WHAT IS THE SNS NETWORK MEMBER'S ACTIVITY AND ATTITUDE?

Takatsugu Aoki
Waseda University
The graduate school of commerce
Nishi-waseda 1-6-1,Shinjuku-ku,
Tokyo,Japan

ABSTRACT

Will not the social networking services "SNS" be different in a certain kind of network characteristic in comparison with the internet community and the realÅ@ommunity as aÅ@onventional real social relations?
As the reasons we assume that it has three unique characteristics of SNS network as follows;

1. SNS basically consists of "strong interest for a person" and "relationships of mutual trust".
2. In SNS, real human relations and virtual human relations coexist.
3. In SNS, there is a unique and variety about the connection with other people.

In addition, it is thought that an activity of SNS members will vary with psychologically and intention of members from a property by ethics and a function in the unique world. Therefore, how will SNS affect it for the interactivity and the spread of information and the word-of-mouth communication in inside if activity of members changes variously?

This study consists of two parts. First part is structural analysis of an SNS network. In second part, how will a property of a virtual network based on real relations of SNS affect for "activity of relation to information" "activity of reliability" and "consumption activity"? We carried out quantitative investigation for an actual mixi members Å\even though mixi has members of the biggest scale in Japanese SNSÅ\after having shown a hypothesis and we processed the data which we acquired and statistically analyzed to see correlation of a variable of "a characteristic to be based on real relations" "A characteristic to be based on virtual relations" and "an activity variable in a hypothesis"
Both of part1 and part2 are based on "mixi" which is the representative and the biggest SNS network in Japan. （Over 10,000,000members at May .20.2007 ） This study presentation mainly consists of the part 1.

Keywords: SNS; a real characteristic; a virtual characteristic; information spread; word-of-mouth communications; reliability

SNS environment in Japan and "mixi"

1) Difference Internet Community and SNS

Negoro / Ebine (2000) define the internet community as follow. "A place on the network where people are interested in a certain kind of value gather" They denote the 4characteristic, ⅰ).An information exhibition, ⅱ).An information accumulation, ⅲ).An initiative of the information dispatch and the information receipt, ⅳ). A mutual reference of the information Therefore, It clearly different from the conventional real community, and do not depend on "regionality" and "presence of a bond" as a general rule. Furthermore, They point out that it have " The characteristics of the information accumulation " and "An characteristics that it is asynchronously possible for dispatch, receipt, reading". On the other hand, SNS is a network based on real acquaintance

relations unlike the internet community which have anonymity basically as the mainstream. By adding the virtual relations that is the friends of friends or the unknown people into SNS network, it would have a structure unlike conventional internet community. Furthermore, it is thought that a definition of SNS becomes apparent by trying to replace a part of "value" in the definition of the above-mentioned Internet community in "Involvement to a person" "Interest to a theme".
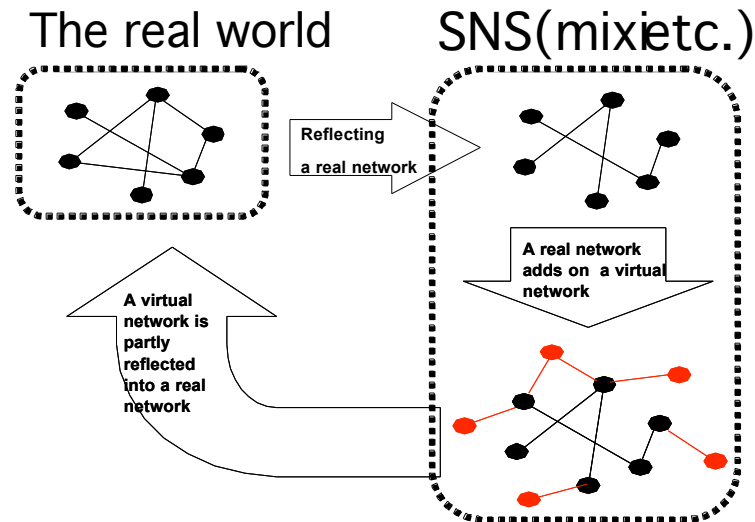
Figure A.

2) Comparison of American SNS and Japanese SNS

In U.S.A. where SNS was born, there are service brands such as Friendster and Orcut, MySpace, but understands that it adopt "an invitation system", trying to observe a characteristic of MySpace which is the largest network. Therefore it is not always that is the network model which depended on the real friends.There is main activity of the members for the purpose of being connected to the same hobby-oriented virtual members. In addition, these SNS have abundantly exhibition function of a song or a customized function of an original page, therefore, the entertainment tendency is remarkable.On the other hand, as for Japanese SNS, the largest mixi or GREE adopt "an invitation system". This is because mixi refers to a service model of Orcut and started up in Japan.These SNS are the network based on the real friends by "an invitation system". As for the activity of the participants, communication with a friend by "a diary" function plays a key role.In addition, mixi equips the function which can controll in detail the information disclosing range and "ASHIATO; means footprints in Japanese" function which can ascertain an access history of another person. Individually, giving a network action of members some choices and it does not damage a network. Furthermore, it is characteristic to include a function of monitor to another person who is unknown.

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3) Structure of mixi

Showing an example of the individual page screen of mixi to Figure B. Called friend relations on mixi "My mixi" and you can find the relations of the friends.In addition, tell you by an alert and give it when comment from a friend for your diary in mixi, and a message as an email function reaches it. Furthermore, you need not to be peeped out indefinite people with a profile and a diary because to be able to set in detail setting of a profile exhibition and a disclosing range of your diary.
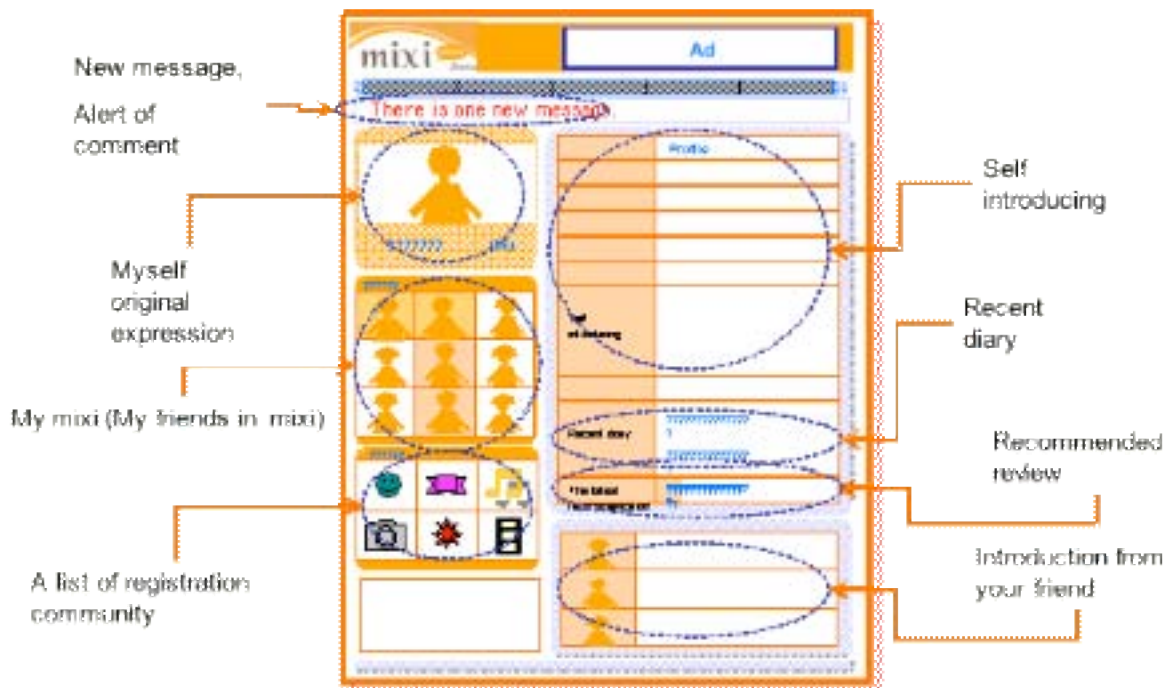

Figure B.

Figure C made human relations in mixi a chart. Although an interchange range is the whole in mixi as a general rule, by an access control function, you can limit it. Though based on the real friends relations, but actually, as for "My mixi", unkown person is

registered with there basically, too. In other words, real relations and virtual relations coexist.
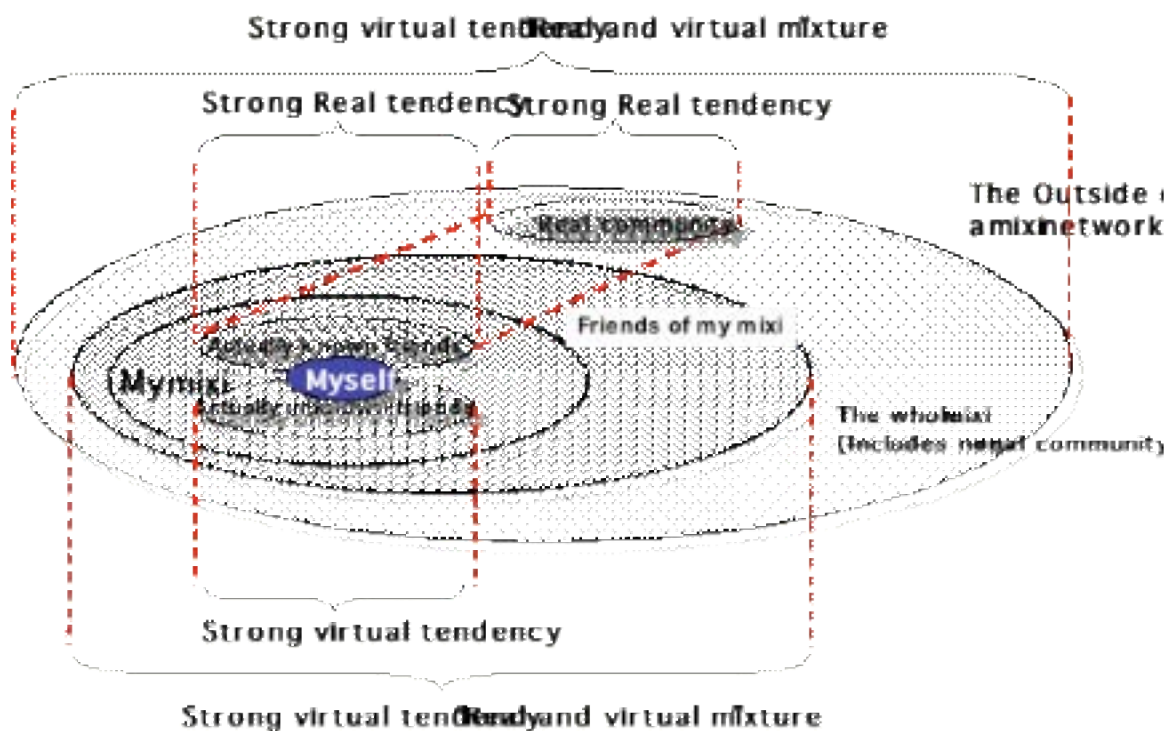

Figure C. The Structure of mixi Member's Relation

Factor analysis to determine an action of mixi members

In mixi, members oneself can control an exhibition of information by the recommended tacit rule and a function equipped with, and can know access from strange people promptly. In addition, stem from "trust of the relations" that acquaintance relations link

to by "an invitation system". These have a profound effect on the psychological side for a entrybarrier to mixi of a participant and an activity barrier in mixi of a participant. In other words, it is mixed with a tendency to actions such as an open tendency or closed tendency of a participant and determines an action in a network and complicates it. It is thought that mixi differs essentially from the conventional virtual net community in that network characteristics (Figure 4)

Table A.

⬇ Barrier down   ⬆ Barrier up

System property		Entry barrier		Activity barrier (In mixi)		An effect of "a systematic property"	As a result, the property that is brou...
		Open tendency	Closed tendency	Open tendency	Closed tendency		
Recommended rule in mixi	Real name exhibition	⬆⬇	⬆	⬇	⬆	* Grasp of an another person attribute * Reduction of uncertainty * Specification of a suspicious individual * The formation of a closed network which you intended	* The formation of "real oriented" trust / a relief network * Improvement of reliability of information Self-propagation of a trust network
	Profile exhibi...	⬆⬇	⬆	⬇	⬆		
Functional characteristic	Invitation syst...	⬆⬇	⬇	⬆	⬇		
	Network self-control	⬆⬇	⬇	⬆	⬇		
	Mutual reference of the visiting track	⬆	⬇	⬆	⬆⬇	* Monitor of a suspicious individual * Grasp of an another person action * A message of silence	
	Mutual reference of the access log	⬆	⬇	⬆	⬆⬇	* Grasp of an another person action	
	Mutual confirmation of a comment note (RSS function)	⬇	⬆	⬇	⬆	* Grasp of an another person action * A message of silence	

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Influence to a consumption action (Application to the marketing)

The Information of mixi members interacts variously. In mixi inside, the information which is affecting consumption actions such as evaluation about a product and service circulates.How much influence will these information give members aspect each other as expected?It followed that we showed it in Graph A as a result of questionary survey for mixi members.By influenced from the evaluation of a friend of direct acquaintance and the evaluation of indirect-known people such as the friends of a friend, this graph denotes over 25% ratio that purchased an object product and service at least one time.It extrapolates that the influence of information of known people is actually strong more than the information of strange people. Reversely, it is thought that the minus effect is strong in the same way.
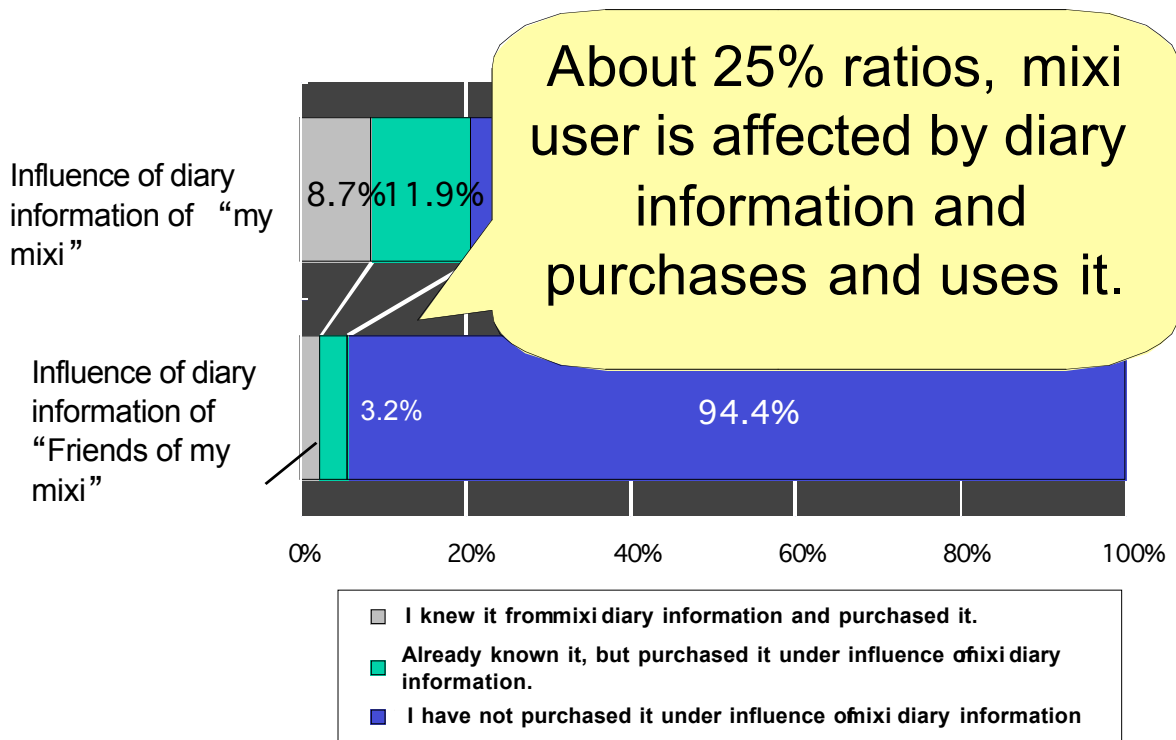
Graph A.

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