this study not only could not calculate the usage of other SNSs, but also might classify those participants as “low level of SNS usage”.

Three questionnaires adopted were not a perfect choice for this study, which can be demonstrated in the following aspects: Firstly, as translation work was required for designing the online survey for Chinese students, some questions could not be easily translated. For example, in the question “if I needed an emergency loan of $500, I know someone I can turn to”, the Chinese version of the survey translated 500 U.S. Dollars to 500 RMB, based on the purchasing power parity in 2013. But it is not a very good decision, if taking the rate, real living standard, and GDP in China into consideration. Secondly, some questions may not work properly in China, such as questions related to race. In 2014, Han Chinese occupy over 90 percent of all the citizens in China, while the
other 55 ethnic groups are the real minority group, with less than 10 percent of the whole population (China population, 2014). In U.S., Caucasians are the majority of the population (72.4 percent), while other races take up almost 30 percent of the whole population (United States population, 2014). This indicates a higher possibility for U.S. citizens to meet and communicate with people from different races. Thirdly, the questionnaire about social capital adopted in this study failed to make a clear distinction between online friends and real world friends. This means that it remained unclear whether observed effects of SNS usage on social capital were directly caused by SNS usage or only indirectly reflected in SNS usage while being generated elsewhere.

Conclusion

Based on a quantitative analysis, this study explored the effects of intensity of SNS usage on users’ social capital (both bonding and bridging) and privacy awareness. Differences between users of Facebook and Renren Network were also examined in intensity of SNS usage and its relationship to students’ social capital and privacy awareness. Results indicated that the usage of SNSs was positively associated with users’ social capital (both bridging and partially bonding) and privacy awareness. A known “privacy paradox”, intense users are disclosing more information online despite their knowledge of privacy risks, was confirmed in this study. Significant differences were found in the intensity of SNS usage and bridging social capital between the users of Facebook and Renren Network. Facebook users use SNS more intensely, and have more bridging social capital. Facebook users also know more about privacy but disclose more personal information online.
SNS usage patterns are changing because of new technologies, especially the creation of mobile APPs. Mobile communication applications, such as Facebook, Instant Messages, Twitter, Renren Network, Sina Weibo in China offer new and convenient communication channels for users to surf SNSs and the Internet almost any time they want. New ways of communication provided by mobile phones and their recent messaging apps, such as Snapchat, Nimbuzz, Safe Gallery, or KeepSafe, make these devices the leading tool for quick and casual interpersonal communication (Bohmer, Hecht, Schoning, Kruger, & Bauer, 2011). It is more likely that the overall time that users spend on SNS may increase because of increasing frequencies of smaller time fractions spent on APPs, whenever users want.

As usage of SNS increase people’s bridging social capital, concerns may come up about whether bonding social capital could be negatively affected. To a large extent, people may be more interested in bonding than in bridging social capital (Chu & Choi, 2010), and future evaluations of SNSs should re-consider if the obsession with SNSs would lead to an alienation between users and their family members. Besides, a loss of bonding social capital in China has already taken place partially because of the one child-policy and the increasing divorce rate in China (Chu & Choi, 2010; Ur & Wang, 2013). Both increase children’s feelings of loneness and many of them may refer to various online forums and social media to fill this void. Spending time online has become a common way to compensate for what they have lost in family relationships. But it is uncertain whether their engagement online has actually helped in achieving their goal, because bonding social capital is hard to generate online (Chan & Cheng, 2004).
Increasing privacy invasions are on the rise in both China and the United States, which in some cases have prompted users to deactivate or delete their SNS accounts (Baumer, et al., 2013). Invasion of privacy and surveillance originate not only from official government agencies, these invasions also come from and are closely tied to commercial interests. Anything users have posted online since they first came to SNS sites will be collected and used for commercial reasons, usually without users noticing or even knowing about it. But many users still accept this reality, continuing to use SNSs and to disclose their personal information, as shown in this study.

In conclusion, on one hand there are rapid technological changes that are shaping the new media environment, while on the other hand, different social, political, cultural, and economic factors are also influencing the way individuals connect to society. These shifts may also influence the expectations individuals have of society and of the media platforms that have now become an inseparable part of most peoples’ everyday lives. In the present media environment, where media companies possess highly effective ways of tracking individuals and their behaviors, and have been consistently working on ways to monetize this information, the expectation of privacy protection is almost antiquated and is thus is going to be one of the critical issues of our future. As Internet penetration increases around the world and the new media environment becomes more pervasive and diverse, understanding of ways in which individual’s expectations and the nature of the society are changing may become a very important tool to address present and future conflict and concerns.
REFERENCES


http://www.pewinternet.org/2013/02/05/coming-and-going-on-facebook/#fn-82-1

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renren


*Journal of Internet Commerce, 1*(2), 2002.

*Information & Management, 47*(2), 115-123.


Title of Research:
Effects of Social Network Sites on Social Capital and Awareness of Privacy: A Study of Chinese and U.S. College Students’ Usage of SNS.

Researchers:
Tianyi Sun

You are being asked to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to participate in this study. Completion and return of this survey implies your consent to use of data for research purposes. If you like, you may print a copy of this document to take with you.

Explanation of Study:
As social networks have become very popular across the world, the effects of social networks are receiving increasing degree of attention.

This study focuses on students in both United States and China and aims at exploring the effects of Social Network Sites on social capital and sense of privacy. The study will also attempt to analyze similarities and differences between users of Facebook and Chinese Social network website RenRen on variables of interest.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire with questions related to your Internet use behavior, awareness of privacy issues and also the relationship with your friends. Questions about basic information, like gender, year in school, will also be included in the questionnaire.

You can participate in this study if you are 18 years or older in age. The questionnaire will approximately take you about 5 to 8 minutes to finish.

Risks and Discomforts:

No risks or discomforts are anticipated.

Benefits:

Result of this study can help develop understanding of the impact of the usage of Facebook and Renren (China) on users’ social capital and awareness of privacy issues. Besides, analyzing similarities and differences between users of Facebook and Renren can also help develop more awareness on the effect of cultural difference in future. And as a participant, you can also achieve a final report of the survey if you want.
Confidentiality and Records:

You are invited to fill out the questionnaire online without registering with your personal information ahead. Some private information about yourself, such as your name and contact number, is not required in this study. Thus, your study information will be kept confidential.

Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:

* Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;

* Representatives of Ohio University (OU), including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at OU;

Contact Information:

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Tianyi Sun at 740-590-6902 and ts056911@ohio.edu.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Jo Ellen Sherow, Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (740)593-0664.

Questionnaire

Demographic Information
1. Gender:
   - Male
   - Female

2. Year in school
   - Freshman
   - Sophomore
   - Junior
   - Senior

3. Facebook members
   - Yes
   - No

4. Currently in
   - United States.
   - China

Facebook (or Renren Network) Intensity (Please respond to the following items by selecting an option from the 5-point scale. Unless provided, response categories ranged from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.)

5. About how many total Facebook friends do you have at school or elsewhere?
   - 10 or less,
   - 11–50,
   - 51–100,
6. In the past week, on average, approximately how many minutes per day have you spent on Facebook?
   - less than 10 min,
   - 10–30 min,
   - 31–60 min,
   - 1–2 hours,
   - 2–3 hours,
   - more than 3 hours

7. Facebook has become part of my daily routine
   1  2  3  4  5

8. I feel out of touch when I haven’t logged onto Facebook for a while
   1  2  3  4  5

Social Capital

*Linkage to external assets/Information diffusion*

9. Based on the people I interact with, it is easy for me to hear about new job
opportunities.

1 2 3 4 5

10. Based on the people I interact with, it is easy for me to hear about the best new places to shop.

1 2 3 4 5

11. The people I interact with help me to stay in touch with what is new and popular.

1 2 3 4 5

*Outward-looking*

12. Interacting with people makes me interested in things that happen outside of my town.

1 2 3 4 5

13. Interacting with people makes me want to try new things.

1 2 3 4 5

14. Interacting with people makes me interested in what people unlike me are thinking.

1 2 3 4 5

15. Talking with people makes me curious about other places in the world.

1 2 3 4 5

*Contact with a broader range of people*

16. I interact with people who are from different economic backgrounds than me.

1 2 3 4 5

17. I interact with people who are from different educational backgrounds than me.

1 2 3 4 5
18. I interact with people from different cultural backgrounds.
   1 2 3 4 5

_A view of oneself as part of a broader group_

19. Interacting with people makes me feel like part of a larger community.
   1 2 3 4 5

20. Interacting with people makes me feel connected to the bigger picture.
   1 2 3 4 5

21. Interacting with people reminds me that everyone in the world is connected.
   1 2 3 4 5

_Diffuse reciprocity with a broader community_

22. People help each other out.
   1 2 3 4 5

23. I am happy to help out a stranger.
   1 2 3 4 5

24. I won’t help out someone unless I get something for it.
   1 2 3 4 5

25. I am willing to spend time to support general community activities.
   1 2 3 4 5

_Emotional support_

26. There are several people I trust to help solve my problems.
   1 2 3 4 5

27. There is someone I can turn to for advice about making very important decisions.
28. There is NO ONE that I feel comfortable talking to about intimate personal problems.

29. When I feel lonely, there are several people I can talk to.

Access to scarce or limited resources

30. If I needed an emergency loan of $500, I know someone I can turn to.

31. The people I interact with would put their reputation on the line for me.

32. The people I interact with would be good job references for me.

33. The people I interact with would share their last dollar with me.

34. The people I interact with could get me into an exclusive organization.

Out-group antagonism

35. I do not trust people who are a different race than me.

36. I do not trust people who are part of other generations.
Privacy Awareness

*Information Disclosure on Facebook (Yes or No)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37. Partner’s name</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Relationship status</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Family members</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Political views</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Likes/interests</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. School</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Hometown</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. E-mail</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Date of birth</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Privacy Settings and Policy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46. Changed settings?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Privacy settings are currently set at</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Only myself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Friends only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Everyone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Confidence in settings</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Policy read?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Comprehension on facets of privacy (Agree or Disagree)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50. Your name and profile picture on Facebook are NOT protected under the privacy settings</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
51. Whenever you share information on Facebook you can control exactly who can see it  
   Agree  Disagree

52. Information set to ‘everyone’ on Facebook in the privacy settings is available to everyone on the internet not just Facebook users  
   Agree  Disagree

53. Using the games and applications means you are making your information available to someone other than Facebook  
   Agree  Disagree

54. Your friends’ activities on Facebook can result in your information being made available to other companies and websites  
   Agree  Disagree

55. Facebook shares information with third parties  
   Agree  Disagree

Online Privacy Behavior Statement.

56. I am cautious in what I say and do on Facebook
   
   1  2  3  4  5

57. I don’t think about privacy issues when online
   
   1  2  3  4  5

58. I trust Facebook with my information
   
   1  2  3  4  5

59. I trust my Facebook friends with my information
   
   1  2  3  4  5

60. I trust other Facebook users with my information
   
   1  2  3  4  5
61. It is my responsibility to protect my information on Facebook

1 2 3 4 5

62. It is Facebook’s responsibility to protect my information on Facebook

1 2 3 4 5

That’s all. Thank you.

BILINGUAL VERSION OF THE SURVEY (ENGLISH AND CHINESE)

Title of Research:

研究题目：

Effects of Social Network Sites on Social Capital and Awareness of Privacy: A Study of Chinese and U.S. College Students’ Usage of SNS.

社交网络对社会资本以及隐私意识的影响——有关中美两国大学生社交网络使用情况的调查研究。

Researchers: Tianyi Sun

研究者：孙天怡
You are being asked to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to participate in this study. Completion and return of this survey implies your consent to use of data for research purposes. If you like, you may print a copy of this document to take with you.

Explanation of Study

As social networks have become very popular across the world, the effects of social networks are receiving increasing degree of attention.

This study focuses on students in both United States and China and aims at exploring the effects of Social Network Sites on social capital and sense of privacy. The study will also
attempt to analyze similarities and differences between users of Facebook and Chinese Social network website RenRen on variables of interest.

该研究的研究主体是中美两国大学生，旨在研究社交网络对社会资本与隐私意识的影响。研究同时也会从多方面分析中美两国大学生在脸书以及人人网的使用情况的异同。

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire with questions related to your Internet use behavior, awareness of privacy issues and also the relationship with your friends. Questions about basic information, like gender, year in school, will also be included in the questionnaire.

如果您同意参加此项调查，您将回答一份问卷调查，内容涉及网络使用情况、隐私意识以及与朋友的关系等。同时，几项有关被调查者的隐私问题，如性别、在校年级等，也会出现在问卷中。

You can participate in this study if you are 18 years or older in age. The questionnaire will approximately take you about 5 to 8 minutes to finish.

参加此问卷调查需年满 18 岁，完成问卷需 5 至 8 分钟。

Risks and Discomforts

风险与不适

No risks or discomforts are anticipated.

没有风险或不适
Benefits
收益

Result of this study can help develop understanding of the impact of the usage of Facebook and Renren (China) on users’ social capital and awareness of privacy issues. 该研究可以让被调查者了解社交网络人人网和脸书对社交网络和隐私意识的影响。

Besides, analyzing similarities and differences between users of Facebook and Renren can also help develop more awareness on the effect of cultural difference in future. 此外，研究中美两国学生使用社交网络的异同也可让被调查者了解文化差异的影响。

And as a participant, you can also achieve a final report of the survey if you want. 同时，被调查者也可获得一份该研究的最终报告。

Confidentiality and Records
保密和结果

You are invited to fill out the questionnaire online without registering with your personal information ahead. Some private information about yourself, such as your name and contact number, is not required in this study. Thus, your study information will be kept confidential.

您不需事先填写个人信息便可在线参加问卷调查，您不需填写姓名、联系方式等相关隐私问题。因此所有信息将完全保密。
Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:

此外，尽管调查者会努力保护问卷中涉及的个人信息，但以下人员仍可接触相关信息:

* Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;

联邦机构，如保护被调查者的人类研究保护办公室。

* Representatives of Ohio University (OU), including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at OU;

俄亥俄大学相关人员，如监督俄亥俄大学的调查研究的机构审查委员会。

Contact Information

联系方式

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Tianyi Sun at 740-590-6902 and ts056911@ohio.edu.

如果您有任何问题，请联系孙天怡，联系方式 740-590-6902 或 ts056911@ohio.edu

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Jo Ellen Sherow, Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (740)593-0664.

如有问卷参与的权利等方面问题，请咨询俄亥俄大学研究主任 Jo Ellen Sherow，(740)593-0664。
Questionnaire

Demographic Information 基本信息

1. Gender: 性别
   - Male 男
   - Female 女

2. Year in school 在校年级
   - Freshman 大一
   - Sophomore 大二
   - Junior 大三
   - Senior 大四

3. Facebook members 是不是人人网用户
   - Yes 是
   - No 否

4. Currently in 目前居住在
   - United States 美国
   - China 中国

Facebook (or Renren Network) Intensity 人人网使用情况(Please respond to the following items by selecting an option from the 5-point scale. Unless provided, response
categories ranged from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. 请从以下5个级别中选择一个选项。除非有特殊说明，否则答案选项1-5代表认同程度，1十分反对，2比较反对，3中立，4比较赞同，5十分赞同。)

5. About how many total Facebook friends do you have at school or elsewhere? 人人网好友数
   - 少于10人,
   - 11–50,
   - 51–100,
   - 101–150,
   - 151–200,
   - 201–250,
   - 251–300,
   - 301–400,
   - 多于400

6. In the past week, on average, approximately how many minutes per day have you spent on Facebook? 过去一周中，平均每天使用人人网的时间
   - 少于10分钟,
   - 10–30分钟,
   - 31–60分钟,
   - 1–2小时,
   - 2–3小时,
7. Facebook has become part of my daily routine 我每天都会登陆人人网

8. I feel out of touch when I haven’t logged onto Facebook for a while. 我只要一段时间没登人人网就会感觉“与世隔绝”

Social Capital 社会资本

Linkage to external assets/Information diffusion 信息获取

9. Based on the people I interact with, it is easy for me to hear about new job opportunities. 我现在的朋友圈可以给我提供新的工作信息

10. Based on the people I interact with, it is easy for me to hear about the best new places to shop. 我现在的朋友圈可以给我提供新的购物信息

11. The people I interact with help me to stay in touch with what is new and popular. 我现在的朋友圈可以让我接触新鲜时尚事物

Outward-looking 与外界联系
12. Interacting with people makes me interested in things that happen outside of my town. 与朋友交流，会让我对外面的世界很感兴趣

13. Interacting with people makes me want to try new things. 与朋友交流，会让我很想尝试新事物

14. Interacting with people makes me interested in what people unlike me are thinking. 与朋友交流，会让我很想知道不喜欢我的人在想什么

15. Talking with people makes me curious about other places in the world. 与朋友交流，会让我对世界大事很感兴趣

Contact with a broader range of people 朋友圈的背景

16. I interact with people who are from different economic backgrounds than me. 我会跟与我有不同经济背景的人做朋友

17. I interact with people who are from different educational backgrounds than me. 我会跟与我有不同教育背景的人做朋友

18. I interact with people from different cultural backgrounds. 我会跟与我有不同文化背景的人做朋友
A view of oneself as part of a broader group

19. Interacting with people makes me feel like part of a larger community. 与人交往会让我感觉自己属于一个更大的环境

20. Interacting with people makes me feel connected to the bigger picture. 与人交往会让我感觉自己与更大的局势联系起来

21. Interacting with people reminds me that everyone in the world is connected. 与人交往会让我感觉世界上的每一个人都联系起来

Diffuse reciprocity with a broader community

22. People help each other out. 大家会互相帮助

23. I am happy to help out a stranger. 我很乐意帮助陌生人

24. I won’t help out someone unless I get something for it. 除非有回报，不然我不会帮助别人

25. I am willing to spend time to support general community activities. 我愿意花时间支持这个大环境中的一些社会活动
Emotional support 情感支持

26. There are several people I trust to help solve my problems. 有些人值得我信赖，帮我解决难题

27. There is someone I can turn to for advice about making very important decisions. 有些人值得我信赖，会在我做重要决策的时候为我提供建议

28. There is NO ONE that I feel comfortable talking to about intimate personal problems. 目前，没有人会让我觉得很放心去跟TA讲私密的问题

29. When I feel lonely, there are several people I can talk to. 在我觉得孤独的时候，我会找到朋友跟我聊天

Access to scarce or limited resources 获取稀缺资源

30. If I needed an emergency loan of $500, I know someone I can turn to. 如果我亟需500元，会有人帮我的

31. The people I interact with would put their reputation on the line for me. 我有朋友会为了我不顾他们的声誉
32. The people I interact with would be good job references for me. 我有朋友会在我求职的时候给面试官极力推荐我

1 2 3 4 5

33. The people I interact with would share their last dollar with me. 我有朋友，会在他只剩1块钱的时候，也能跟我一起分享

1 2 3 4 5

34. The people I interact with could get me into an exclusive organization. 我有朋友能帮助我加入一些难进的组织

1 2 3 4 5

*Out-group antagonism* 对不同背景人群的敌对意识

35. I do not trust people who are a different race than me. 对于其他种族的人，我不能十分信任

1 2 3 4 5

36. I do not trust people who are part of other generations. 对于不同年龄阶段的人，我不能十分信任

1 2 3 4 5

*Privacy Awareness* 隐私意识

*Information Disclosure on Facebook* 人人网个人信息公开情况 (Yes or No)

37. Partner’s name 男（女）朋友的姓名

1. Yes 2. No
38. Relationship status 感情状况 1. Yes  2. No
39. Family members 家庭成员 1. Yes  2. No
40. Political views 政治观点 1. Yes  2. No
41. Likes/interests 个人喜好 1. Yes  2. No
42. School 学校 1. Yes  2. No
43. Hometown 家乡 1. Yes  2. No
44. E-mail 电子邮箱 1. Yes  2. No
45. Date of birth 出生日期 1. Yes  2. No

Privacy Settings and Policy 隐私设置和隐私条款

46. Changed settings? 曾经修改过隐私设置吗？ 1. Yes  2. No

47. Privacy settings are currently set at 个人主页公开程度
   1. Only myself 只有自己
   2. Friends Only 只限朋友
   3. Everyone 完全公开

48. Confidence in settings 对目前的设置很有信心？ 1. Yes  2. No

49. Policy read? 可曾读过隐私条约？ 1. Yes  2. No

Comprehension on facets of privacy 隐私意识判定 (Agree or Disagree)

50. Your name and profile picture on Facebook are NOT 1. Agree  2. Disagree
    protected under the privacy settings 人人网上，你的姓名
    以及头像是不受隐私设置的保护的
51. Whenever you share information on Facebook you can control exactly who can see it. 你能完全控制你的每一次主页更新的可见范围。

52. Information set to ‘everyone’ on Facebook in the privacy settings is available to everyone on the internet not just Facebook users. 隐私设定在“公众可见”意味着除了人人网用户，第三方也能看到你的个人信息。

53. Using the games and applications means you are making your information available to someone other than Facebook. 玩游戏或者一些应用意味着你自己把个人信息提供给第三方。

54. Your friends’ activities on Facebook can result in your information being made available to other companies and websites. 你的人人网好友的个人活动可能会把你的个人信息泄露给第三方。

55. Facebook shares information with third parties. 人人网会与第三方分享信息。

Online Privacy Behavior Statement. 有关网络隐私行为的个人态度

56. I am cautious in what I say and do on Facebook. 我很谨慎在人人网上的行为，发表言论、上传照片等。
57. I don’t think about privacy issues when online 在网上的时候，我从未考虑隐私问题
1 2 3 4 5

58. I trust Facebook with my information 我相信人人网会好好管理我的个人信息
1 2 3 4 5

59. I trust my Facebook friends with my information 我相信我的人人网好友会善待我的个人信息
1 2 3 4 5

60. I trust other Facebook users with my information 我相信其他人人网用户会善待我的个人信息
1 2 3 4 5

61. It is my responsibility to protect my information on Facebook 保护我的个人信息，
是我自己的责任
1 2 3 4 5

62. It is Facebook’s responsibility to protect my information on Facebook 保护我的个人信息，是人人网的责任
1 2 3 4 5

That’s all. Thank you. 问卷到此结束，再次感谢您！