

1-1-2007

Weblog effects on social capital

Seyed Mohammad Reza Vaezi
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/rtds>

Repository Citation

Vaezi, Seyed Mohammad Reza, "Weblog effects on social capital" (2007). *UNLV Retrospective Theses & Dissertations*. 2139.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.25669/tekp-ho4z>

This Thesis is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Scholarship@UNLV with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Thesis in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in UNLV Retrospective Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@unlv.edu.

WEBLOG EFFECTS ON SOCIAL CAPITAL

by

Seyed Mohammad Reza Vaezi

Bachelor of Science
Sharif University of Technology
2005

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

**Master of Science Degree in Management Information Systems
Department of Management Information Systems
College of Business**

**Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
May 2007**

UMI Number: 1443788

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 1443788

Copyright 2007 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346



Thesis Approval

The Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

April 11, 2007

The Thesis prepared by

Seyed Mohammad Reza Vaezi

Entitled

Weblog Effects on Social Capital

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science in Management Information Systems

Examination Committee Chair

Dean of the Graduate College

Examination Committee Member

Examination Committee Member

Graduate College Faculty Representative

ABSTRACT

Weblog Effects on Social Capital

by

Seyed Mohammad Reza Vaezi

Dr. Reza Torkzadeh
Professor of Management Information Systems
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Weblog is the newest and clearly one of the most influential computer mediated communication (CMC) tools. Growing body of literature about the weblog effects on education, marketing, journalism, and human resource management is a sign of importance and significant effects of weblogs. This rapidly growing communication tool is expected to have significant impact on the work life of the individual and organization. However, there is little research evidence as to the nature and extent of this impact. Using a sample of 326, this research examines the effects of weblogs on social capital and its components: social connections, trust, and reciprocity. Implications of these findings for research and practice are discussed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	4
Weblog.....	4
Social Capital.....	6
Trust and Reciprocity.....	9
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT	11
CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODS	15
Design	15
Testing The Model.....	19
CHAPTER 5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	24
CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION.....	30
APPENDIX.....	31
REFERENCES	36
VITA.....	39

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis advisor Professor Reza Torkzadeh for his precious advice, comments, and continuous supports. I would also like to thank Dr. Jerry Chang for his valuable comments and help. I would also like to thank my other committee members, Dr. Ken Peffers and Dr. Michael LaTour, for their help and support.

It has been an enjoyable project to work on and I have enjoyed working with and benefiting from my advisor and my committee members.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Blogging is a relatively new communication technology and as yet no empirical study has investigated its impact on the user's social capital and its related constructs such as networking and trust. Some companies use weblogs to provide internal teams with frequent project update or to deliver product support information to customers (Charlene, 2004). Some industry executives believe that blogging is a more effective means of communication with customers, suppliers, and employees. In short, it is claimed that weblog phenomenon is nothing short of a revolution. Furthermore, it is believed that weblog conversations build trust among users and that in turn improves business effectiveness (Scoble and Isreal, 2006).

The use of weblogs in education has had an increasing trend in recent years. In a blogging project in which elementary school students used weblogs to communicate with each other (Davis, 2006), weblogs proved to be very efficient in improving language skills – not only for non-native speakers but also for native speakers – and interaction between two groups of students. It has also been suggested that weblogs are a useful psychological and emotional support tool for students who are away from their countries, experience culture shock and homesickness, and lack the social support networks which benefit their home-based peers (Keegan, 2006).

Weblogs have been seen as powerful tool to facilitate hearing voices that may not have been heard in the absence of these tools in organizations and society. weblog can be seen to give the organizational voice (Silva et al. 2006) and society voice to employees and ordinary citizens. Silva suggests, “weblogs are created and read by individuals who share similar interests and who want to interact and communicate with like-minded people”.

In addition to the use of weblogs in business and industry, the use of weblog among general internet users has had an increasing trend in recent years. Approximately, 8 millions (7%) of 120 millions adult internet users in the United States have created a weblog by the end of 2004; weblog readership has been up 58%; from 17% in 2003 to 28% in 2004 (Rainie, 2005). According to Cahrlene (2004) young adults read weblogs three times more frequently than adults and they are nine time more likely to keep a weblog. These statistics show that in the near future we should expect a work force which is more familiar with weblog than the current work force is and they would interact with weblogs more often. Given the increasing use of weblogs, both by general internet users as well as company employees, there is a clear need in research and practice to empirically investigate this contention and examine the extent and nature of this impact on individuals and organizations.

Although there is some research about the risk and benefits of weblogs in marketing, journalism, human recourse management and education, there has been no research on the effects of weblog on the individual user or the society as a whole. The current study was designed to examine some of these important research questions. In this report, we will first present a review of the literature on weblog and social capital as well as the

relationship between the two. Next, we will describe the relationship model developed using this literature. Then, methodology, survey design and hypotheses are described followed by a section on results and discussion of findings. Finally, implications and limitations of the study are discussed and suggestions are offered for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter we review the literature on weblog, Social Capital. We also briefly review the literature on trust and reciprocity which are forming elements of social capital.

2-1. Weblog

Silva et al. (2006) defined weblog (also known as “blog”) as a self-publishing website which is updated regularly. Researches in journalism (Johnson and Kay, 2004) describe weblog as “diary style websites that generally offer observations and news listed chronologically on the site as well as commentary and recommended links, surged in popularity after the events of 9/11.” Human resource scholar Ross (2005) described weblog as an “informal online journal with chronological entries that are usually short and often includes news summaries and link to other sites”. Ross also suggests that weblog entries can be about anything from world events to how weblog owner morning coffee tasted. Furthermore, Smudde (2005) views weblogs as a personal website which contains its owner ideas and opinions as well as internet links. The community and collection of weblogs in cyberspace is named “blogosphere” (Smudde, 2005). According to wikipedia.com someone who maintains a weblog is called a “blogger”.

Depending on the context, researchers group weblogs differently. According to Smudde (2005) weblogs are categorized into four categories: (1) Personal weblogs which

belongs to an individual who wants to express his/her ideas, observations, suggestions, etc; (2) Topic or Industry weblogs which focus on issues related to a given subject area or industry; (3) Publication-based weblogs that foster dialog about subject of interest to the parent publication readers; and (4) Corporate weblogs which is defined as “hybrid of personal weblog”. These weblogs are fairly new and include the insights, assessments, commentary, and other discussions related to a single company.

From a human resource management prospective weblogs are also divided into another four types. First, Organizational weblogs which serve several purposes such as facilitating communication between managers and employees, hosting work group discussion, maintaining communication among employees, providing a forum for CEO, developing customer relations, and recruiting new employees. Second, Professional Interest weblogs which are about specific profession and discuss that profession related issues. Third, Personal Employee weblogs which are kept by individuals, independent of any organization, as means of self expression. Fourth, Hostile weblogs which are basically against a specific company (Ross, 2005).

Some Characteristics of weblogs make them unique and increasingly popular. Followings are some weblog features borrowed from Silva et al. (2006). The most prominent features of weblogs are their simplicity and low maintenance cost. Many weblog hosting services let individuals create a weblog with great simplicity free of charge. The high level of simplicity in both reading and creating a weblog allows participation of people with limited technical knowledge. Furthermore, because of the blogosphere culture in which bloggers often put links of other weblogs, news, etc, weblogs typically rank higher in the search engines. Also, weblogs, themselves, usually

have a powerful search feature that let people dig into their archive. A weblog can have more than one author with an indicator that relates any post to its respective author. This feature gives group of like-minded people the ability to maintain one single weblog. A recently added feature of weblogs is their use of RSS (Really Simple Syndication). Today, many bloggers use RSS feed service for their weblog. The RSS technology allows weblog users to read new weblog posts at the same time as a blogger publishes the post without browsing the web. The RSS feed can be read using an aggregator program (a program which collects RSS feed from different sources).

There are some risks associated with the use of weblogs. Employees may use weblogs to harm their company or they can waste their company resources using work-time reading and updating weblogs for non-business purposes (Silva et al. 2006). The other threat relates to taking advantage of weblogs as a source of documented information which can cause legal problems. This risk is particularly for bloggers who identify themselves as an employee of a specific company.

2-2. Social Capital

Similar to weblog, social capital is a new concept and as a result there is not a universally recognized definition for it yet (Pruijt, 2002). A similar concept to social capital first discussed by Pierre Bourdieu (as cited in Syrjanen and Kuutti, 2004) who introduced the concepts of cultural and intellectual capital. Examples of cultural capital include education, social networks, and social skills that one earned during a life time.

Putnam (2000), describe social capital concept by comparing it to physical capital and human capital as tools and training that improve individual productivity. He believes the

core idea of social capital theory is that social networks have value. To illustrate, imagine a screwdriver as means of physical capital or a college education as means of human capital, both can increase productivity of either a group of people or a person. Drawing on the definitions and examples of physical and human capital, Putnam concludes that social capital is the “connection among individuals – social networks- and the norms of reciprocity and the trustworthiness arise from them” (Putnam, 2000). Putnam divides social capital into two categories of “bridging” and “binding”. *Bridging* social capital refers to connections among groups and organizations through connections of their members. *Binding* social capital refers to connection among members of a social or organizational group. Typically, bridging social capital is associated with weak ties among people and binding social capital is associated with strong ties among people. It is argued that bridging social capital and inter-organizational links is more valuable than binding social capital because bridging social capital facilitates flow of information among groups and people that are disconnected. (Kavanaugh et al. 2005)

Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) believe social capital is jointly owned by a group of people in a relationship and define it as “the sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit”. They conclude that social capital is composed of “both the network and the assets that maybe mobilized through that network.” Further, Nahapiet and Ghoshal viewed social capital as a three dimensional asset and named those dimensions *structural*, *relational* and *cognitive*. They also suggest that these dimensions are highly correlated and difficult to consider separately in practice.

Huysman and Wulf suggest that “social capital refers to network ties of goodwill, mutual support, shared language, shared norms, social trust, and a sense of mutual obligation that people can draw from. It is understood as the glue that holds together social aggregates such as networks of personal relationships, communities, regions, or even whole nations.” Another argument by Blanchard (2004) states social capital as “any aspect of a group that facilitates the group’s interaction, benefiting both the group and its individual members”. Blanchard also believes that the most reliable and agreed upon components of social capital are the network of social relationship, the norms of behavior, and the trust among members. Social trust, social networks and established norms of mutuality are considered as major features of social capital by Kavanaugh et al. (2005). Moreover, Chapman (2004) believes that “fundamental features of social capital are networks, shared values, social trust, and norms of community”.

Social capital is about connections among people (Huysman and Wulf, 2004). The Internet has enabled socializing beyond the boundaries of local neighborhood, workplace, and family. The effect of Internet and Internet Mediated Communications on social capital has been the focus of much debate among academics in recent years. Wellman (2001) believes when computer networks such as the Internet help to link people, as well as machines, they become social networks. Syrjanen and Kuutti (2004) argue that information systems help formation of social capital by making the infrastructure for collective conversation, action, and interaction space which can facilitate creation of new knowledge. On the other hand, Blanchard (2004) believes that virtual communities (“groups of people who interact primarily through computer mediated communication and who identified with and have developed feelings of belonging and attachment to each

other”) do not increase social capital within face to face communities because they do not foster a network of face-to-face relationship.

Uslaner (2000) believes people perform everything on the Internet as they do in real life. They shop, get news, plan vacations, and most importantly talk with friends through instant messaging or email. He also suggests that “the Internet neither destroy nor creates social capital”. Quan-Hasse and Wellman (2004) describe three ways in which the Internet influences social capital. They state that the Internet may *transform*, *diminish*, or *supplement* social capital. Later, they conclude that in the short-term the Internet increases social capital rather than diminishing or transforming it. They also suggest that the Internet leads to new forms of social capital which can not be measured using current forms of measurement. They suggest researchers should develop new forms of measurements that complement existing ones and that help measuring full impact of internet on social capital.

2-3. Trust and Reciprocity

Base on the above description and definition of social capital we understood that trust and norm of reciprocity (or simply known as reciprocity) are elements of forming social capital. In this section we will provide a brief literature review on these concepts. A recent definition described trust as “the extent to which one is willing to ascribe good intentions to and have confidence in the words and actions of other people” as cited by Dietz and Hartog (2006). Mayer et al. (1995) describe the difference between trust and trustworthiness. Trust is an action that the trustor takes while trustworthiness is a quality that trustee has. They add that a party may consider the other party as trustworthy but

he/she may not indeed trust the second party. Also they define trust as “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control the other party”. A more recent definition of trust is offered as follows: “trust is a psychological state compromising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another” (Rousseau et al. 1998).

The definition of reciprocity according to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary is “the practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit”. As cited by Guth et al. (1998) reciprocity is phrased as responding in kind and it means that someone’s behavior is reciprocated later on by somebody else. The party who moves second will reciprocate the first party who trusted him/her the first time. Gouldner (1960) argues that norm of reciprocity is a universal norm and it is consisted of two interrelated rule. First, “people should help those who have helped them”. Second, “people should not injure those who have helped them”. It has been argued by Sanders and Schyns (2006) that the norm of reciprocity acts as initiator and stabilizer of social interactions among exchange parties. They, also, mentioned three aspects of the reciprocity norm and believed that these three aspects – *equivalence*, *immediacy*, and *interest* - have a determinant effect on norm of reciprocity.

In this chapter we reviewed literatures on social capital and the relationship between social capital and the Internet. We also had a brief review of two elements of forming of social capital, trust and reciprocity. In the following chapters we will describe our research development procedures as well as research methods, results and discussion.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

Because weblog and blogging are relatively new concepts, there are different definitions for them depending on the context they are used. As stated before, different authors divide weblogs into different types depending on the context of their study. In the current study, we use a general definition of weblog as well as a general categorization for our research model. The most general description of weblog, also known as 'blog' reads as follows. A weblog is an informal online dairy with chronological entries that are typically short and often include personal opinions, news summaries, and links to other sites and weblogs. Weblogs often feature a comment section which visitors can write comments reacting to the author's content (Ross, 2005; Donovan and Lee, 2006). Weblog posts can contain pictures and/or videos to support the text and a post can be pictures and/or videos supported by a few lines of text.

In general, a weblog user can recognize different types of weblogs. A web site that complies with the general definition of weblog can be a Photoblog, Videoblog (also known as Vblog), Organizational blog, or simply a general weblog which can contain anything ranging from simple text to metadata. Photo and video blogs are respectively dedicated to post photos and videos in each post. These photos and videos may accompany with a few lines of text to describe or support them. Organizational blogs are directly associated with a specific organization or entity. This kind of weblog often has

more than one author. Authors are usually employees or associates of an organization. Also, these weblogs clearly declare themselves to be a part of the organization they are associated with such as Dell Company weblog. The rest has been called weblog as they comply with the general definition of weblogs. These weblogs do not refer to themselves as photo, video, or organizational blog even though they may have some posts containing videos, photos, or something else related to an organization.

However, in our research we divide the family of weblogs into two broad groups. They are either '*general*' or '*specific*'. General weblogs are mostly diaries, experiences, insights, or poems of the person or people who keep them. Specific weblogs are mostly about a special interest of the owner or owners such as politics, economics, finance, etc. It does not matter who owns a weblog or what type it is. The owner can be a person or a group of people and the weblog itself can be a Videoblog, a Photoblog, or simply a general weblog. All the weblog types that have been discussed earlier – except organizational weblog - can fall into the general weblogs category as long as they do not declare themselves, by their owners, as a special interest weblog, an organization weblog, or they do not discuss a special issue for a long period of time.

Individuals interact with weblogs differently. Some people own a weblog, others are only weblog reader, and yet others read and post their comments. Moreover, the frequency of these interactions differs in individuals. The level of interaction that each individual has with blogosphere defines the weblog use.

Social connections refer to any kind of connection that individuals make to socialize. Connections can be face-to-face, via phone, through email, through internet chat rooms

and via weblogs. The authors believe that increase in weblog use not only increases connections through weblogs but also it increases other kind of social connections. Thus:

Hypothesis 1: weblog use will increase social connections.

We have identified components of social capital based on Putnam's (2000) definition of social capital that is a widely recognized definition of social capital by scholars in this domain. Putnam suggests that network, norm of reciprocity and trust are elements of forming social capital. He also believes connection among people can create norm of reciprocity and trust among them. Putnam (1995) suggests that based on the social capital theory the more we connect with other people, the more we trust them and vice versa. However, in their attempt to examine this statement by Putnam, Calibourn and Martin (2000) only found limited evidence supporting the idea that belonging to a group makes individuals more trusting. Also, as stated by Kavanaugh et al. (2005) "social networks and groups help to build trust among members". They believe that trust among a community member will increase as people communicate more and get to know each other better. Thus:

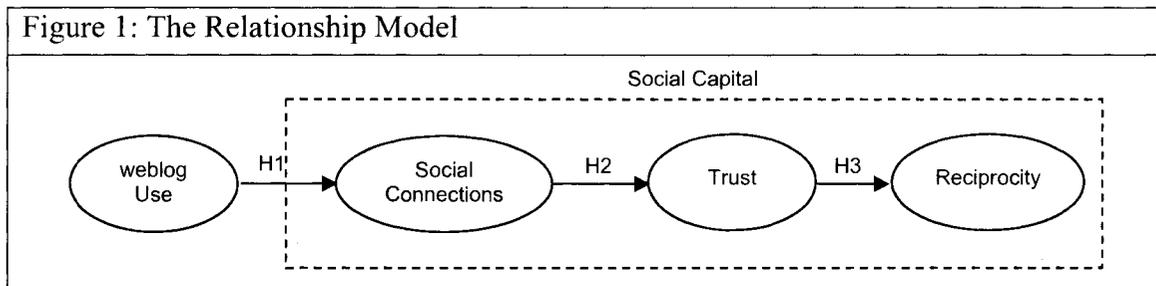
Hypothesis 2: An increase in social connection among weblog users will lead to an increase in trust among them.

Relying on the literature on trust and reciprocity, Berg et al. (1995) implicitly argue that people reciprocate to keep a trust or simply because they were trusted. Given the

literature on trust and reciprocity described earlier, one can expect that reciprocity proceeds with an initial trust. Thus:

Hypothesis 3: An increase in trust will lead to an increase in norm of reciprocity among weblog users.

Therefore, our research model states that weblog use will increase connections among users – social connections – and this will lead them to trust each other more or initiate trusting each other. Also, trust among users is expected to enhance reciprocity. Finally, this process chain is expected to ultimately increase the social capital among weblog users. Figure 1 depicts this relationship model.



CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODS

In this chapter we describe the methodology that we used to prove our hypotheses as well as the design procedure that of our research.

4-1. Design

In order to test the model we developed an online survey to be conducted among weblog users. It is suggested that survey questionnaires are useful in capturing quantitative data in the form of self-reported traits, attitudes, opinions, and behaviors (Kavabaugh et al. 2005). A review of related literature was conducted to make sure that a comprehensive list of items was included in survey questionnaire to measure dimensions of social capital and weblog use. Notable works in sociology and behavioral science (Putnam, 2000; Wellman et al. 2001; Stone, 2001; Onyx, 2000; Calibourn and Martin, 2000), marketing researches (Lang, 2005; Burger, 2005), human resource management (Ross, 2005), public relations (Smudde, 2005), and journalism and media (Johnson and Kay, 2004) were reviewed. This literature, especially studies of behavioral science and journalism influenced design of our survey. Drawing on this literature review, we generated a 54-item questionnaire (see Appendix) to measure the perceived impacts of weblogs use on social capital. The survey used a combination of 5-point Likert-scale, binary, and descriptive questions and includes measures for weblog use, social

connectedness and trust. It also includes questions to help us understand the influence of weblogs on diversity and work life.

We measure weblog use by asking each respondent about his or her frequency of interaction with weblogs, the fact that whether he/she owns a weblog, and the fact that whether he or she actively interacts with blogosphere by posting comments on weblogs posts. To measure social connection and trust among people we borrowed and modified measurement items from the literature on social capital as well as journalism and media. Specifically, works of Putnam (2000), Onyx and Bullen (2000), and Johnson and Kay (2004) contributed to the development of our measures for trust and social connections.

To pilot test this survey questionnaire, it was sent out to 10 bloggers and weblog readers in both categories of '*general*' and '*specific*'. The intent of this pilot test was to ensure that the language (English) was conventional and easy to understand by general Internet users and to assess whether it captured important aspects of blogging. Next, we submitted the survey questionnaire with the research proposal to social and behavioral sciences committee of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at UNLV for review and approval. Feedback and revisions followed and the survey instrument was approved on January 17th 2007.

Since this survey was to be administered online, we conducted a vendor selection process. The main question at this time was to decide whether or not to use the free service that UNLV provides; UNLV provides a basic service with introductory graphic capabilities and limited flexibility of design to users. The advantage of UNLV service was that we could use the UNLV domain name with original UNLV logo that could induce a sense of trust in participants that this study is purely an academic study with no

direct benefit for any business. We finally decided against the use of UNLV tool because of its design limitations. We felt these limitations may hamper response rate because we could not design a user friendly survey.

Thus, we searched for commercial vendors and used a bench mark approach to evaluate them. The goal was to find a vendor with the minimum cost and maximum level of service and reliability. In the search for the online vendor we came across the [QuestonPro.Com](#). This company provided us with a full access service for six months free of charge in exchange for putting their link on the researcher's website and providing them with the research abstract and the right to use it. They also wanted permission to use our questionnaire template in future. The service looked quite reliable and outstanding because they had highly ranked universities and companies (Harvard University, Stanford University and Intel Corporation) on their list of clients expressing high level of satisfaction with their service. Also, this service allowed us to put the UNLV logo on all pages of our online questionnaire with minimal amount of their advertisement.

To announce the start of the survey, we first asked 10 bloggers to put the announcement of our survey in their weblogs. We also started posting comments randomly on weblogs announcing our study. We used approximately 200 randomly selected (English) weblogs to post these comments. We also had unexpected help. In one case a blogger liked our study very much and she posted the announcement directly to her weblog. Later, we promoted our study by sending an email to *ISWorld* list server. The target population for this study was adult bloggers.

In a period of 5 weeks, 1377 people visited our survey web page, 598 started the survey and 346 people completed it - a response rate of 57.86%. Twenty incomplete responds out of 346 were discarded.

Out of 326 usable responses, 51.5% were male and 45.7% were female and 2.8% did not identify. Most respondents (68.1%) were between ages 18 to 35. About half the respondents (49.1%) had graduate degrees followed by those who had bachelor degrees (28.5%). Our sample consisted of 36.8% White Americans followed by 34.7% non-Americans. A total of 69.9% of respondents said they had their own weblog and all of them were weblog readers as well. Most respondents (58.3%) tend to read weblogs daily followed by weekly and more than once a week. Of those respondents who owned a weblog 18.7% told us they update their weblogs weekly followed by daily (17.8%) and more than once a week (17.5%). See Table 1 for detailed statistics on respondents.

4-2. Testing The Model

To test our model, we used Partial Least Squares (PLS), a structural equation modeling tool that utilizes a component-based approach to estimation, to test our model. PLS is component-based statistical software which uses a least squares estimation procedure, allowing the flexibility to represent both formative and reflective latent constructs, while placing minimal demands on measurement scales, sample size, and distributional assumptions (Chin, 1998).

The model was evaluated by using PLS to examine internal consistency reliability and convergent and discriminant validity. Internal consistency reliability, which is similar to Cronbach's alpha, was part of normal PLS output. Having an internal consistency of

Table 1: Detail Respondents Characteristics		
	Frequency	Percent
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	168	51.5
Female	149	45.7
<i>Age</i>		
18 to 25	107	32.8
26 to 35	108	33.1
36 to 45	60	18.4
45 to 65	38	11.7
65+	4	1.2
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
White	120	36.8
African-American	5	1.5
Hispanic	5	1.5
Asian	70	21.5
Non-American	113	34.7
<i>Education</i>		
High School Diploma	46	14.1
Associate Degree	19	5.8
Bachelor Degree	93	28.5
Graduate Degree	160	49.1
<i>weblog Use</i>		
weblog Owners	228	69.9
weblog Readers	326	100.0
Daily weblog Readers	190	58.3
Weekly weblog Readers	49	15.0
More than once a week weblog Readers	42	12.9
Monthly weblog Readers	20	3.1
More than once a month weblog Readers	6	1.8
Randomly weblog Readers	19	5.8

0.7 or higher is considered adequate (Agarwal and Karahanna, 2000). We assessed convergent and discriminant validity through applying two criteria. First, the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) by a construct from its indicators should exceed that of construct's correlation with other constructs and it should be greater than 0.7. Second, standardized item loadings should be greater than 0.7 and items should load more highly on constructs they are intended to measure than on other constructs

(Agarwal and Karahanna, 2000). For reflective measures, we compute cross loadings by calculating the correlations between latent variable component scores and the manifest indicators of other latent constructs (Chin, 1998; Yi and Davis, 2003).

We define the model as follow: items 5 to 8 are measures of weblog usage and therefore are defined as reflective measures of weblog Use. Items 22 to 25 are measures of Social Connection and items 39 to 50 are measures of Trust and are defined as reflective measure to their respective constructs as well. Items 26 to 29 and 32 and 33 ask respondents to indicate if they have participated in reciprocal behavior in connection to weblog. They are indicators rather than measures of reciprocity and therefore are defined as formative measures in PLS.

Initial analysis suggests several items with low loading. An iterative process was used to eliminate low loading items one by one until all item loadings are at acceptable level. For formative items, weight and statistical significance with t- statistics were evaluated to determine the contribution of individual item to the construct. Very low weight indicates no contribution to the construct and can be candidate for removal. Using these criteria, two items were removed for norm of reciprocity. We eliminated item 6 because it did not have any variation all respondents said they are weblog readers. Item 23a, 23b, 23d in social connection measure and 41 in trust measure were eliminated because of low loadings in their respective latent construct. Also, item 27 and 32 in formative items were eliminated because of their low contribution to the construct.

This analysis resulted in a model with three items for weblog Use, three items for Social Connection, eleven items for Trust, and three items for Reciprocity. Figure 2 depicts the model and its measures.

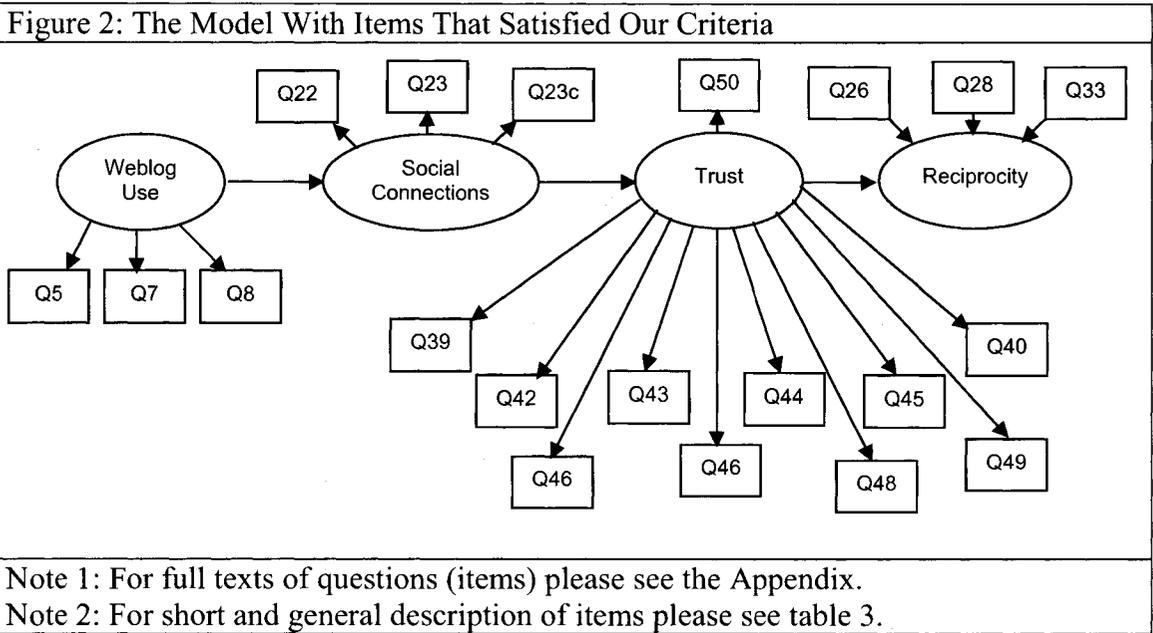


Table 2 demonstrates internal consistency reliabilities, convergent and discriminant validities, and correlations among latent constructs of the final model. The correlations in Table 2 were generated by PLS, and the rest were computed by feeding SPSS with the PLS outputs because this version of PLS does not perform these calculations.

Latent Constructs	ICR	weblog Use	Social Connection	Trust
weblog Use	<i>0.772</i>	<i>0.729</i>		
Social Connection	0.803	0.426	<i>0.765</i>	
Trust	0.943	0.084	0.183	<i>0.776</i>

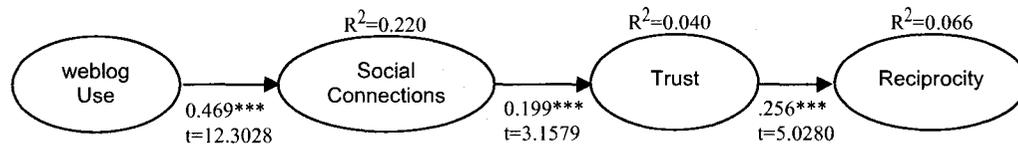
ICR: Internal Consistency Reliability (should be >0.7). Diagonal elements (in italic) are square root of Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Off-diagonal elements are correlations between latent constructs. For Convergent and discriminant validity, they should be greater than 0.7 and larger than off-diagonal correlations.

We used Microsoft Excel to read and edit the rescaled data matrix, which is the output of PLS measurement model run, into 326 rows (the number of respondents) and 20 columns (17 items plus three reflective factors). Pearson correlations were computed between the three factor scores and 17 rescaled item scores to obtain the factor structure matrix of loadings and cross-loadings shown in Table 3.

The internal consistency reliabilities were all greater than 0.7, exceeding minimal reliability criteria (Table 2). As a strong evidence of convergent and discriminant validity Table 2 shows that the square root of the average variance extracted for each construct was greater than 0.7 and greater than the correlation between that construct and other constructs. Also, the factor structure matrix (Table 3) shows that all items, except Q8 and Q23c, exhibited high loadings of greater than 0.7 on their respective constructs and no items loaded higher on non-primary constructs. In short, the self-report measurement instruments exhibited strong psychometric properties to support valid testing of major part of the proposed structural model.

The structural model and the hypothesis were tested by examining path coefficient which is similar to standardized beta weights in a regression analysis and their significance levels (Yi and Davis, 2003). As can be seen in Figure 3 all path coefficients are significant at 0.01 level and all are supported by t-statistics value greater than 2. This suggests our research model and hypothesis is supported by our data. Figure 3 summarizes model testing results.

Figure 3: PLS Test of Proposed Model



Note: Path Coefficient and statistics under the relationships

Table 3: Factor Loading and Cross-loading

	Weblog Use	Social Connection	Trust
weblog Use			
Q5 (own a weblog)	.718	.305	-.010
Q7 (post comments)	.775	.344	.074
Q8 (read frequency)	.693	.280	.121
Social Connection			
Q22 (belonging to a community)	.501	.798	.182
Q23 (more connectivity)	.299	.840	.138
Q23c (connecting via Internet chat)	.171	.675	.101
Trust			
Q39 (feeling safe)	.151	.213	.685
Q40 (trusting weblogs)	.100	.159	.830
Q42 (knowing the owner of weblog)	.010	.108	.744
Q43 (trusting weblogs over time)	.030	.145	.750
Q44 (trusting information on weblogs)	.092	.179	.830
Q45 (trusting most people)	.000	.116	.824
Q46 (most people are honest)	.010	.105	.820
Q47 (weblog independence)	.070	.174	.705
Q48 (use of weblog in evaluation of its owner)	.090	.084	.780
Q49 (evaluating people through weblogs)	.136	.183	.793
Q50 (evaluating based on knowledge)	.038	.111	.764

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this research was to investigate effects of weblogs on users' social capital. For this reason we developed a research model that examines direct impacts of weblogs on social connections as well as effects of social connections on trust and effects of trust on reciprocity. Based on this sample, the model was successful in explaining the nature of weblogs effect on social capital by explaining how weblog use influences social capital elements. All path coefficients were significant at the level of 0.01 and the t-statistics was greater than 2 for all of them. We have learned from this model that increase in weblog use will increase social connection and trust among users, in turn they will be more reciprocal. Further the findings clarify the distinct and important role that social connections plays on trust and reciprocity.

It has been argued that weblogs are created by people who share interests and who like to communicate with like-minded individuals (Silva et al. 2006). We examined this statement by running a Pearson correlation analysis between question 9 and question 12 of our survey questionnaire. Question 9 investigates weblogs readers' tendency to read about their issues of interest and question 12 investigates weblogs keepers' tendency to write about their issues of interest. The correlation between these two items is 0.425; is significant at the 0.01 level. This suggests that individuals who tend to read weblogs that

discuss their concerns and issues of interest tend to write about those issues as well and communicate with other like-minded people.

Items number 14 to 20 in our survey questionnaire try to assess the reason that an individual keeps a weblog. By running the factor analysis on these items we recognized two main reasons that described 66% of variance. We called the first factor the need for socializing ('need to socialize'); individuals keep a weblog to expand their network of friends and socialize. The second reason for keeping a weblog is individuals need to express ('need to express ideas') their ideas and to talk about their concerns. We also had a comment from a respondent who believes writing in a weblog is mostly a form of self-expression. Table 4 represents detailed factor loadings.

Table 4: Detailed Factor Loadings for Reasons to Keep a weblog	
	Loadings
<i>Factor 1</i>	
I keep a weblog to expand my network of friends.	0.875
I keep a weblog to socialize.	0.844
I keep a weblog because I want to get peers' attention.	0.736
I keep a weblog for entertainment.	0.591
<i>Factor 2</i>	
I keep a weblog to express my thoughts and ideas.	0.873
I keep a weblog because I enjoy writing.	0.798
I keep a weblog because I feel concerned about issues that I need to write about.	0.765

Interestingly, the majority of respondents (weblog users) were college graduates and about half of these users had graduate degrees. This suggests that weblog users are highly educated, and maybe influential, people in the society. The demographic data do not show any significant difference between the number of male and female respondents.

But it suggests that African-American and Hispanic people are far less active in blogosphere than their White-Americans pals.

The number of non-American participants was considerable in this study. This may reflect the nature of weblogs and the Internet which does not know geographic boundaries. Also, half of the bloggers who announced the start of this project were non-American which could greatly contribute to the number of non-American respondents.

We also found that a majority of weblog owners tend to frequently update their weblogs. Frequently updating weblogs is a key factor in weblog's popularity as suggested by Silva et al. 2006. They suggest that frequency of updating a weblog is directly related to its life cycle.

Weblog users are socially active people. About half of respondents (49.1%), helped to elaborate a special issue or concern in the blogosphere and 32.8% of them initiated elaboration of a special issue or concern. Also, 39.3% of respondents joined a campaign through weblogs.

A majority of weblog users stated that they do know in which weblog they can find their needed information. This suggests that weblog users are sophisticated internet users and they are pretty aware of the blogosphere.

About half of respondents (45%) stated that they have met other people through weblog and 12.6% stated that they dated people they have met through weblog. This shows that not only weblog users tend to communicate through weblogs but they tend to meet each other in the real world. Responses to the open ended question, "how many friends you have made through weblogs", range from zero to 100. Respondents also answered this question with statements such as "dozens", "a lot", "many", "numerous",

“too many to count”, and “several hundred”. Responses to another open ended question, “how many people you know through weblog”, range from zero to 200. Statements such as “about hundred”, “dozens”, “many”, “over 200”, “too many too count”, “several thousands” and some funny statements such as “can I count how many stars there are in the sky instead” and “Gosh – Dozens and Dozens” were also expressed for this question. Responses to the last open ended question, “how many people have you personally met through weblogs?” varies from zero to 100 and again includes statements such as “several thus far”, “more than 50”, and “too many to keep track of. Got a job because of blog”.

Majority of respondents (52.8%) stated that they have assisted other bloggers when their assistance was needed and 52.1% of respondents stated that they have been asked by other bloggers to provide assistance. This suggests that we have an established norm of reciprocity, which is an essential component of social capital, in bloggers communities.

We also received few comments about weblogs. Followings are some of the more interesting and useful ones. One respondent stated that “blogs have changed the way I work and socialize. I generally find everything, from current events (News) to cooking recipes through blogs or links to websites that were posted on blogs”. The other respondent stated that “I have owed many things from writing my personal weblog. I have become a 'web developing' teacher and a journalist by lessons I learned and experiences I got from blogging. So, I'm a big fan of weblogs, blogging and blogosphere. I believe that weblogs have changed many things on the internet and in the real world, specially in the world of media”. Another comment reads as “I believe that weblogs are an essential and valuable part of society. They allow people who would not normally

have a voice in American society in particular, to speak and be heard by others who have the same feelings, opinions, problems, experiences, etc.”. Other respondent said: “I think weblogs are a great way for people around the world to communicate and share information and ideas. I also find them to be therapeutic and mind-broadening”. Finally, one respondent stated that “The best thing about weblogs is bringing people together over a common interest. I have lots of friends, but many of them are not interested in talking about the merits and flaws of the Kyoto Protocol, for example. I learn a lot from bloggers and commenters I have come to know and trust”.

These quotes implicitly support our findings that weblog users are educated and sophisticated as well as they like to communicate more with other users. These quotes also suggests that weblog users value this phenomenon and they believe this revolutionary form of communication is very useful and powerful in term of being a voice for socially and politically weak members of our society.

Because we were inspired by work of Ross 2005, we put two items in our survey question to investigate effects of weblogs on professional lives of respondents. We found that 6.7% of respondents tried to hire someone based on what they have read on his/her weblog. Also, 12.3% of respondents stated that they received a job offer or invited to an interview because of their weblog. This is an example of how weblogs can be used in human resource management and suggests that weblogs can be a good resource for a recruiter to find his/her targets as well as a good marketing tool for those who are seeking new jobs.

Finally, as word of caution about our findings is appropriate. This study was limited in terms of the number of participants compared to the number of actual weblog users

although the sample was randomly selected and can be considered a fair representation of the weblog population. Another limitation of this study, which contributes directly to the first limitation, relates to the timeline for our data collection. With more time, the response rate for this study would have been higher and would increase the generalizability of these findings.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Weblogs provide a revolutionary way of communications via the Internet. There is a clear need for research to explore and examine impact of this technology on the individual, organization, and society. The exact nature of how weblogs can help us to promote our individual and organizational goals is still undiscovered and needs research. The current research contributes to this issue by examining how weblogs influence social capital and its forming elements.

The exploratory model examined in this study provides a useful beginning for further studies on the impact of weblogs on work life. This model can be used in measuring social capital in other societies rather than blogosphere. In this research we specifically investigate impacts of weblogs use on social connection and in turn on trust and norm of reciprocity in community of bloggers. We found a positive and significant correlation between weblog use and social connections as well as a positive and significant correlation between social connections and trust. We found that trust directly influences norm of reciprocity in weblog users. Results of this study suggest that weblog use can increase social capital in user groups.

APPENDIX

THE SURVEY

The effect of the Internet and internet mediated communications on social interactions has been the focus of much debate among academics in recent years. The objective of this voluntary survey is to measure the effects of weblog on social interactions and the individuals who interact regularly with weblogs. By participating, you will help research in areas of management information systems and sociology. We will protect your privacy and your responses will be confidential; only group data will be analyzed.

As you go through this survey you may see some words that may not be completely clear for you. Below are definitions for some of the more widely used key words:

Blogging: adding new material to or regularly updating a weblog.

Blogger: a person who owns a weblog.

Blogosphere: community or social network of weblogs.

For any question please feel free to contact the author at reza.vaezi@yahoo.com

Demographic Information:							
1	Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female				
2	Age:	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 26 to 35	<input type="checkbox"/> 36 to 45	<input type="checkbox"/> 46 to 65	<input type="checkbox"/> 65+
3	(If you are not American citizen or permanent resident Please Chose Non-American as your ethnicity)						
	Ethnicity:	<input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-American:	
4	Education:	<input type="checkbox"/> High school diploma	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Degree		
weblog Information:							
Please provide your answer for the following statements based on your blogging habits.							
5	I have my own weblog.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No				
6	I read others' weblogs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No				
7	I read others' weblogs and I frequently post comments on them.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No				
8	How often do you read weblogs?						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Daily	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/> More than once a week	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/> More than once a month	<input type="checkbox"/> Randomly	
Please circle the number that indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.							
		Strongly Disagree			Strongly agree		
9	I usually read and post my comments on weblogs that are about my special interests.	1	2	3	4	5	
10	I usually read and post my comments on weblogs that are about general issues and daily events.	1	2	3	4	5	
11	I usually read both general and special interest weblogs and post my comments on them.	1	2	3	4	5	
Please answer following questions if you have your own weblog, if you do not own a weblog please skip to question number 23.							
12	I usually write about special interests.	1	2	3	4	5	
13	I usually write about general issues and daily events.	1	2	3	4	5	
14	I keep a weblog because I want to get peers' attention.	1	2	3	4	5	
15	I keep a weblog for entertainment.	1	2	3	4	5	
16	I keep a weblog to expand my network of friends.	1	2	3	4	5	
17	I keep a weblog to socialize.	1	2	3	4	5	
18	I keep a weblog because I feel concerned about issues that I need to write about.	1	2	3	4	5	

19	I keep a weblog to express my thoughts and ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I keep a weblog because I enjoy writing.	1	2	3	4	5
21	How often do you update your weblog? <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a week <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a month <input type="checkbox"/> Randomly					
<p>Social connections:</p> <p>Please circle the number that indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Disagree Strongly agree</p>						
22	I feel that I belong to a community of bloggers.	1	2	3	4	5
23	I like to be in touch with other bloggers whom I read their weblogs, through channels other rather than weblog.	1	2	3	4	5
	a. I like to have a face-to-face connection.	1	2	3	4	5
	b. I like to be in touch over the phone.	1	2	3	4	5
	c. I like to chat with them via Internet.	1	2	3	4	5
	d. I like to be in touch via email.	1	2	3	4	5
24	If I disagree with other bloggers, I feel free to write about it.	1	2	3	4	5
25	I am willing to take actions to stop escalation of dispute between myself and other bloggers.	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Please answer following questions based on your experience and knowledge of weblog.</p>						
26	Have you ever helped to elaborate a special issue or concern in the blogosphere?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			
27	Have you ever initiated a special issue or concern in the blogosphere?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			
28	Have you ever joined a campaign through weblog?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			
29	When you need information about a topic, do you know which weblog you should read?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			
30	Have you ever met other people through weblog?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			
31	Have you ever dated someone you met through weblog?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			
32	Have you ever been asked by other bloggers for assistance?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			
33	Have you ever provide assistance to other	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			

	bloggers?					
34	Do you know about Deutsche Well International weblog Award – The Bobs contest?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	
35	Have you ever participated in Deutsche Well International weblog Award – The Bobs contest?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	
36	How many friends have you found through weblogs?	<input type="text"/>				
37	How many people do you know of through weblogs?	<input type="text"/>				
38	How many people have you personally met through weblogs?	<input type="text"/>				
Trust characteristics:						
The following statements are about how you trust and treat bloggers and weblogs. Please circle the number that best indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.						
		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
39	I feel safe to express my ideas in my weblog.	1	2	3	4	5
40	I believe that most weblogs can be trusted.	1	2	3	4	5
41	I would trust a weblog more if I personally know its writer.	1	2	3	4	5
42	I would trust a weblog more if I know its writer through others but not personally.	1	2	3	4	5
43	I would trust a weblog more if it has been updated regularly for a long time.	1	2	3	4	5
44	When I need information to make an important decision, I can trust information that I find on a weblog.	1	2	3	4	5
45	I believe that most people can be trusted.	1	2	3	4	5
46	I believe that most people are honest.	1	2	3	4	5
47	I think a weblog can be independent of the owner's associations and affiliations.	1	2	3	4	5
48	I think weblogs are useful in evaluating their owners.	1	2	3	4	5
49	I evaluate people through their weblog.	1	2	3	4	5
50	I evaluate bloggers based on my knowledge of the issues that they write about.	1	2	3	4	5
Diversity:						
Please circle the number that indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.						
		Strongly Disagree			Strongly agree	

51	I believe the anonymity of bloggers results in my prejudice-free judgment.	1	2	3	4	5
52	I believe reading weblogs of different interests is useful and enlightening.	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Work:</p> <p>Please answer the following question based on your personal experience.</p>						
53	Have you ever tried to hire someone based on what you have read on his/her weblog?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	
54	Have you ever received a job offer (or been invited to an interview) because of your weblog?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	

REFERENCES

- Agarwal R., and Karahanna E., (2000). Time flies when you're having fun: Cognitive absorption and beliefs about information technology usage. *MIS Quarterly*, 24, 4, pg. 665
- Becks A., Reichling T., and Wulf V., (2004). Expertise finding: approach to foster social capital. In Marleen H. & Volker W. (Eds.), *Social capital and information technology*. The MIT Press, Massachusetts
- Berg J., Dickhaut J., and McCabe K., (1995). Trust, Reciprocity, and Social History. *Games and Economic Behavior*, 10, 1, pg. 122
- Blanchard A., (2004). The effects of disperses virtual communities on face to face social capital. In Marleen H. & Volker W. (Eds.), *Social capital and information technology*. The MIT Press, Massachusetts
- Burger K., (2005). blogging for Dollars. *Insurance and technology*, 30, 3, pg. 8
- Calibourn M. P., and Martin P. S., (2000). Trusting and Joining? An empirical study of the reciprocal nature of social capital. *Political behavior*, 22, 4, pg. 267
- Chapman R., (2004). Pearls of wisdom: social capital building in informal learning environments. In Marleen H. & Volker W. (Eds.), *Social capital and information technology*. The MIT Press, Massachusetts
- Charlene L., (2004). blogging: bubble or big deal. *Forrester Research* retrieved on Jun 2005 at <http://www.forrester.com/Research/Document/Excerpt/0,7211,35000,00.html>
- Chin W. W., (1998). The partial least squares approach to structural equation modeling. In Gorge A. M. (Eds). *Modern Methods for Business Research*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ
- Davis P. A., (2006). Thinking and writing wrinkles bloggers. *Learning Technology Newsletter, A publication of IEEE Computer Society*, 8, 4, pg. 9
- Dietz G., and Hartog D. N.D., (2006). Measuring trust inside organizations. *personnel review*, 35, 5, pg. 557
- Donovan L. L., and Lee D. C., (2006). Realizing the potential of collective learning through blogs. *Learning Technology Newsletter, A publication of IEEE Computer Society*, 8, 4, pg. 25

- Gouldner A. W., (1960). The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement. *American Sociological review*, 25, 2, pg. 161
- Guth W., Klose W., Konigstein M., and Schwalbach J., (1998). An Experimental study of a Dynamic principal-agent relationship. *Managerial and Decision Economics*, 19, 4/5, pg. 37
- Huysman M., Wulf V., (2004). Social Capital and information technology: current debates and research. In Marleen H. & Volker W. (Eds.), *Social capital and information technology*. The MIT Press, Massachusetts
- Johnson T. J., and Kay B. K., (2004). Wag the blog: how reliance on traditional media and the internet influence credibility perceptions of weblogs among blog users. *Journalism and mass communication quarterly*, 81, 3, pg. 622
- Kavanaugh A. L., Reese D. D., Carroll J. M., and Rosson B., (2005). Weak ties in networked society. *The information society*, 21, 2, pg. 119
- Keegan H., (2006). blogging to enhance the support of international mobility students. *Learning Technology Newsletter, A publication of IEEE Computer Society*, 8, 4, pg. 23
- Lang E. M., (2005). Executive Summery. *Journal of Accountancy*, 199, 6, pg. 38
- Mayer R.C., Davis J.H., and Schoorman F.D. (1995). An integrative model of organizational trust. *Academy of Management Review*, 20, 3, pg. 709.
- Nahapiet J., and Ghoshal S., (1998). Social Capital, Intellectual Capital, and the organizational advantage. *Academy of Management. The Academy of Management Review*, 23, 2, pg. 242
- Onyx J., and Bullen P., (2000). Measuring social capital in five communities. *The journal of applied behavioral science*; 36, 1 pg. 23
- Pruijt H., (2002). Social capital and the equalizing potential of the internet. *Social science computer review*; 20, 2, pg. 109
- Putnam R., (1995). Tuning in, tuning out: the strange disappearance of social capital in America. *PS: Policy and Society*, 28, pg. 664
- Putnam R., (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster. Wills, Garry
- Quan-Hasse A., and Wellman B., (2004). How does the internet affect social capital. In Marleen H. & Volker W. (Eds.), *Social capital and information technology*. The MIT Press, Massachusetts

- Rainie L., (2005). The state of blogging. *Pew Internet and American Life project*. Retrieved on Sep 2005 at http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_blogging_data.pdf
- Ross W., (2005). what every human resource manager should know about web logs, *Advanced Management Journal*, 70, 3, pg. 4
- Rousseau D. M., Sitkin S. B., Burt R. S., and Camerer C., (1998). Not so different after all: a cross discipline view of trust. *Academy of Management Review*, 23, 3, pg. 393
- Sanders K., and Schyns B., (2006). Trust, Conflict and Cooperative behavior, Considering reciprocity within organizations, *Personnel Review*, 35, 5, pg. 508
- Scoble R., and Isreal S., (2006). *Naked Conversations: How blogs are Changing the Way Businesses Talk with Customers*, Hoboken, New jersey: John Wiley and Sons
- Silva L., Mousavidin E., and Goel L., (2006). weblogging: Implementing Communities of Practice. *Proceeding of Social Inclusion: Societal and Organizational Implications for Information Systems*, Limerick, Ireland, pg. 295
- Smudde P. M., (2005). blogging ethics and public relations: A proactive and dialogic approach. *Public Relations Quarterly*. 50, 3, pg. 34
- Syrjanen L., and Kuutti K., (2004). Trust, acceptance, and alignment: the role of it in redirecting a community. In Marleen H. & Volker W. (Eds.), *Social capital and information technology*. The MIT Press, Massachusetts
- Uslaner E. M., (2000). Social capital and the Net. *Association for computer machiner. Community of ACM*, 43, 12, pg. 60
- Wellman B., Quan Haase A., Witte J., and Hampton K., (2001). Does Internet increase, decrease, or supplement social capital?. *The American behavioral scientists*, 45, 3 pg. 436
- Wellman B., (2001). Computer networks as social networks, *Science*, 293, 5537, pg. 2031
- Yi Y. M., and Davis F. D., (2003). Developing and validating an observational model of computer software training and skill acquisition. *Information Systems Research*. 14, 2, pg. 146

VITA

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Seyed Mohammad Reza Vaezi

Local Address:

4386 S. Escondido St., Apt. 203
Las Vegas, NV, 89119

Home Address:

Hossienih Ali Ebn Mossa Reza
Robat Karim, Tehran, 37619
Iran

Degrees:

Bachelor of Science, Industrial Engineering, 2005
Sharif University of Technology, Tehran, Iran

Thesis Title: weblog Effects on Social Capital

Thesis Examination Committee:

Chairperson, Dr. Reza Torkzadeh, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Jerry Cha-Jan Chang, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Ken Peffers, Ph.D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Dr. Michael S. LaTour, Ph.D.