Psychology and Social Networks

Name:

Institution:

This article presents psychology as a science regarding its hypothesis testing, predictability, empirical evidence, and its analysis of human thought and behavior through theory and psychological methods. The article applies the network theory to examine people’s emotions within a semantic network. In support of the network theory, the study carried out a quadratic assignment experiment procedure whose results revealed significant shared connection between system supporting and goal sharing. These findings manifest the article’s hypothesis which states that systems have some actions independently involved with goals. The researchers in the article were also objective considering that they held unbiased views during their investigation. All these aspects of the article present psychology as a science of thought and behavior.

The article highlights on the topic of networking in social arenas, and what influences these social networks. I decided to focus on this topic because I wanted to understand what situations or processes influence social networks. People are different regarding the quality and quantity of social relationships, and for them to form a social network that enhances their interaction and communication, there must be influences behind them. This article provides a broad analysis into network theory to explain how influences, such as emotional contagion, goal attainment, and performance determine social networks. Following this article, I found that people don’t form social networks for no reasons; however, they always have in mind a purpose of achieving a specific goal, learning from one another, or to enhance their performance.

This article presents also taxonomy of professional roles in a social network. The first role is goal striving, which is the implicit notion of purposeful pursuant of goals. Psychology professionals strive to achieve specific goals in their social networks, such as learning and improving performance. After setting goals, professionals have a role to strive to achieve them. Another role of professionals is system support, which ensures the attainment of day-to-day operations of an organization. Professionals offer system support in a social network following the skills and aptitudes of a network of peers and colleagues. In a social network, not all participants will agree on the same decisions. Professionals also have a role to participate in system negating to influence the outcome of decisions. This allows for a team to examine critically their decisions to ensure success. These roles apply to professionals in psychology and other fields because they all have social networks, which integrate goal pursuit and motivation to map their role behaviors in a social network.

This article also presents the social exchange theory, which posits that people’s behaviors are as a result of interaction between two parties where the cost-benefit analysis determine the risks and benefits they gain from exchanging behaviors. Social exchange network offers a theoretical background for social network research. When studying social networks and its influences, social exchange theory helps to understand the contributions and inducements of every individual in the network. It is in the valuing of the benefits and risks of social relationships that people choose to form a social network. This theory is of particular interest because in understanding social networks, one must know their influences, and social exchange theory offers a significant aspect of the motivations behind forming a professional network. People join social networks because they will benefit from significantly through learning, improved performance, and emotional well-being.

Reference

Westaby, J., Pfaff, D., & Redding, N. (2014). Psychology and social networks: A dynamic network theory perspective. *American Psychologist*, *69*(3), 269-284. doi: 10.1037/a0036106