Understanding social media use for work
Content, causes, and consequences
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Chapter 2

The chapter is under review as: Van Zoonen, W. & Treem, J. W. (2017). The role of Organizational Identification and work motivation in explaining social media use. 

*Internet Research*

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The role of Organizational Identification and work motivation in explaining social media use.

Abstract

Technological advancements are continuously changing and reshaping work environments. This study takes a multi-method approach to advance our understanding of social media use for work and explores the role of pride, respect, organizational identification and the desire to succeed. Drawing on identification literature this study proposes a framework to explore the mechanisms that may drive the publication of work-related information on public social media. This study combines survey data from 430 employees with a content analysis of 38,124 tweets sent from their personal Twitter account. The results indicate that respect is strongly associated with organizational identification and the desire to succeed which in turn are related to two distinct types of work related content i.e., organizational information sharing and professional information sharing, respectively. Conversely, the findings signal that how individuals feel in relation to the groups of which they are members influences their work-related online activities. Keywords: Organizational Identification; Desire to Succeed; Pride and Respect; Social Media; Multi-Method Approach.
Introduction

Recently, scholars have noted that individual participation on personal social media platforms includes active communication by working professionals (Bucher, Fieseler, & Suphan, 2013; Del Bosque, 2013; Lefthoriotis & Giannakos, 2014; Moqbel, Nevo, Kock, 2013; Ollier-Malaterre, Rothbard, & Berg, 2013; van Zoonen, van der Meer, & Verhoeven, 2014; Van Zoonen, Verhoeven, & Vliegenthart, 2016; Walton & Rice, 2013). For instance, a recent study found that eight in every ten employees with a personal Twitter account used this account to share work-related information (van Zoonen et al., 2016). Another study found that two out of three employees use social media for work (Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014). Though scholarship has noted the increased intersection of social media use and professional life, little is known about the specific nature of this activity or its antecedents. Given that the use of social media by workers is associated with a number of potential social consequences for individuals including job performance (Charoensukmongkol, 2014; Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014; Moqbel et al., 2013) and the development of social capital in organizations (Fulk & Yuan, 2013; Steinfield, DiMicco, Ellison, & Lampe, 2009) it is important to develop a better understanding of the correlates and potential drivers of personal social media accounts for work.

We focus on employees’ use of personal social media accounts for two reasons. First, the public nature of this communication means it is potentially visible to a broad and diverse audience beyond the individual’s organization. Second, personal social media use is a context in which individuals are likely to have more control over the nature of participation relative to intra-organizational social media use, where management can shape what technology is accessible. Because social media content is often visible beyond an individual’s personal network, it serves as a useful channel for employees to share their knowledge or opinions with a broad audience (Marwick & boyd, 2011). By content analyzing employees’ tweets sent from their personal Twitter accounts, and linking that content to survey responses, this study advances our understanding of a widespread yet poorly understood communication phenomenon in contemporary workplace practices. Investigating the use of personal social media for work-related communication will help researchers develop theories on the role of social media in organizational and professional contexts and aid managers and practitioners in forming a better understanding of the drivers of online work behaviors.
Use of Social Media for Work

Research on social media in the context of work has predominantly focused on the use of enterprise social media (ESM) (e.g., Gibbs, Razoidi, & Eisenberger, 2013; Ellison, Gibbs, & Weber, 2015; Majchrzak, Faraj, Kane & Azad, 2013; Leonardi, Huysman, & Steinfield, 2013; Treem & Leonardi, 2012). This work found that individuals had a variety of motives for using social media including networking with colleagues, facilitating career advancement, and promoting projects (DiMicco, Millen, Geyer, Dugan, Brownholtz, & Muller, 2008). Social media use enables ambient awareness – i.e., awareness of others’ communication – through which social media smoothen social interactions and knowledge transfer (Leonardi, 2015; Leonardi & Meyer, 2015). Because the context of this research is focused inside of organizations, questions are commonly focused on implications of social media use for information sharing or the development of workplace relationships (Fulk & Yuan, 2013; Majchrzak et al., 2013). Within internal contexts, workers make decisions about engaging in social media largely in terms of the anticipated perceptions and behaviors of other organizational members (Gibbs et al., 2013; Treem, 2015).

However, professionals also participate actively in public-facing social media that is visible to a broad and diverse audience beyond coworkers (Skeels & Grudin, 2009). In addition, individuals may use personal social media at work both for reasons related to personal enjoyment and for goal-oriented behaviors (Archambault & Grudin, 2012; Leftheriotis & Ginannakos, 2014). Additionally, it is common for individuals to have social networks on social media that include both personal and professional contacts (Fieseler, Meckel, & Ranzini, 2014; Stutzman & Hartzog, 2012). The communication by workers on public social media in terms of content, scope, and purpose is potentially expansive.

Making distinctions between the potential audience for activities on personal social media is important because when individuals communicate via social media they do so with an imagined audience in mind (Litt, 2012). This idea of potential viewership and the associated consequences largely influences the choices individuals make regarding what to share on social media and how visible to make this activity to others. In the context of ESM, individuals may not be aware of the exact audience of social media contributions, but they are aware that viewing is limited to other organizational members (Treem, 2015). However, when workers
participate on public social media, it is not as clear what the audience for the activity is, and therefore it is more difficult to discern what individuals hope to communicate and to whom.

Identification and Worker Social Media Use

Because social media offer the opportunity for individuals to perform identities to others (Hogan, 2010; van Dijck, 2013), social media use by workers may be related to identification processes (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). Indeed, studies of workers’ posts on Twitter found that employees were largely aware of the potential impact of their messages (Van Zoonen et al., 2014), and strategically used personal social media to engage in behaviors that supported their respective organizations’ goals (Dreher, 2014; van Zoonen et al., 2014). Additionally, individuals who experience stronger professional or organizational identities are more likely to combine social and work connections in social media networks (Fieseler et al., 2014). Though these findings signal a connection between a workers’ relationship to an organization and social media activity, the particular ways this manifests in active communication about work online is unknown.

Organizational identification refers to the extent to which workers define themselves in terms of their membership in and association with an organization (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). This identification is shaped and reinforced through the active communicative behaviors of workers (Scott, Corman, & Cheney, 1989), and workers may purposefully and strategically alter communication in efforts to elicit particular perceptions of organizational identification from different audiences (Scott & Stephens, 2009). Though organizational identification is commonly thought of as oriented toward a worker’s organization (i.e., the company or firm that employs him or her), workers may also express organizational identification with professional groups (Russo, 1998; Vough, 2012). This professional identification directs individuals’ attention to the values, actions, and communication of a group of professionals beyond individuals’ own specific organization (e.g., engineers, physicians). Hence, professional identification is related to an individual’s commitment to work regardless of a particular organizational membership (Morrow & Goetz, Jr., 1988).

Both organizational and professional identification are related to social identity theory; that is, the idea that individuals are motivated to participate actively in groups with which they identify strongly. Specifically, when individuals identify with a particular group, that is
manifest in feelings of pride for the group or respect from the group (Fuller, et al., 2006; Tyler & Blader, 2003). Pride reflects judgments about the status of the group (here, organization), also referred to as group prestige (Bartels, Pruyn, de Jong, Joustra, 2007; Fuller et al., 2006; Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Smidts, Pruyn, & van Riel, 2000). Respect, in turn, reflects judgments about an employee's status within the organization (Fuller et al., 2006; Tyler & Blader, 2001; 2003).

Given that feelings of pride and respect are related to organizational commitment (Bozeman & Ellemers, 2008), they may also be associated with individuals’ communication in support of organizational groups (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013; Tyler & Blader, 2001). Furthermore, employees who perceive respect within organizations are more likely to embed themselves in their respective organizations and exhibit gratitude (Ng, 2016). When individuals feel pride or respect in, or from, an organization they are likely to express their identification with that group in some active, visible manner.

Personal social media offers workers an opportunity to communicate aspects of organizational identification broadly. Therefore, employees with stronger social identities vis-à-vis their organization may be likely to share organization-related information on personal social media as a means of facilitating organizational success (Blader & Tyler, 2009). Publicly sharing information about the organization, its products, and services is a way to endorse the organization (van Zoonen et al., 2014). Therefore, we expect that when pride and respect produce organizational identification this may result in workers’ active communication on social media.

H1: a) Pride and b) respect are positively related to organizational identification, which is positively related to organizational information sharing on Twitter.

The desire to Succeed and Social Media Sharing.

Workers not only identify with organizations as units, they also recognize that status differences exist among individuals within organizations, and this influences their motivation to work in organizational contexts (Bunderson & Reagans, 2011; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). People intrinsically care about their relative standing in the organization (Ederer & Patacconi, 2010), and are dedicated to uphold or improve their standing (Goffman, 1959; Yun et al.,
Pride and respect are ways of hierarchically organizing groups. This provides incentives for employees to try to ascend to a higher position in their organization because more pride and respect affords greater material and psychological rewards and comfort (Bunderson & Reagans, 2011). In addition, pride and respect provide greater opportunities to satisfy other goals, such as autonomy, internal control, and power (Magee & Galinsky, 2008).

The presence of such hierarchies creates competition by workers for influence and recognition (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). It is also correlated with work motivation – i.e., the desire for workers to succeed professionally (Wegge et al., 2010). Moreover, pride and respect are often subjectively assessed by others and can be inflated or deflated by factors that are not necessarily indicative of true performance. This has important implications for the consequences of an increased desire to succeed that employees might experience as a result of perceived pride and respect evaluations. For instance, an employee might achieve an important accomplishment; however, if nobody notices or updates their level of respect for that employee, the status hierarchy will not change. Hence, even objective accomplishments are translated into status only through subjective interpretations and communication (Magee & Galinsky, 2008).

One way employees might be able to influence the subjective evaluations others form of them is by sharing their accomplishments and showcasing their expertise on social media (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013; Zhao & Rosson, 2009). Showing others what you know or what you have been doing and thinking allows others to develop more accurate perceptions (Zhao & Rosson, 2009). If the accomplishments are perceived positively, respect will increase. Conversely, sharing inappropriate information may lead to perceptions of incapability of upholding the norms and scripts required in a professional domain (Tyler & Blader, 2002). These behaviors can lead employees to inadvertently lose respect (Phillips, et al. 2009).

H2: a) Pride and b) respect are positively related to a desire to succeed, which is positively related to professional information sharing on Twitter.

Different Effects for Pride and for Respect

Though pride and respect are both representatives of employees' desire to be identified with higher status in a professional context, the two constructs are distinct in important ways. Specifically, pride reflects a categorical self, whereas respect reflects the reputational self.
Pride reflects employees’ evaluation of the status of the group (i.e. the organization), whereas, respect reflects employees’ evaluation of their status within the group (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2008; Tyler & Blader, 2003). A basic assumption in social identity theory is that people tend to think of themselves in terms of the groups or organization to which they belong (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). As a result of social identification processes employees may develop a sense of psychological attachment to their organization or profession, which can be an important predictor of their motivated behavior (Bartels et al., 2007; Boezeman & Ellemers, 2008; Ellemers, De Gilder, & Haslam, 2004; Smidts et al., 2001). Tyler and Blader argue that the extent to which employees derive pride and respect determines their membership to the group and sense of commitment (e.g., Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2001; 2002; 2003).

The term pride is used to refer to the notion that the organizations to which the employee belongs are valued positively by others. Conversely, respect refers to the belief that the self is valued as a member of the group (Tyler & Blader, 2003). In other words, pride and respect speak to different psychological drives; pride explicitly recognizes the employee as part of the group, whereas respect appeals to the values that are attributed to individual members of the group. As such we expect that communicatively, pride would likely be reflected in messages about the group (i.e., organization), whereas respect would be associated with messages directed at a broader status or ideal such as an employee’s identity as a professional beyond organizational boarders.

This distinction resonates with earlier findings associated with work-related tweets, classifying them as either socially oriented (organizational) or professionally oriented (knowledge and experience) (van Zoonen et al., 2016). Put differently, an employee experiencing pride from his organization will likely communicate positively about that specific organization, whereas, a worker seeking respect from similar others may communicate in a way to garner professional esteem. As such we assume that pride is more strongly related to organizational information sharing, whereas respect is more strongly related to professional information sharing.

H3a: Organizational information sharing is more strongly associated with pride than with respect.
H3b: Professional information sharing is more strongly associated with respect than with pride.

Methods

Sample and Procedure

This study examines employees' public Twitter accounts for several reasons. First, public Twitter accounts are frequently utilized to share work-related information (van Zoonen et al., 2016). Second, the unidirectional connections on Twitter make this channel accessible to a broad audience (not necessarily limited to an individual's own social and professional network). Third, information on Twitter is public-by-default and private-through-effort (Marwick & boyd, 2011), making Twitter an effective channel for open communication among employees, organizations and other stakeholders (Schultz, Utz, & Göritz, 2011). Hence, Twitter is viewed as an appropriate context for examining employees’ personal social media use for work.

Two forms of data were used for this study: survey responses, and respondents’ twitter posts. Survey responses were collected using a Dutch Internet-based questionnaire; participation was voluntary. Participants were asked to provide their Twitter account name and permit the analysis of their tweets. Email invitations were sent to 1,200 Dutch employees who worked on a part- or full-time basis in various organizations with at least 30 employees. Overall, 452 employees completed the questionnaire, and eight employees were excluded as they used an organizational Twitter account, and another 14 employees were excluded as they were a) unemployed at the time of this study or b) provided an invalid Twitter account name. This left a total of 430 employees who completed the survey and provided a valid Twitter account.

The response rate was 35.8%. Of these employees 65.6% were male and they worked 39.62 (SD = 10.07) hours on average per week. The average age of the respondents was 43.31 years (SD = 10.79), and 28.1% had an academic degree. This is in line with the Dutch workforce, in which the average age is 41.4 years old and 33% of the employees hold a higher educational degree. The sample also represents the Dutch workforce in terms of average working hours per week (34.4). The employees worked for different organizations in the following sectors: government/public administration (16.6%), education/science (12.1%),
The 430 employees from our sample had a total of 186,139 followers (M=495.20, SD = 1225.32) and they followed 162,410 other Twitter users (M=426.23, SD = 771.65). They had sent 1,536,920 tweets (M=3574.23, SD = 9295.49) since their account was created.

Measures

Independent variables

All latent constructs were measured with three to four indicators each, based on five-point Likert scales. The descriptive statistics, bivariate correlations and alpha coefficients are represented in Table 1. Table 2 lists all scale items and their respective factor loadings, standard errors and squared multiple correlations.

--- Tables 1 and 2 About Here ---

Pride was measured using three items previously employed by Riordan and Weatherly (1990) and Bartels et al. (2007). Pride taps into the status evaluations of the organization – e.g., does the organization have a good reputation among its customers. Respect was measured using four items derived from Fuller et al. (2009). Respect refers to the status evaluations of the employee – e.g., being a valued team member.

The desire to succeed was measured using four items derived from Desrochers and Dahir (2000) and reflects the importance employees attribute to being successful in their work (Boswell & Olson-Buchanan, 2007). Organizational identification was tapped using Meal and Ashforth’s (1992) scale including four items such as “I usually refer to ‘we’ rather than ‘they’ when I talk about this organization.”

Dependent variable – tweets

Manual content analysis. Work-related tweets were identified by content analyzing employees’ Twitter timelines. Job statements on Twitter were cross-referenced with other social media accounts (i.e., LinkedIn and Facebook, when existing) to more accurately determine an individual’s job and organization. This way we coded for job type and organization.
After receiving eight hours of coder training, four coders were randomly assigned to users and coded their tweets chronologically. All tweets were categorized, as outlined by van Zoonen et al. (2016), into one of five categories. Two categories comprise professional information sharing, namely; a) industry related content, and b) work-related activities. Three categories comprise organization-related information sharing: c) organization news, d) employee-public communication, and e) persuasive communication (see Table 3 for examples). Each respondent’s 100 most recent tweets were coded on the five categories (1 = presence; 0 = absence). The dependent variables in our analysis are comprised of the relative sum of positives (1 = presence). If respondents had not sent 100 tweets yet, we used all available tweets. A total of 38,124 tweets were coded for the 430 employees.

Reliability of the coding procedure was assessed using a randomly selected double-coded subsample of 11.3% (n = 4,309) of the tweets (Lacy & Riffle 1996; Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken 2002); Krippendorf’s Alpha and percent agreement statistics are shown in Table 3. Some of the KALPHA coefficients are relatively low, however, this is due to the skewed distribution of the binary variables. The percent agreement for these variables is at least 97 percent in all cases, establishing appropriate reliability to proceed with analysis. Four trained coders coded all the tweets to analyze the contents relevant to this study.

Analysis

We employed structural equation modeling (SEM, using AMOS) to test our hypotheses. We present both incremental and absolute fit indices to gauge the model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Two incremental fit indices were used: The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), these model fit indices have a threshold of > .90 (Kline, 2011). Two absolute fit indices were examined: a standardized version of the root mean squared residual (SRMR) and the root mean square of approximation (RMSEA). A SRMR ≤ .08 is considered to indicate good model fit, whereas a RMSEA value ≤ .05 is defined as a close fit (Kline, 2011).

We extracted 5,000 bootstrap samples from the data to estimate model parameters and standard errors and to calculate parameters’ confidence intervals (Kline, 2011). The confidence intervals are used for comparison of the regression weights of indirect pathways (i.e., contrasting effects). Contrasting effects were calculated to determine which paths should be
given statistical priority – e.g., the indirect path between respect and professional information sharing through a desire to succeed or an alternative indirect effect linking pride to professional information sharing through the desire to succeed.

Results

Content Analysis

This study describes two types of work-related tweets: professional tweets – tweets that display employees' knowledge and expertise about their industry and work – and organizational tweets – e.g., organizational news, information about products and services. Notably, 14,917 tweets (36.2%) of the 38,124 tweets analyzed here were professional (N = 9,044) or organizational (N = 5,873). Although an in-depth discussion of non-work related tweets is beyond the scope of this article, most of these tweets appear to be related to television programs, sports games, and service encounters (mostly with public transportation companies and mobile service providers) these users had as customers.

Professional tweets. Of the 9,044 professional tweets 5,647 tweets could be labeled industry-related, exemplified by a police officer who tweeted about collective labor agreements: "#CLApolice five #Sundays extra work on a yearly basis, paid #breaks are canceled. So #drawbacks." This information refers beyond organizational boundaries and applies to all within the profession or industry, this is 14.8% of all tweets. Likewise, the tweet does not involve personal work activities, since (s)he did not negotiate these terms in person. Work experiences were shared in 3,397 tweets and always involved the performance of a work activity associated with an individual’s job, these tweets represent 8.9% of all tweets in the sample. This could be in the near past or future, or a work activity that is performed by the employee at the time of the tweet. For instance, a police officer tweeted: “Unfortunately I failed the #Caco Exam. Know what went wrong, so next time it should work out. #sad.” A teacher of an elementary school tweeted: “Busy preparing #parent information morning about #linguistics in #class 1-2, we will show videos of the classes. #behindthescenesview.”
Table 1. Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Professional content</td>
<td>9.74 (11.11)</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Organizational content</td>
<td>4.54 (7.36)</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Respect</td>
<td>3.80 (0.80)</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Pride</td>
<td>3.86 (0.73)</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Desire to succeed</td>
<td>3.93 (0.70)</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Identification</td>
<td>3.71 (0.79)</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Age</td>
<td>43.31 (10.79)</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Gender</td>
<td>1.34 (0.48)</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Work experience</td>
<td>20.22 (11.26)</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Hours a week</td>
<td>39.62 (10.06)</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Managerial position</td>
<td>1.55 (0.48)</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 General Twitter use</td>
<td>3574.23 (9295.49)</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Org. Interference</td>
<td>1.48 (.28)</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N= 430. * Values on the diagonal represent reliabilities Cronbach’s Alpha (a). Significance levels are flagged at * p. < .05.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example*</th>
<th>$\alpha$</th>
<th>% Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Profession-related communication</td>
<td>Tweets refer to the field in which the employee works. Thus information that is not specific to an individual’s job or organization but to the profession at large. These tweets may refer political, societal or economic issues relevant to the profession/industry. For instance, tweets about “CLA” (collective labor agreements) negotiations. These tweets do not include activities from employees such as the performance of work related tasks.</td>
<td>#Police allowed to campaign for #CLA. Success and perseverance. #Police fights for #reognition by the Minister #CLAAction</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work behaviors</td>
<td>Tweets in this category refer to activities performed by the employee. When the tweet includes information that can be ascribed to work tasks or the actual performance of work the tweets are related to work behaviors. For instance, arrival at work or a meeting, or progress reports.</td>
<td>Did a great disaster simulation exercise concerning a huge incident at a shipyard this evening. #practicealcomperfect</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization-related communication</td>
<td>This includes messages about the organization and the brand, including news about awards, internal affairs, mergers, and reorganizations, etc. Organizational milestones, accomplishments, employment communication or the organization featured in news articles are also ways in which employees share organizational news on Twitter.</td>
<td>RT: @Organization signs partnership agreement with [company], for legal support in case of emergencies</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee-public communication</td>
<td>This includes tweets that refer to information related to public activities conducted by employees. Communication is directed at individuals outside the organization. For instance information about products and services. These tweets are by definition directed at the organization’s stakeholders through @mentions.</td>
<td>@user your answer: public map or heat maps are intended to map visualize crowds. Users can see where it is too busy.</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive communication</td>
<td>Tweets that explicitly aim to induce specific behaviors by the reader. A call to action is considered persuasive, for instance requests to participate in a competition, survey or campaign, or calls to buy a product are considered persuasive messages.</td>
<td>#City #Street There has been a burglary. Have you seen something call #09008844</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * all example tweets are from employees working in law enforcement, except in the organizational news category. Organizations and users are made anonymous. $^\dagger$ Reliability scores are calculated on N = 4,309
Organizational tweets. The organization-related tweets, in turn, are directly pertaining to the individual's respective organization, and include tweets that share organizational news, calls to action, and product information [see – sort of thought "work-related" above was organizational]. Organizational news accounted for 3,405 tweets, referring to 8.9% of all tweets. For example, an employee of a bottled water vendor tweeted “[organization] sponsors at the HorecaEvent TT the http://t.co/[…].” And: “Today our new website www.[…].nl was launched. We will have updates daily.” Moreover, in 1,296 tweets (3.4% of all tweets) the primary focus was on a call to action from the audience. This became apparent in encouragements to apply to vacancies, or requests to share or like organizational information: for instance; “Are you the new top sales person for our #Icentre in #place? Apply quickly via this link! http://t.co/[…].” Finally, 1,172 tweets (3.1% of all tweets) referred to employee-public interactions, providing information about products and services of the organizations or offering help to consumers. Consider the following example of a producer at a local news broadcaster who tweeted in response to a question from a viewer; “@[…]. As of next week we will be back from our own studio. In sd. Until April, after that definitive transition to HD.”

Measurement Model

The measurement model demonstrates good model fit: $\chi^2 (155)=352.82; CFI=0.95; TLI=0.94; SRMR=0.04$ and $RMSEA=0.055 (CI: 0.047, 0.062)$. Discriminant validity was assessed through cross-factor correlations. The highest correlation was 0.60 between respect and organizational identification. Other correlations ranged from 0.01 to 0.47 (see Table 1), which convincingly demonstrates the distinctiveness of the latent constructs in the model (Kline, 2011). Convergent validity was assessed by examining factor loadings and squared multiple correlations. All factor loadings in the model were significant and sizable on the intended latent constructs. The standardized factor loadings range from 0.60 to 0.92 (see Table 2) indicating satisfactory convergent validity. In sum, the measurement model adequately measures all latent constructs in the model, and examination of the structural model is justified.
Table 3. Measurement model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>St. Factor loading</th>
<th>Unst. Factor loading</th>
<th>Se</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Profession related information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry related information</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.638</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily work activities</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.732</td>
<td>0.894</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization related information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational news</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.599</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products and Services</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.639</td>
<td>0.684</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive communication</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.818</td>
<td>0.621</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My organization cares about my opinions</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.803</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My organizational really cares about my well-being</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.893</td>
<td>1.376</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My organization strongly considers my goals and values</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.843</td>
<td>1.316</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help is available from my organization when I have a problem</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.719</td>
<td>1.244</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally, I think my organization has a good reputation in the community</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.815</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My organization has a good reputation compared to competitors in the industry</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.812</td>
<td>0.949</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My organization has a good reputation among its customers</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.709</td>
<td>0.895</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to succeed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that I succeed in my profession</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.835</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that I move up in my profession</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>1.051</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that I am successful at my job</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.893</td>
<td>1.079</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that I succeed in my organization</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.782</td>
<td>1.041</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am very interested in what others think about this organization</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I talk about this organization, I usually say ‘we’ rather than ‘they’</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.679</td>
<td>0.722</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This organization’s successes are my successes</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.919</td>
<td>0.813</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When someone praises this organization, it feels like a personal compliment</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.878</td>
<td>1.069</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a* All factor loadings are significant at *p < .05*  
*b* Unit loading indicator constrained to 1

Structural Model

The structural model shows good model fit: \( \chi^2 (161) = 392.42; \) CFI = 0.95; TLI=0.94; SRMR= 0.06 and RMSEA= 0.058 (CI: 0.051, 0.065). Figure 1 presents the overall structural model with standardized path coefficients. Table 4 provides the bootstrapping estimates for the indirect effects, including the confidence intervals and contrasts of indirect effects.
Importantly, it should be noted that organizational identification is related to organizational information sharing ($b^* = 1.379, BC95% [.249; 2.668] p = 0.049$), but not to professional information sharing by employees ($b^* = -1.466, BC95% [-3.386; .477] p = 0.203$). Similarly, employees’ desire to succeed is related to professional information sharing ($b^* = 5.720, BC95% [3.142; 8.396] p = 0.000$), but not to organizational information sharing ($b^* = .899, BC95% [-.072; 2.104] p = 0.120$). This is line with the reasoning reflected in our hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1 assumes that both pride and respect are related to organizational information sharing through organizational identification. The results show a significant unstandardized indirect effect of pride on organizational information sharing through identification ($b^* = 0.306, BC95% [.058; .769] p = 0.029$). Similarly, respect was found to affect organizational information sharing through identification ($b^* = .986, BC95% [.175; 2.031] p = 0.041$), thus substantiating hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2 reflects the assumption that pride and respect are related to professional information sharing on Twitter if these evaluations also affect the desire to succeed at work. The indirect effect of respect on professional information sharing through desire to succeed was significant ($b^* = 2.131, BC95% [1.018; 3.635] p = 0.000$). Similarly, pride yielded a significant indirect effect on professional information sharing through a desire to succeed ($b^* = .717, BC95% [.150; 1.607] p = 0.000$). These findings support the reasoning reflected in H2.

The results further demonstrate the distinctiveness of the two types of work-related information sharing on Twitter: professional and organizational. Hypothesis 3 warrants a more in-depth look at the indirect effects leading to professional and organizational information sharing. Hypothesis 3 assumes that the indirect effect of pride on organization information sharing through identification should be given statistical priority over the alternate causal path. Whereas, hypothesis 3b assumes that indirect effect of respect on professional information sharing through a desire to succeed is dominant over alternative indirect effects.
Figure 1. Structural Equation model with standardized estimates.
The indirect effects are contrasted to see which effects should be given statistical priority over alternative indirect effects that are possible within the model. The results show that organizational information sharing is more strongly affected by respect than by pride through organizational identification ($\Delta b^* = .680, BC95\% [.130; 1.664], p = 0.031$). The results show that professional information sharing is more strongly influenced by respect than by pride through the desire to succeed ($\Delta b^* = 1.415, BC95\% [.236; 3.339], p = 0.047$). Hence, these results provide support for hypothesis 3b, but lack support for hypothesis 3a.

**Table 4.** Hypotheses testing: Indirect Pathways using Bootstrapping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indirect effect</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$H1a$ Pride $\rightarrow$ organization identification $\rightarrow$ organizational content</td>
<td>.306</td>
<td>.211</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.769</td>
<td>.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H1b$ Respect $\rightarrow$ organizational identification $\rightarrow$ organizational content</td>
<td>.986</td>
<td>.571</td>
<td>.175</td>
<td>2.031</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H2a$ Pride $\rightarrow$ Desire to succeed $\rightarrow$ professional content</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.431</td>
<td>.150</td>
<td>1.607</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H2b$ Respect $\rightarrow$ Desire to succeed $\rightarrow$ professional content</td>
<td>2.131</td>
<td>.799</td>
<td>1.018</td>
<td>3.635</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H3a$ Pride $</td>
<td>$ vs. $</td>
<td>$ Respect $\rightarrow$ organizational identification $\rightarrow$ organizational content</td>
<td>.680</td>
<td>.464</td>
<td>.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H3b$ Pride $</td>
<td>$ vs. $</td>
<td>$ Respect $\rightarrow$ Desire to succeed $\rightarrow$ professional content</td>
<td>1.415</td>
<td>.940</td>
<td>.236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: BC= bias corrected; CI= confidence interval. Entries represent unstandardized coefficients. N= 430

**Control Variables and Alternative Models**

In the model, we controlled for gender, age, years of work experience, managerial position, Twitter activity, organizational encouragement, and working hours per week by consecutively modeling them. Twitter activity was modeled by including employees' total amount of followers, following, and the total number of tweets sent through their account. These figures were derived from the profile page; none of these indicators of general Twitter use were found to impact the relationships in the model. Additionally, organizations may encourage employees to share specific types of information within their social networks. Such organizational encouragements could have a confounding effect. To test this alternative
explanation the model was estimated while controlling for organizational encouragement. This was measured with dichotomous variables such as: "The use of Twitter for work is being encouraged in my organization." Again, including these variables did not affect the relationships in the model. In sum, all the parameters presented in the final model remained significant when controlling for any of these variables, meaning the control variables had no influence on the overall findings.

Alternative and nested models were examined using a $\Delta \chi^2$ test; the model fit statistics are reported in Table 4. First, we re-specified our structural model as a CFA, representing unanalyzed (non-directional) associations between factors. Model fit indices suggest significant model deterioration compared with the retained structural model ($\Delta \chi^2=42.84$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, a reversed causation model, using professional and organizational tweets to explain pride and respect through the mediators, was examined (Kline, 2011). This model suggests an inferior fit to the data compared with the retained model ($\Delta \chi^2=52.56$, $p < 0.001$).

Discussion

Theoretical Implications

This study extends our theoretical understanding of the relationship between social media use, identification, and organizational work. The findings show that pride and respect, the desire to succeed, and organizational identification all operate as antecedents to the work-related use of personal Twitter accounts, but not necessarily in similar ways. This extends previous findings linking a desire to succeed and identification processes to social media use by workers (Boswell & Olson-Buchanan, 2007; Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013), and presents a more rigorous and nuanced understanding of the relationship between these concepts and social media content. Specifically, the results demonstrate that work-related Twitter content could be distinguished as professional information sharing and organizational information sharing. Though this study did not directly measure psychological motivations for social media use by workers, the findings signal that work-related activities are influenced by how individuals feel in relation to the groups of which they are members. Importantly, professional information sharing correlated with the desire to succeed and not with organizational identification. Conversely, organizational information sharing correlated with organizational identification but not with a desire to succeed. This implies that employees feel that sharing individual work
experiences and showcasing knowledge about the industry contributes to achieving professional success. At the very least, making knowledge and experiences visible helps effective self-presentation (Leonardi & Treem, 2012). In other words, employees with a greater desire to succeed can capitalize on the ambient awareness that social media creates (e.g., Leonardi, 2015). Each individual post about work experience and knowledge of the industry contributes to establishing a picture of competence, which in turn may help employees' achieve professional goals.

Additionally, our results suggest that employees who more strongly identify with their organization are more inclined to utilize their personal social media to share organizational news, share product and service related information, and even persuade their audience to engage with the organization. This suggests that organizational identification makes employees intuitively and socially inclined to act in the organization's best interest and exhibit greater effort in obtaining organizational goals through social media use. This is in line with studies that argue that employees can use social media to represent their organization (Dreher, 2014) and influences others' perceptions of the organization (Helm, 2011; van Zoonen et al., 2014) and by extension of themselves.

This study confirms that both organizational identification and a desire to succeed are correlated with pride and respect. The relationship between pride and respect and organizational identification has been well established in the literature (Blader & Tyler, 2009; Fuller et al., 2006; Tyler & Blader, 2000; 2003). Both organizational identification and the desire to succeed are strongly related to respect, suggesting that internal status evaluations – i.e., respect – are important in understanding work-related social media use than external status evaluations – i.e., pride. Specifically, employees who feel that their contributions are being valued by the organization and who feel that the organization has their best interest at heart, identify more strongly with the organization and are more dedicated to succeed. This is associated with higher levels of professional and organizational information sharing in employees' online networks.

More broadly, this study provides further evidence that workers actively shape group identities beyond organizational identification. Scholars have noted that as the boundaries of organizations blur in contemporary society, there is a need to broaden our conceptions of organizational membership and identification (Pratt, 1998). Social media, as a visible form of
communication that crosses professional and personal boundaries, may be a powerful influence on the different forms of group identification that workers construct. Further investigation is needed to determine the specific ways that organizational identification influences social media use by workers, but also how workers might utilize social media to strategically influence the way they are perceived by existing, past, and future colleagues across professional contexts.

This is important given the visibility of social media, which makes communication available to a broad audience of current organizational members, broader professional groups, and potential future employers. As with any communicative act, employees have mental conceptualizations of the people with whom they are communicating through social media (Litt, 2012). As Marwick and boyd (2011) noted individuals may use social media strategically depending on their imagined audience, and this includes decisions of what to share and acts of self-censorship. The findings of this work support the idea that employees tailor their social media content to their audiences. Arguably, conceptualizations of audiences as primarily constituting social connections or potential clients might encourage employees to share organizational information. Audiences that are believed to consist of coworkers, supervisors, or future employers might induce more professional information. Ongoing research is needed to investigate the dynamic and purposeful ways that workers edit and adjust social media content in attempts to reach different audiences and facilitate individual and group goals.

**Practical Implications**

To start, results provide more robust support for findings that employees widely engage in knowledge sharing about their profession and the organization on personal social media, (Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014; Miles & Mangold, 2014; Moqbel, et al., 2013; Peluchette, et al., 2013; van Zoonen, et al., 2014), and demonstrate this with measures of behaviors instead of self-reported data. Employees' work-related social media content is important to organizations for several reasons. First, public perceptions of organizations are increasingly shaped by the content that people encounter on social media (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silverstre, 2011). Second, work-related social media use affects individual outcomes such as employee performance (Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014) and wellbeing (Van Zoonen et al., 2016b). And finally, employees may use work-related content to enact professional identities on social media, which may transpose to the organization
(Ollier-Malaterre, et al., 2013). The findings of this study have several managerial implications as they help managers and practitioners have a better understanding of work-related communication beyond traditional workplace boundaries.

Firstly, employees regularly use Twitter to share messages about their work and their organization, which offers organizations a tremendous communication potential (van Zoonen et al., 2014; van Zoonen et al., 2016a). Employees have their social networks in place, and through these networks, employees reach a broad and diverse audience including professional contacts (e.g., (potential) clients, (potential) co-workers) and personal contacts (e.g., family and friends). Additionally, the voluntary nature of work-related use of personal social media is what makes these messages being perceived as more authentic and more credible than centrally communicated messages through organizational social media channels (Dreher, 2014; van Zoonen & van der Meer, 2015).

Secondly, our results are important for organizations because they provide insights into the practices that might be used to promote social media use for work. Organizational and professional information sharing on Twitter may increase largely to the extent to which organizational identification and the desire to succeed are facilitated by pride and respect. Employees communicatively construct their belongingness to a group on social media. This implies that employees will act in support of professional and or organizational goals. To achieve higher levels of organizational identification managerial efforts should focus on fostering respect within the organization. In turn, efforts directed at increasing perceptions of the status of the organization – i.e., pride – are also likely to foster identification and the desire to succeed albeit to a smaller extent than respect.

Hence, to increase employees’ use of their networks to contribute to organizational and professional goals managerial efforts should cater to employees’ needs in terms organizational identification or individual success. Specifically, facilitating organizational identification is associated with ambassadorship behaviors by representing the organization online. In turn, when individual success and personal goal setting is salient for employees professional information sharing on Twitter is more likely. The content analysis further shows that in general employees want to inform their networks refraining from sharing explicit negative messages.
Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations to this study need to be acknowledged. First, the underlying factor structure of the dependent variable shows some marginal factor loadings. In part, this is due to the use of binary and count variables, which tend to produce suppressed factor loadings in CFA’s. These data characteristics are also likely to affect reliability statistics such as Krippendorff’s Alpha. Additional research is needed to more adequately model latent factor structure for work-related social media content. Secondly, the survey data is cross-sectional making causal inferences impossible.

Finally, from a thematic perspective, this is one of the first studies to examine work-related Twitter use. Hence, many empirical questions about its causes and consequences remain unanswered. Similarly, in this study, the focus was on employees’ Twitter use. Although Twitter shares similar features to other social media outlets it is hard to say to what extent these behaviors and the suggested indirect effects might be generalizable to these outlets. Hence, future research should direct attention to other social media channels such as Facebook and LinkedIn. Similarly, research might examine whether the findings reported here also apply to enterprise social media use. Regardless of these limitations, this study provides a deeper understanding of the drivers and content of public social media use for work. Hopefully, this study serves as a springboard for future research on the drivers, content, and consequences of social media use for work.
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