



Positive Orientation and Social Capital: The Insignificance of the Mediating Effects of Social Network Sites Usages

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Abstract This research examined the relationships among positive orientation, types of social network sites (SNS) usage, and social capital. 235 private university students in Malaysia, aged from 18 to 30 ($M = 19.64$, $SD = 1.50$), participated in this research. They completed items that reflect on self-esteem, life satisfaction, optimism, the intensity of SNS use, the three connection strategies employed on SNS, and the bridging and bonding aspects of social capital. Factor analysis supported that self-esteem, life satisfaction, and optimism formed a single construct that was interpreted as positive orientation or positivity. Analyses revealed that the specific indirect effects of active use of SNS and the enacted SNS connection strategies on the relationship between positive orientation and social capital were not significant. Results revealed that the inclination to use SNS to seek relevant social information facilitated both weak and strong ties. Despite the benefits of SNS on the development of social capital, individuals with high positivity were able to form weak and strong ties that are beneficial without relying on these online platforms. The implications of the results and directions for future research are discussed.

Keywords Positive orientation · Positivity · Social capital · Social network sites usages · Bonding social capital · Bridging social capital

Introduction

With the proliferation of social network sites (SNS), these online platforms are utilized for various purposes, mainly to establish and to maintain relationships with others (e.g. Bakshy et al., 2012). Empirically, the use of SNS has been linked to both positive (e.g. Ellison et al., 2007) and negative outcomes (e.g. Lee et al., 2023). This research is a continuation of the existing empirical investigations to validate the benefits of SNS use. Research indicates the benefits of the connectedness fostered by SNS on individuals' self-esteem and psychological well-being (e.g. Valkenburg et al., 2006). In this line of research, SNS are instrumental to the construction of social networks with potential access to resources, which is known as social capital (e.g. Lin, 2001). Collectively, research findings reflect clearly on the importance of active SNS use on social capital (e.g. Ellison et al., 2007). The present research contributes to this line of research by examining the significance of individual differences that underlie the use of SNS to form social capital. Specifically, the present research examined how positive orientation relates to the development of social capital through different aspects of SNS usage.

Social Capital

Although social capital is an elastic term with various definitions (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Coleman, 1988), it can be defined as a perception of accessible resources embedded within an existing network (Beaudoin & Tao, 2007; Burt, 2010; Lin, 2001). The two general forms of social capital include bridging social capital, which refers to external relationships formed among individuals of diverse backgrounds, and bonding social capital, which refers to close relationships formed within tightly knit communities

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(Putnam, 2000; Williams, 2006). Bridging social capital refers to relationships developed among acquaintances without commitment to the relationships (Paxton, 1999). These weak ties allow individuals to advance their personal goals (Putnam, 2000). Bonding social capital is often formed in networks of individuals with strong levels of trust and affiliation to enable them to pursue collective goals (Leana & Van Buren, 1999). It provides the benefits of knowledge sharing, complementarity, quality control, and conflict resolution that help bolster performance (Okoli & Oh, 2007). Therefore, it is evident that social capital reflects an individual's social well-being, making it an important psychological outcome. Empirical findings have suggested that the development of social capital is conditional upon one's position in a social structure (e.g. Lin, 2001), while other researchers have identified other psychological factors that are fundamental to its development (e.g. Tulin et al., 2018). This research focused specifically on human personality (Tulin et al., 2018) and technology usage, such as SNS use (e.g. Ellison et al., 2007).

Positive Orientation

In the vast literature, individual differences are mainly depicted by the Five-Factor model (e.g. Seidman, 2019) that relate weakly to SNS use (e.g. Huang, 2019). To stimulate the development of literature, researchers have initiated exploration of other personality traits (e.g. the Dark Triad; Lyons et al., 2019). This research will extend the scope of investigation to a psychological construct known as positive orientation.

Positive orientation refers to a set of interconnected positive cognitive appraisals of the self (self-esteem), the present personal life (satisfaction with life), and the upcoming future (optimism; Caprara, 2009). This orientation bolsters individuals' self-efficacy (2010b; Alessandri et al., 2015; Barbaranelli et al., 2019; Caprara et al., 2010a; Wasowska, 2019) that is highly adaptive against aversive outcomes (Alessandri et al., 2012a, 2012b, 2010b, 2012b; Caprara et al., 2010a, 2012a; Livi et al., 2018) and is crucial to the pursuit of personal goals (Laguna et al., 2017). This trait-like dimension is stable across developmental stages (Alessandri et al., 2012b; Milioni et al., 2016) and across cultures (Caprara et al., 2012a, 2012b; Heikamp et al., 2014) due to its foundation in human genetics (Caprara et al., 2009; Fagnani et al., 2014). The stability of this orientation contributes to its persisting facilitative effect on positive affect (Caprara et al., 2017a, 2017b), which empowers individuals against stress provoking events (Caprara et al., 2016, 2017b; Milioni et al., 2016). Moreover, research also indicates that a high degree of positivity facilitates self-efficacy in managing connectedness with social contacts

(Alessandri et al., 2012a; Caprara et al., 2010a, 2010b; Caprara et al., 2010a, 2010b; Jin & Dewaele, 2018), which is highly relevant to the formation of social capital. Hence, empirical evidence supports the idea that positive orientation is adaptive to individuals' well-being and social functioning.

Consistent with past findings that indicated a positive relationship between emotional stability and the development of social support (Tulin et al., 2018), it is reasonable to predict positive orientation, which maintains a state of positive affect (Caprara et al., 2017a, 2017b), as another form of individual differences that can promote the development of social capital. As individuals with a high degree of positive orientation are highly optimistic about the quality of interaction with their social contacts (Alessandri et al., 2012a; Caprara et al., 2010a, 2010b; Caprara et al., 2010a, 2010b; Jin & Dewaele, 2018), it is reasonable to anticipate its facilitative effect on bridging and bonding social capital.

Consistent with previous research that examined the dynamics of psychological well-being and SNS usage on social capital (e.g. Ellison et al., 2007), the present research intends to examine how individuals with high positivity or high positive orientation utilize SNS to elicit social capital. It was found that positive orientation inhibits unregulated SNS use (Błachnio et al., 2016), supporting the likelihood that individuals with a high level of positivity are more prudent in using SNS. As this is the only research on positive orientation and SNS use, the present research is a significant addition to the existing literature.

Positive Orientation and SNS

Due to its adaptive features, the state of positivity is protective against excessive Internet and SNS use (Błachnio et al., 2016). In this light, individuals with a high positive orientation are less likely to engage in active use of SNS, which is similar to the posited finding on active use of SNS to establish connections amongst those with low self-esteem and life satisfaction (Ellison et al., 2007). This suggests that individuals with a high level of positivity do not benefit from the active use of SNS in establishing connections with others. However, findings have also posited the present oriented nature of positive orientation induced goal-directed actions and efforts that increase task engagement (Laguna et al., 2016). As unregulated use of SNS is inhibited by this state of positivity (Błachnio et al., 2016), it is plausible that these individuals utilize SNS strategically to facilitate connectedness with others to maintain the state of positivity (Caprara et al., 2010a, 2010b; Caprara et al., 2010a, 2010b). Due to limited resources on positive orientation and SNS usage, the present research is a significant addition to

extending our understanding of social outcomes from SNS usage for individuals with a high level of positivity.

Social Capital and SNS

Due to the availability of strong and weak ties on SNS (Bakshy et al., 2012), intense use of these online platforms is facilitative of both bridging and bonding social capital (Ellison et al., 2007; Greenhow & Burton, 2011; High & Buehler, 2019; Johnston et al., 2013; Kwon et al., 2013; Stefanone et al., 2012; Steinfield et al., 2008). However, in particular, SNS are more effective at facilitating weak ties or bridging social capital (2014a, 2014b; Bucholtz, 2019; Carpenter et al., 2015; Ellison et al., 2007; Greenhouse & Burton, 2011; Liu et al., 2016; Tiwari et al., 2019). In support of the view that intense use of SNS may not encapsulate other aspects of SNS usage (Vanden Abeele, et al., 2018), existing findings indicate that connection strategies on SNS are crucial attempts to secure social capital. For instance, these connection strategies include the inclination to utilize SNS to meet new contacts, the tendency to maintain interaction with existing contacts, and the propensity to extract information regarding a contact (Ellison et al., 2011). Of these three connection strategies, social information gathering through SNS significantly predicted bonding and bridging social capital (Ellison et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2016). As individuals intentionally construct their social networks for the forthcoming resources (Bourdieu, 1986), SNS are often exploited as mediums to extract relevant information to facilitate connection with individuals that have access to resources and benefits (Ellison et al., 2011; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012; Gray et al., 2013; Guo et al., 2014; Li & Peng, 2019; Liu et al., 2016). In this light, it is imperative to consider specific usages of SNS to enrich interpretations of results and draw conceptually meaningful conclusions. Consistent with this flow, the present research will examine the effects of both active and specific usages of SNS on individuals' social capital.

Despite the facilitative effect of active SNS use on both bridging and bonding social capital, empirical evidence revealed that this effect was subjected to individual differences. The vast literature revealed the complexity of this aspect, where certain predispositions enhanced or inhibited the likelihood of acquiring social resources (Cheng et al., 2019). To compensate for their social deficits (Cheng et al., 2019), those with low self-esteem (Ellison et al., 2007; Steinfield et al., 2008), low self-efficacy (Kahai & Lei, 2019) and low life satisfaction (Ellison et al., 2007) utilized SNS to foster bridging social capital. It was interpreted that these individuals utilized SNS to overcome social barriers that they encountered in their attempts to construct their social networks (Ellison et al., 2007; Steinfield et al., 2008). Thus, these

individuals may utilize SNS to extract prior information for validation purposes to ensure success in establishing connections with prospective contacts (Ellison et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2016). Reflecting on this, SNS allow individuals with certain predispositions, such as low life satisfaction (e.g. Ellison et al., 2007), to align themselves strategically before commencing any attempt to connect with other individuals. Hence, individual differences are significant factors that determine the utilization of SNS in the construction of social capital.

The Present Research

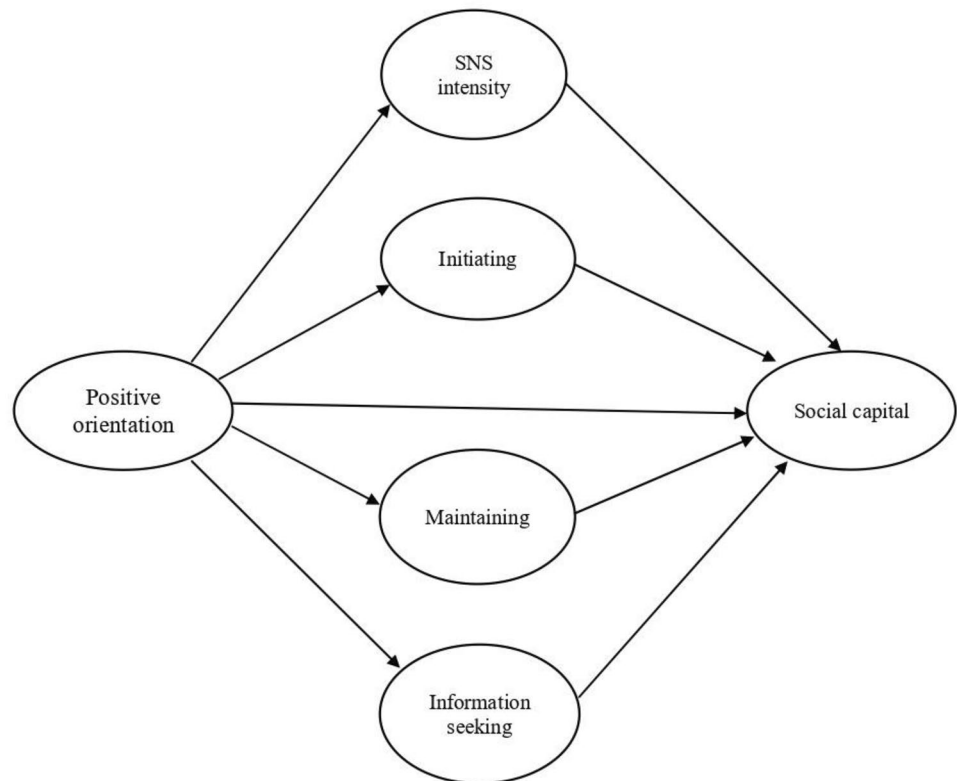
The present research aims to examine the effect of positive orientation on both aspects of social capital, with the use of SNS and their connection strategies as intervening variables. As SNS are crucial to the development of social capital (e.g. Ellison et al., 2007), it is plausible that individuals with a high positive orientation utilize these mediums to construct their social networks. In this light, a conceptual framework was formed to examine the direct effect of positive orientation on the formation of social capital and the significance of active use of SNS and the corresponding connection strategies as intervening variables. Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of the present research. The direct effect of positive orientation on social capital converges with previous findings on the high level of perceived support amongst individuals with high positivity (Caprara et al., 2010a, 2010b; Caprara et al., 2010a, 2010b). The framework also portrays the effect of positivity on the intensity of SNS usage and the connection strategies employed on these online platforms, which is consistent with previous research that posited the influence of individual differences on the use of SNS (e.g. Seidman, 2019). Moreover, the framework illustrates the effects of SNS usage on social capital, as provided by previous findings on the facilitative effect of these online platforms on social capital (2014a, 2014b; Ellison et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2016).

Method

Participants

235 undergraduate university students in Malaysia were successfully recruited for the present research (Male = 80, 34%; Female = 152, 65%; Prefer not to say = 3, 1%). Participants were recruited from Taylor's University Lakeside Campus, which is a private university in Malaysia, located at Subang Jaya, Klang Valley. The age range was 18–30 ($M = 19.64$, $SD = 1.50$). Majority of the participants

Fig. 1 A conceptual model depicting the mediating effects of SNS usage on the relationship between positive orientation and social capital



were Chinese ($n = 141$, 60%), followed by those who identified themselves as Malay ($n = 41$, 17%), Indian ($n = 33$, 14%), and other ethnic groups ($n = 20$, 9%).

Procedure

The present research was advertised in the lecture halls of Taylor's University Lakeside Campus at Subang Jaya. Those who were interested contacted the researchers for arrangements to complete the questionnaire. Subsequently, they were invited to complete the questionnaire at a venue booked specifically for this research. Upon completion, participants were required to submit the completed questionnaire to the researchers. No monetary reward was provided to the participants to ensure their voluntary participation. To ensure anonymity, implied consents from these participants were obtained. Additionally, no identifier was assigned to the completed questionnaire. Hence, participants were informed that they were unable to withdraw from this research after the submission of the questionnaire. This research utilized single-item measures for measuring the fundamental aspects of positive orientation (e.g. life satisfaction, optimism, self-esteem). The use of these single-item measures reduces the length of the survey and hence the time required for completion (Nagy, 2002). Consequently, respondents are more likely to participate (Wanous et al., 1997). Additionally, these

measures prevent participants' fatigue (Robins et al., 2001), and this will eventually translate into better quality of the collected data (Dolbier et al., 2005).

Analyses were conducted with SPSS 25. To examine the significance of the intervening variables on the relationship between positive orientation and social capital, as depicted in Fig. 1, the total and specific indirect effects were estimated with PROCESS v3.0 (Hayes, 2017; see also Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The total indirect effect is the sum of the specific indirect effects, whereas a specific indirect effect is the product of the two unstandardized paths linking positive orientation to social capital through a specific intervening variable (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The significance of these effects was assessed with bootstrap analysis with 5000 replications. When the range of the upper and lower limits of the 95% percentile CI does not contain zero, the significance of these estimated effects is supported (Hayes, 2017; Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

Outliers were identified with (1) a z score larger than 3.29, (2) a $p < 0.001$ for Mahalanobis' distance, and (3) a Cook's distance larger than 1.00 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012). No univariate outlier was found using the stated criteria. One multivariate outlier was found, with a Cook's distance of 0.06. Since Cook's distance indicated that the multivariate outlier was not influential, it was retained in the dataset. Normality was assumed if the variables exhibit skewness $< \pm 2$ and kurtosis $< \pm 3$ (Kline, 2005).

The range of skewness (-0.02 to -0.58) and kurtosis (-0.59 to 0.23) indicated that the variables were normally distributed. The VIF values ranged from 1.15 to 1.75, which is less than 10, which indicates multicollinearity (Kennedy, 1992).

Measures

Demographic details, which include age, gender, and ethnicity, were collected at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Self-esteem was measured with the Single-Item Self-Esteem Scale (Robins et al., 2001; $M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.97$). This single item, “I have high self-esteem”, was rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *Not very true of me*, 5 = *Very true of me*). This item was highly correlated with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), supporting that this single-item indicator of self-esteem reflects a similar construct measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). Results have supported the stability of this single-item indicator over six periods of assessment (beginning of college, end of first semester, end of first year, end of second year, end of third year, and end of fourth year; Robins et al., 2001). Additionally, this single item was positively correlated with other indicators of functioning and was negatively correlated with depression and perceived stress (Robins et al., 2001).

Satisfaction with life was measured with the single item, “In general, how satisfied are you with your life?” (Cheung & Lucas, 2014; $M = 2.95$, $SD = 0.59$). This item was rated on a 4-point scale (1 = *Very dissatisfied*, 4 = *Very satisfied*). This item was highly correlated with the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985), supporting that this single item reflects the similar construct measured by the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985). This finding has been replicated with two US samples and a German sample (Cheung & Lucas, 2014). Moreover, this item was positively correlated with other domains of satisfaction and eudemonic well-being and was negatively correlated with negative affects (Cheung & Lucas, 2014).

Optimism was measured with the single item from the Scale Optimism–Pessimism-2 (Kemper et al., 2011; Kemper et al., 2015; $M = 4.71$, $SD = 1.16$). This single item that reflects optimism, “How optimistic are you in general?”, was rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *Not at all optimistic*, 7 = *Very optimistic*). It was positively correlated with the Life Orientation Test-Revised (Scheier et al., 1994), supporting that the single item and the Life Orientation Test-Revised (Scheier et al., 1994) are both reflecting on the same construct. Results also supported that the single item correlated positively with self-efficacy (Kemper et al., 2011, 2015) and self-esteem (Kemper et al., 2011).

An index of positive orientation was formed with the aforementioned items for self-esteem (Robins et al., 2001),

satisfaction with life (Cheung & Lucas, 2014), and optimism (Kemper et al., 2011, 2015). A factor analysis with oblique rotation (Direct Oblimin) was conducted to verify the presence of a single factor that reflects positive orientation. Results indicated the presence of a single factor, $KMO = 0.67$, $\chi^2(3) = 127.83$, $p < 0.001$, that accounted for 63.15% of the variance. Each item loaded highly on the single factor (optimism = 0.81, self-esteem = 0.79, satisfaction with life = 0.77). The index score of positive orientation was computed by calculating the mean of all three items ($\alpha = 0.67$).

The intensity of SNS usage was measured with the modified Facebook Intensity Scale, which consists of eight items that reflect on attitudinal aspects of SNS usage (Ellison et al., 2007; e.g. I feel I am part of the social network site community). These items were mainly measured on a 5 point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 5 = *Strongly agree*), except for the estimated time of SNS usage per day (1 = *Less than 10 min*, 2 = *10–30 min*, 3 = *31 min–1 h*, 4 = *1–2 h*, 5 = *2–3 h*, 6 = *More than 3 h*) and the estimated number of friends on SNS (1 = *10 or less*, 2 = *11–50*, 3 = *51–100*, 4 = *101–150*, 5 = *151–200*, 6 = *201–250*, 7 = *251–300*, 8 = *301–400*, 9 = *More than 400*). The total score of the intensity of SNS usage was computed by calculating the mean of all eight items ($\alpha = 0.72$). The test–retest reliability of this measure over a two-week period was supported (Li et al., 2016). Although there were findings to support its structural validity (Beyens et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2016), there is no research that formally assesses its psychometric properties (Sigerson & Cheng, 2018).

Connection strategies on SNS were measured with 13 items from Ellison et al. (2011) research. Five of these items reflect the Initiating strategy on SNS (e.g., I use social network site to meet new people; $\alpha = 0.73$), four reflect on Maintaining strategy on SNS (e.g., Add them as a SNS Friend; $\alpha = 0.75$), and the remaining four reflect on Information-seeking strategy on SNS (e.g., I have used social network site to check out someone I met socially; $\alpha = 0.75$). These items were rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 5 = *Strongly agree*). The total score of each connection strategy was computed by calculating the mean of the corresponding items.

Bridging and bonding social capital were measured with 14 items adapted from Ellison et al.’s (2007) research. From these 14 items, nine reflect on bridging social capital (e.g., At my university, I come into contact with new people all the time.; $\alpha = 0.90$), and the remaining five reflect on bonding social capital (e.g., There are several people at my university I trust to solve my problems.; $\alpha = 0.70$). These items were rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 5 = *Strongly agree*). The total score for each aspect of social capital was computed by calculating the mean of the corresponding items.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 1 summarizes the descriptive statistics and the correlations. These correlations were mainly significant positive relationships. However, positive orientation did not correlate significantly with the intensity of SNS use or the connection strategies employed on SNS. These results suggested that individuals with a high level of positivity do not actively engage on SNS to connect with others. The significant positive relationships that positive orientation formed with bridging and bonding suggested that individuals with a high degree of positive orientation are able to form beneficial social relationships. Similarly,

the significant positive relationships that the measured aspects of SNS usage formed with the different aspects of social capital suggested that the usage of these online platforms is facilitating the formation of beneficial social relationships.

Indirect Effects

The indirect effects of SNS use and their connection strategies on the relationships of positive orientation and both aspects of social capital were examined. Figures 2 and 3 depict the multiple mediation model with bridging social capital and bonding social capital, respectively, as the outcomes.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables

	<i>M(SD)</i>	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7
V1. Positive orientation	3.60(.73)	1	.12	.09	.08	.06	.35**	.22**
V2. Intensity of SNS use	4.02(.84)	–	1	.32**	.37**	.42**	.24**	.27**
V3. Initiate	3.19(.84)	–	–	1	.25**	.53**	.26**	.18**
V4. Maintenance	3.94(.88)	–	–	–	1	.39**	.22**	.25**
V5. Information seeking	3.50 (.84)	–	–	–	–	1	.37**	.33**
V6. Bridging social capital	3.40(.80)	–	–	–	–	–	1	.55**
V7. Bonding social capital	3.35(.78)	–	–	–	–	–	–	1

p* < .05, *p* < .01

Fig. 2 Conceptual model depicting the mediating effects of SNS usage on the direct effect of positive orientation on bridging social capital. Note: ****p* < .001

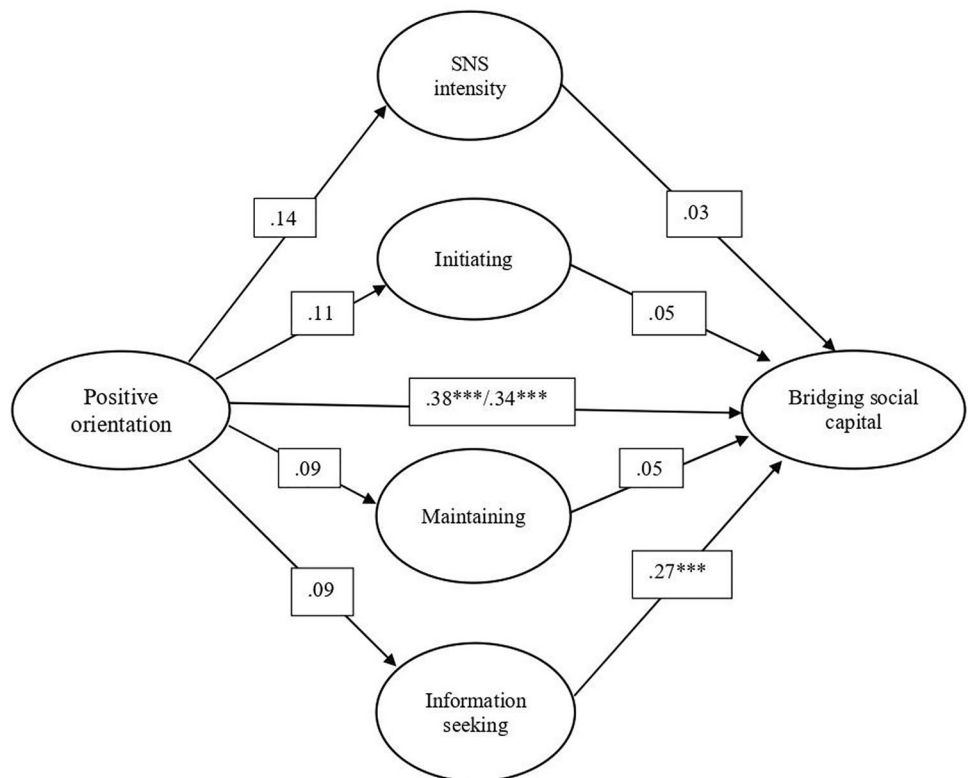


Fig. 3 Conceptual model depicting the mediating effects of SNS usage on the direct effect of positive orientation on bonding social capital. *Note:* ** $p < .01$

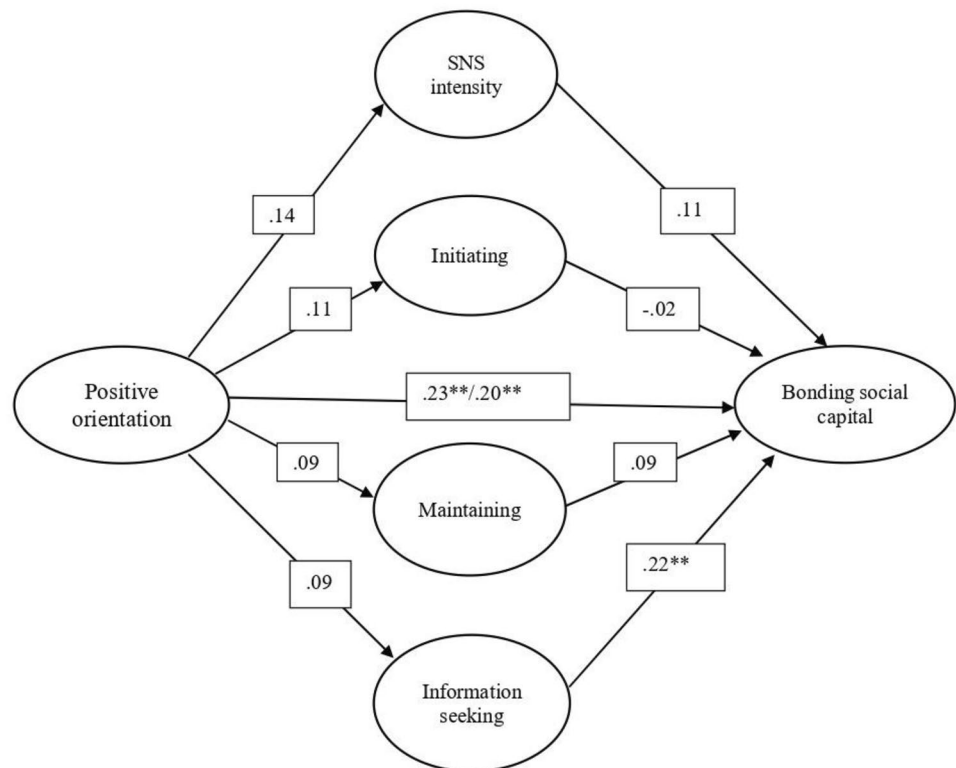


Table 2 summarizes the relevant statistical values. From this table, positive orientation predicted bridging and bonding social capital significantly. From these results, positive orientation positively predicted these aspects of social capital, indicating its facilitative effect on social capital. However, positive orientation did not significantly predict the intensity of SNS use. Similarly, positive orientation did not significantly predict the Initiating strategy on SNS, the Maintaining strategy on SNS, or the Information-seeking strategy on SNS. These results suggested that individuals with high positivity or positive orientation do not actively use SNS. When these variables were considered simultaneously, the predictive model of bridging and bonding social capital was significant. Of the included predictors, positive orientation emerged as the most influential positive predictor of bridging social capital, followed by the tendency to seek information through SNS. In predicting bonding social capital, the inclination to seek information through SNS emerged as the most influential positive predictor, followed by positive orientation. The remaining variables were not significant predictors of bridging and bonding social capital. These results suggested that positive orientation and information seeking on SNS are instrumental to the formation of beneficial ties.

Table 3 summarizes the indirect effects of these analyses. The computed indirect effects were not significant, indicating that positive orientation did not exert its influence on bridging and bonding social capital through the measured aspects of SNS usage. These findings implied that individuals with a high positive orientation do not rely on SNS to form beneficial relationships.

Discussion

The aim of the present research was to examine the relationship between positive orientation and social capital, considering the intervening effects of SNS usage and the corresponding connection strategies. The present research is a significant addition to the vast body of research where positive orientation has been examined in relation to unregulated SNS use (Błachnio & Przepiorka, 2016). The present research uniquely examined the intervening effects of the different aspects of SNS usage on the facilitative effect of positivity on the accumulation of social resources. In brief, the present research found that positive orientation was facilitative of both bridging and bonding aspects of social

Table 2 Summary of the multiple mediation models

	Mediators						Outcomes											
	SNS intensity		Initiating		Maintaining		Information seeking		Bridging social capital		Bonding social capital							
	$b(SE)$	β	95% CI	$b(SE)$	β	95% CI	$b(SE)$	β	95% CI	$b(SE)$	β	95% CI						
Positive ori-entation	.14(.07)	.12	-.01 to .29	.11(.07)	.09	-.04 to .25	.09(.07)	.06	-.05 to .25	.38(.07)***	.35***	.24-.51	.23(.06)**	.22**	.10-.36			
	$R^2 = .02, F(1, 233) = 3.54, F(1, 233) = .01, F(1, 233) = 2.04$						$R^2 = .006, F(1, 233) = 1.57, F(1, 233) = .97$						$R^2 = .12, F(1, 233) = 31.98***, R^2 = .05, F(1, 233) = 11.79**$					
Positive ori-entation										.34(.06)***	.31***	.22-.46	.20(.06)**	.18**	.07-.32			
SNS inten-sity										.03(.06)	.04	-.08 to .16	.11(.06)	.12	-.02 to .24			
Initiating										.05(.06)	.05	-.07 to .17	-.02(.07)	-.03	-.15 to .11			
Maintaining										.05(.06)	.04	-.06 to .16	.09(.06)	.10	-.03 to .21			
Information seeking										.27(.07)***	.28***	.13-.40	.22(.07)**	.24**	.08-.36			
	$R^2 = .25, F(5, 229) = 15.19***$						$R^2 = .17, F(5, 229) = 9.46***$											

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3 Indirect effects and their comparisons

	Bridging social capital		Bonding social capital	
	Indirect effect (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI	Indirect effect (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI
Total	.04(.03)	-.02 to .10	.03(.02)	-.01 to .05
SNS intensity	.01(.01)	-.02 to .03	.02(.01)	-.01 to .05
Initiating	.01(.01)	-.01 to .03	-.002(.001)	-.02 to .02
Maintaining	.004(.01)	-.01 to .03	.01(.01)	-.01 to .04
Information seeking	.02(.02)	-.02 to .07	.02(.02)	-.02 to .06

capital. However, these relationships were independent of the use of SNS.

Positive Orientation and Social Capital

Firstly, the present findings suggest that individuals with a high degree of positive orientation are more likely to perceive the availability of accessible resources based on their weak and strong relationships with others. These findings converge with previous findings on the high perceived social support amongst those with high positivity (2010b; Caprara et al., 2010a; Jin & Dewaele, 2018). The perceived weak and strong links with other individuals can lead to tangible social supports, such as emotional support, informational support, esteem support, and diversion to other social resources (High & Buehler, 2019). This supports the benefits of positive orientation on social functioning, where individuals with a high level of positivity are able to form connections with potential benefits. In addition, the inclination to form connections that are perceived as crucial to the maintenance of individuals' well-being supports the adaptive aspect of positive orientation. As social support can be derived from established contacts, maintaining existing connections is beneficial to social adjustment (Gray et al., 2013; Guo et al., 2014; Li & Peng, 2019). As previous success consolidates the initial state of fundamental to the maintenance of the experienced positivity. As this can only be addressed with a longitudinal design, the present results derived from a cross-sectional design are unable to validate this claim. Therefore, a longitudinal design with at least three time points is required to address this.

Results also suggest that individuals with a high positive orientation are more likely to form weak ties than strong ties. This is evident in the regression coefficients from both mediation models. Hence, individuals with a high positive orientation are actively expanding beneficial social connections. As weak ties allow individuals to gather novel resources that may not be available from existing connections (Chu & Zhang, 2019; Jang & Dworkin, 2014; Putnam, 2000; Shen & Gong, 2019), it is likely that individuals with a high level of positivity actively seek new stimulation from their social contacts. This can be accounted for by the bolstered self-efficacy of those with a high positive orientation (Alessandri

et al., 2015; Barbaranelli et al., 2019; Caprara et al., 2010a, 2010b; Wasowska, 2019). Additionally, the diverse resources from weak ties or the success in establishing new connections can be vital to the consolidation of the state of positivity (Laguna & Razmus, 2018). However, it is unclear what tangible benefits are received from the established social networks that motivated their connections in the first place. In addition, there is no evidence to support the direct benefits of these connections. These unaddressed aspects should be sought out in future research. The pursuit of beneficial relationships or social networks is crucial to the maintenance of the positivity experienced. As indicated previously, the sense of achievement bolstered the appraisals of the self, the present life, and the upcoming future (Laguna & Razmus, 2018). Hence, individuals tend to establish connections with potential benefits to consolidate the state of positivity they experience. While valid, this aspect is outside of the present scope. Thus, future verification is required.

SNS Usages and Social Capital

From the present findings, the connection strategies enacted on SNS and the intensity of their use were significantly correlated with the measured perceived weak and strong ties. The observed relationships between perceived weak and strong ties were stronger with the inclination to seek social information on SNS. In the mediation models where other connection strategies on SNS were entered as predictors of weak and strong ties, only the social information-seeking strategy emerged as a significant predictor. Consistent with previous research (Ellison et al., 2011), the present research implicates that using SNS to connect with existing and prospective contacts does not contribute to the formation of social capital as these usages do not provide individuals with the information needed to form meaningful social relationships. From the present research, the facilitative effect of active SNS usage on the perceived resources from weak and strong connections diminished when social information-seeking strategy was included in the analyses. This indicates that the facilitative effect of active SNS use on social capital found previously (e.g. 2014a, 2014b; Ellison et al., 2007) was due to its shared variance with the propensity to seek social information through SNS. Upon

controlling the shared variance, which is the simultaneous entry of these variables into the predictive models of both aspects of social capital, the significance of active SNS use diminished. In this light, the formation of social capital is facilitated by specific usages of SNS (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012; Guo et al., 2014). Henceforth, SNS are beneficial to the construction of social capital due to their convenience in extracting relevant social information to facilitate communication (Gray et al., 2013; Guo et al., 2014; Li & Peng, 2019). This implicates the importance of precise and specific operationalization of SNS usage.

Positive Orientation and Social Capital: Mediating Effects of SNS Usages

The present findings also suggest that SNS are not crucial to individuals with a high degree of positive orientation in establishing social connections with benefits. The present findings contribute to the limited understanding of the relationship between positive orientation and SNS usage. It was indicated that individuals with a high positive orientation were less likely to engage in the unregulated use of SNS (Błachnio et al., 2016). The present results add that these individuals do not engage in highly regulated use of SNS, as represented by the connection strategies outlined by Ellison et al. (2011). Despite the effectiveness of SNS in facilitating connections with others, individuals with high positivity may not use these online platforms to construct their social network. This converges with previous research that found that the benefits of SNS on social capital were dependent on individual differences (e.g. Ellison et al., 2007; Kahai & Lei, 2019). Due to the compensatory nature of SNS (Cheng et al., 2019), they serve to reduce social barriers faced by individuals with social deficits, such as low self-esteem and low satisfaction with life (Ellison et al., 2007). In light of this, these online platforms are redundant for those with inflated appraisals of themselves, the present, and forthcoming events. With bolstered self-efficacy (Alessandri et al., 2015; Barbaranelli et al., 2019; Caprara et al., 2010a, 2010b; Wasowska, 2019), individuals with high positivity do not require validation from SNS to successfully construct their social networks. Alternatively, these individuals are not active users of SNS, as indicated by the non-significant relationship between positive orientation and the intensity of SNS use. This implies that individuals with a high level of positivity have strict monitoring of their usage of SNS. As depicted in research, positive orientation is protective of overconfidence through a regulatory mechanism that serves to maintain the state of positivity at an optimal level (Laguna & Razmus, 2018), thus preventing its escalation into pathologies such as narcissism (e.g.

Campbell et al., 2002). Therefore, it is plausible that through this regulatory mechanism, individuals with a high level of positive orientation possess a high degree of self-control that prevents them from overusing SNS. Due to its promising theoretical and conceptual implications, this aspect marks a prospect for future research. Further consideration of the motivations behind SNS usage (uses and gratification theory; e.g. Rubin, 1984) and factors that induce adoption of these online platforms (technology acceptance model; e.g. Davis, 1989) can shed more light on this aspect.

Limitations and Conclusion

A few limitations should be noted. Firstly, although the conducted factor analysis supported the decision to retain a single factor, which is deemed to reflect on the hypothesized orientation towards positivity, measures of the aspects that constitute the present index of positive orientation differed from the standard measures employed (e.g. Caprara, 2009). This might hinder the comparability of the results. However, this supports the robustness of the theoretical construct of positive orientation, which marks a theoretical contribution to this finding. Additionally, throughout this research, there is no indication of the direct benefits from the measured bridging and bonding aspects of social capital. As research has highlighted the conceptual distinctions between perceived support and actual support received from social contacts (High & Buehler, 2019), there is a necessity to examine this aspect in forthcoming research. Presently, research on the psychometric properties of measures for SNS usage is lacking (Sigerson & Cheng, 2018). Consequently, interpretations of findings derived from these scales are vague. In the present research, the SNS intensity scale (Ellison et al., 2007), the measures for connection strategies on SNS (Ellison et al., 2011) and the aspects of social capital (Ellison et al., 2007), are instruments with unknown psychometric properties. This is another limitation of the present research, urging future research to develop measures for these aspects with sound psychometric properties. Another limitation of this research is its inability to draw causal conclusions. This is due to the correlational design employed. Furthermore, this design severely limits the understanding of the relationships between positive orientation, the usage of SNS, and social capital. Although longitudinal design is unable to provide conclusive results on causality, it can shed more light on the interactions of these variables over time. This is an aspect that can be pursued in future research. The limited generalizability of the present results is evident, since the demographics of the participants were unequally distributed. In spite of this limitation, the present research remains

novel for examining the relationship between positivity and social capital with SNS usage as intervening factors. While the present conceptual framework is theoretically valid, other factors may significantly interfere with the outlined relationship, such as motivations to use SNS. This is indicated by the small effect sizes of the mediation models. Thus, the non-exhaustive conceptual framework is another limitation of the present research. However, to provide an exhaustive conceptual framework is out of the present scope. Integrating positive orientation with other theoretical perspectives of SNS usage is a prospect for future research.

To conclude, individuals with a high positive orientation are able to form weak and strong ties with others. Although SNS are fundamental to the development of social capital, individuals with high levels of positive orientation do not rely on the use of SNS to form these connections. As suggested by the complexity of the directionality of the relationship between positive orientation and social capital, further expansion with a different theoretical approach is needed.

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Declarations

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