Global Social Media and Global Social Anthropology

www.ucl.ac.uk/global-social-media
Percentage of people who shared their social media passwords with family/friends.

- Brazil: 37%
- Chile (North): 20%
- China (Rural): 83%
- China (Industrial): 29%
- India (South): 73%
- Italy: 41%
- Trinidad: 53%
- Turkey (S.E): 55%
- England: 28%
### WHO set up your FIRST SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>myself</th>
<th>friends</th>
<th>parents</th>
<th>siblings</th>
<th>partner</th>
<th>children</th>
<th>other relatives</th>
<th>Internet Cafe worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile (North)</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (Rural)</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (Industrial)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India (South)</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey (S.E)</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DO YOU THINK...
You know MORE people due to SOCIAL MEDIA?

- Brazil (North) 27% (73%)
- Chile (Rural) 45% (55%)
- China (Industrial) 18% (82%)
- China (South) 11% (89%)
- India (South) 29% (71%)
- Italy 54% (46%)
- Trinidad 24% (76%)
- Turkey (S.E) 40% (60%)
- England 54% (46%)
AVERAGE NUMBER OF FRIENDS ON PRIMARY SOCIAL MEDIA

QQ in China, Facebook in all other sites

- England: 350
- Italy: 537
- Turkey (S.E.): 340
- China (Rural): 181
- China (Industrial): 325
- India (South): 361
- Trinidad: 674
- Chile (North): 529
- Brazil: 573
Polymedia

Choice of communication technology increases
Social and moral judgement increases

Time

Cost and barriers to access decreases

Communication tools are no longer dictated by access and cost, so people are judged on their choice of one particular media over another.

He broke up with me on WhatsApp...not even with a phone call!
“When I broke up with my ex, I posted emotional status updates on my QQ. This way my ex could see how I was suffering, without talking directly to him. But at the same time my family could see everything and they got worried. That’s why I moved my posts to WeChat, where my ex was but my family wasn’t.”

- Huang Ling, 19-year-old factory worker, South China
Traditional media was divided

- Public Broadcasting
- Private Communications

A bridge is created between public and private media with the rise of

**Social Media**

= 

**Scalable Sociality**

Social media has created a new type of media sociality

- We can now easily scale from:
  - The most private to the most public
  - The smallest group to the largest group
PRESENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

for 11-18 years old in schools in England

INSTAGRAM
where pupils welcome strangers who can appreciate their images.

FACEBOOK
where pupils interact with other groups such as family, work colleagues, neighbours.

TWITTER
The main platform for school banter.

WHATSAPP
often class groups, usually one of single sex where can discuss the other sex, and another that includes both sexes.

SNAPCHAT
shared only amongst a few trusted friends.
In both England and Trinidad we found that negative banter and arguments between school children migrated from the playground to BBM, then to Twitter in England and Facebook in Trinidad.

In our Brazilian and Indian field sites genres of content such as memes moved quickly from Orkut to Facebook, then to WhatsApp.
How the World Changed
Social Media

Miller, Costa, Haynes, McDonald, Nicol \- Escol,
Simanah, Spyer, Venkatraman, Wang

UCL Press
THE ENGLISH GOLDILOCKS

The English use scalable sociality to make sure that their relationships are neither too hot or too cold. They like relationships best when they are sort of grey, like the weather.
Oh nyyyyoowwwwwwww
He said maybe....
Instead, I choose vodka.

Vodka Diet
Lose 3 Days in 1 Week

I saw this and thought of you
This reminded me of you
Trinidad

England
Among English school pupils there are three main genres of selfie.

The ‘classic selfie’
Highly stylised for the right ‘look’, often posted on Instagram.

The ‘groupie’
On Facebook school pupils posted five times as many selfies showing friendship groups than individuals alone.

The ‘uglie’
A favoured mode on Snapchat, the best way to take an uglyie is point the phone upwards from below the chin.
Good karma

In our south Indian fieldsite, many people enhance their Karma with the good deed of sending positive or religious memes to their friends throughout the day.
You be lurking

Roger (23) from Trinidad has a reputation to maintain as being cool and laid back. But recently he found out that his girlfriend cheated on him with a friend. Roger didn’t want to reveal his feelings in front of everyone he knew and especially not on Facebook. But he knew his ex was checking his Facebook page so he shared this Kermit meme instead.
Paradise

Every day Francisco (30), in Chile, posts multiple memes to his Facebook profile. One meme shows Eve explaining to Adam that since they don’t have any clothes, food, or hospitals, they must be in that paradise called Chile. This is typical of the way Northern Chileans make fun of their own marginality as opposed to people in Santiago, the capital.
“Offline I am only allowed to spend time with my family and one childhood friend. Online I send up to 500 messages a day to my secret boyfriend and have friends all over Turkey and Europe.”
- Zehra, 21 years old, Southeast Turkey.
Cici (17, South China) first heard the word ‘privacy’ in a TV soap opera. To her, it sounded very fashionable and modern. In her dormitory four girls slept together in two beds. In the factory she shared a room with eight girls. “At night, everyone talks with their boyfriends on the phone, it’s as noisy as the food market...there are no secrets at all because you can always hear each other and see each other.” Cici started to message more on QQ rather than talking on the phone with her boyfriend. This was her first experience of the kind of privacy she had heard about on TV.
In our Brazilian and Trinidadian field sites people often post photos of themselves in ‘high class’ settings such as at a gym or swimming pool, but this does not translate to enhanced social standing offline.
Low income people may now have smartphones that can do everything that rich people’s phones can do. But in our Indian and Brazilian fieldsites this didn’t make people any more likely to ‘friend’ their domestic workers.
Website
www.ucl.ac.uk/why-we-post
Explore our discoveries, stories from the fieldsites, and over 100 films on our website.

Free online course
The Anthropology of Social Media is a 5-week e-course on the uses and consequences of social media for people around the world.

Let us teach your students for free!

11 open access books
All of our research is published as free open access volumes by UCL Press.
THANKS

@DannyAnth