UK – India Social Media Research Workshop

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Presentations

Keynote
Mr Bharadwaj Raghuraman, AVP, Cognizant

Social Media and its implications for Enterprise and Society **- an Introduction to the UK Research Agenda**
John Baird, RCUK Digital Economy Programme, Rebecca Fairbarin, ESRC

Social Media, Linked Data & The Context Question
Professor Pete Edwards, Aberdeen, dot.rural Digital Economy Hub Director (@pedwards63)

Sustainable Societies Network
 Dr Cathy Mulligan, Imperial (@API_Economics)

Digital Economy Research
Professor Derek Mcauley, Nottingham, Horizon Hub Director (@drdrmc)

Social media and the Enterprise: Network Analysis Perspective
Dr Jai Ganesh, Cognizant

Overview of research priorities in Social Media and Web Science
Professor Dame Wendy Hall, Web Science Trust/University of Southampton (@DameWendyDBE)

Privacy, Identity and Credibility in social media
Professor Ponnurangam Kumaraguru, IIIT, Delhi (@ponguru)

[**Organisational Network Analysis**](#)
Professor Suresh Bhagavatula, Professor Mukta Kulkarni, IIM Bangalore

[**Utilising Cloud Resources to Gain Knowledge from Social Media**](#)
Professor Gerard Parr, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland

[**Accelerating UK Digital Economy ideas to market**](#) **Collaborate - Unlock – Accelerate. An Introduction to the Connected Digital Economy Catapult ([@CDECatapult](#))**
Professor Derek Mcauley ([@drdrmc](#))

[**SOCIAM: Social machines**](#)
Professor David De Roure, University of Oxford ([@dder](#))

Open Data, Research and practical implications
Dr. Srinivas Padmanabhuni, Infosys ([@drsrinip](#))

[**Utilitarian aggregation of open data**](#)
Professor Srinath Srinivasa, IIIT Bangalore ([@srinaths](#))

[**Social Media, Big Data and New Business Models**](#)
Dr Richard Adams, Exeter ([@r_jadams](#))

[**Getting Social within the Organisation**](#)
Professor Shankar Venkatagiri, IIM Bangalore

Emerging themes

Following the presentations, the workshop broke down into smaller groups to discuss potential for future research collaborations.

1. **Creating a Web Observatory in Bangalore**

   Professor Dame Wendy Hall had explained the background to the Web Science Trust's mission, and rationale behind the growing network of web observatories around the world. They are a place to share open data on how the web is used, and for that data to be used and analysed by academics and industry, then returned to the observatory for others to use. We discussed the infrastructure necessary to create such an observatory in Bangalore, how it could be linked with the other observatories around the world and who could host it.

2. **Social machines into action**

   Professor David De Roure explained the concept of social machines (collective social processes resulting from the amalgam of individual action and coordination, mediated and enabled by the shared communication substrate of the Web). Many of the presentations highlighted examples of social machines (although they weren't always called this) becoming something outside of the web.

   For example, we heard about social networks effecting business change or supporting disabled people to find jobs, apps to crowd source information about the location of artwork, or massively open online course spontaneously spawning real-world local support groups. Other great examples included using digital tools to under pin a communities efforts to become more sustainable, Crowd sourcing a response to crop diseases, and changing business models of some large successful companies. This phenomenon of social machines, and

what makes them become social action or movements, is an important area for research.

3. **Crowd sourcing for disruption response**

Professor Pete Edwards talked through some of his group's work on a Twitter and travel disruption and multiple talks used data from social media during major weather events as case studies. Pete introduced some questions at the first day: how to define the provenance of data sourced from social media? Can provenance be harnessed to make judgments about the accuracy and veracity of this data, or make other useful analyses? These questions resurfaced throughout the workshop, alongside issues around how else veracity can be assessed (e.g. cross referencing). If data from social media is to be commercially useful, or inform our response to disruption (such as natural disasters or travel delays), answering these questions has got to be a priority.

4. **Online Trust and Privacy**

Professor PK had given an illuminating account of what information it is possible to gather from public sources on the web and, with tools, collate into some fairly detailed descriptions of individuals. You can see for yourself through his online tools: OCEAN, Twit-Digest, MultiOSN, SocialCaller.

From his, and others', talks it was clear that privacy is a fluid concept on the web, with different attitudes towards it existing in different communities and over time. The idea that people are less and less sensitive about privacy doesn't fit with what's been observed among young people in the UK, who are often accurately aware of their desire to hide things from their parents. We also heard about so of the trends behind the way people access the web (phones increasingly) and the infrastructure behind the internet and particularly big data – can privacy be designed into a device/system and to what extent is this about walls and security guards or software and trust in brands?

Of particular interest was what privacy concerns need to be addressed in order to be able to deliver public services through the web. This was felt to be particularly relevant in India, with projects such as Aadhaar coming through, set alongside social trends such as the high penetration of mobile devices, and relatively lower incidence of internet-connected computers.

How to work together

Alongside the thematic ideas for future work, some useful suggestions were made about how to work together. Professor Gerard Parr explained some of the elements of the IU-ATC project a great example of a UK-India research collaboration, perhaps one to emulate? It may also be possible to leverage the IU-ATC research in Cloud Systems, and related work through the ESRC's ADRCs, going forward in support of the follow-up actions from this workshop. Dr Richard Adams and Dr Cathy Mulligan also explained the flexibility in the Network+ (see NEMODE and Sustainable Societies) mode of funding and how this might be used to support some small scale research collaborations with the UK.

External meetings

Before and after the workshop, the UK delegates were able visit some of the companies and research institutes doing interesting work in the area of digital economy and social media. They included:
- Walmart Labs
- Wipro Technologies
- Centre for Infrastructure, Sustainable Transport and Urban Planning

- Robert Bosch Centre for Cyber Physical Systems
- Infosys
- Cognizant
- Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore
- Microsoft Research

The group also had the chance to meet with ICT start ups and SMEs from the Bangalore area at a reception hosted by UKTI's Inward Investment team.

Next steps

1. One major outcome was that IIIT-B would take forward the establishment of a Web Observatory in Bangalore, which is sure to be a great addition to the network. They'll be the nodal point but it will drawn in contributions and support from the wider community in Bangalore with Infosys and Cognizant both keen.

2. Connected to this, Several of the group were keen to hold a [Web Observatory Workshop](#) in Bangalore later this year, with others also interested in a wider event on social media and analytics. Rather than being another research discussion, this would be an opportunity for young researchers from the UK and India to get together for a week, carry our joint analysis of with big data sets about web use and show off what they can do. The emergence and use of social machines was felt to be a fertile are for that to consider.

3. Finally, ESRC and Cognizant will explore initiating a programme of PhD internships on social media analytics, so that ESRC funded PhD students could spend time in a commercial environment, benefitting from Cognizant's expertise and access to data.

4. Dr Richard Adams is already exploring potential to come back to Bangalore for a longer period of time, and to capture some of the exciting examples of innovative business models/research in the digital economy area on show in Bangalore. This will contribute to the NEMODE project which Richard coordinates.

Thanks

Thank you to all our presenters and participants, particularly those from the UK who flew a long way to come to Bangalore. Particular thanks to Dr Jai Ganesh, Cognizant, and Dr Rachel Tyrell, ESRC, for designing such a great programme and the International Institute of Information Technology, Bangalore (IIIT-B) for hosting. Finally, special mention should be made to the student volunteers from IIIT-B, Nisha Basia ([@nishabasia](#)), Tuli Kundu ([@TuliKundu14](#)) and friends, who kept everything running superbly.

Tom Wells ([@_tomwells](#))