Do rich teens get richer? Facebook use and the link between offline and online social capital among Palestinian youth in Israel

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## Sample

The study population consisted of 567 respondents representing Palestinian adolescents in
Israel. The sample was randomly selected and included students in the private and public
Arab high schools in Israel. In the sample, the respondents’ ages ranged from 15 to 18 years old (N = 567), with a mean age of 16.06 years (SD = 0.94). As to gender, 64.4% were girls and 35.6% were boys.

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Stepping up awareness and empowerment

# Abstract

Studies have shown that using social networking sites contributes to
social capital. This study investigated the association between
specific features of Facebook and online social capital. Two
contrasting hypothesis were tested. The first posits that the
rich get richer, meaning that the creation of social capital online
reflects the stock of offline resources already available. In contrast,
the compensation hypothesis argues that disadvantaged ethnic
minorities are more likely to use social media to compensate for
their lack of social capital offline. We tested these two theories
among a representative sample of Palestinian teenagers (N = 567).
While we found no gender differences in the use of Facebook’s
features, our results highlight the positive correlation between the
use of active and passive communication features and perceived
social capital online. Moreover, the results support the rich-get richer
model; in that, even among this socially disadvantaged
group, the youngsters who already had a store of social capital
offline benefitted more from using Facebook.

# Outcome

First, the authers demonstrated a significant positive relationship between active and passive
communication on Facebook and perceived bridging social capital online. we established that passive communication contributes to bridging social capital online. These results suggest that Palestinian young people use Facebook’s features to strengthen their ties and obtain support from their online contacts. Regarding the positive relationship between passive communication and online perceived bonding
social capital, we suggest that this kind of communication, which includes viewing other people’s profiles, visiting social pages, and participating in groups, may contribute to a sense of constant and frequent connection with close ties, thus increasing the perceived bonding social capital online. One important result of our study is that the benefits of using active and passive communication on Facebook hold even after controlling for the existing stock of offline social capital. Thus, Facebook use has an independent and additive positive effect on social capital