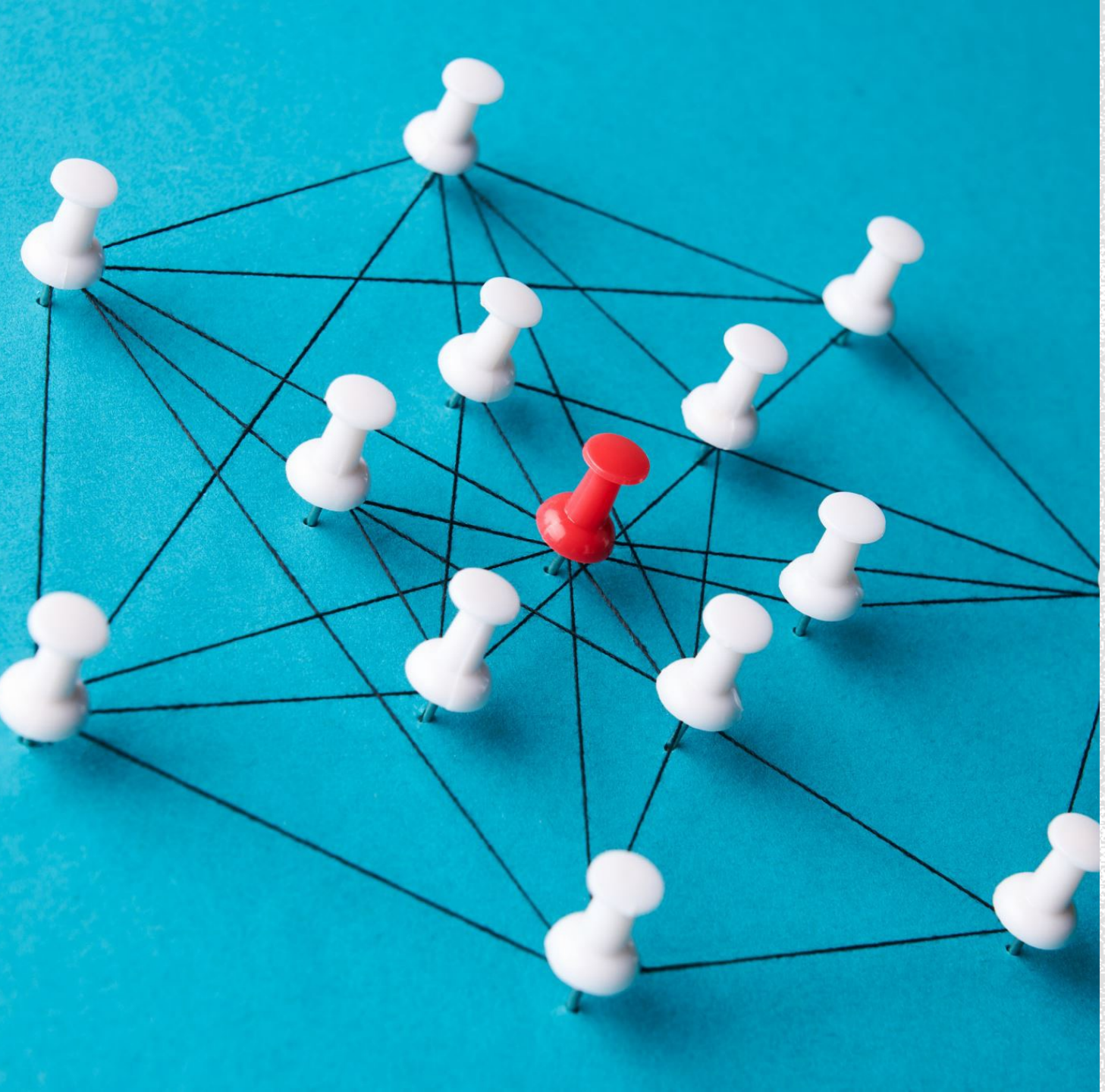

NETWORKED INFLUENCE: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF SOCIAL NETWORK RESEARCH ON INFLUENCERS

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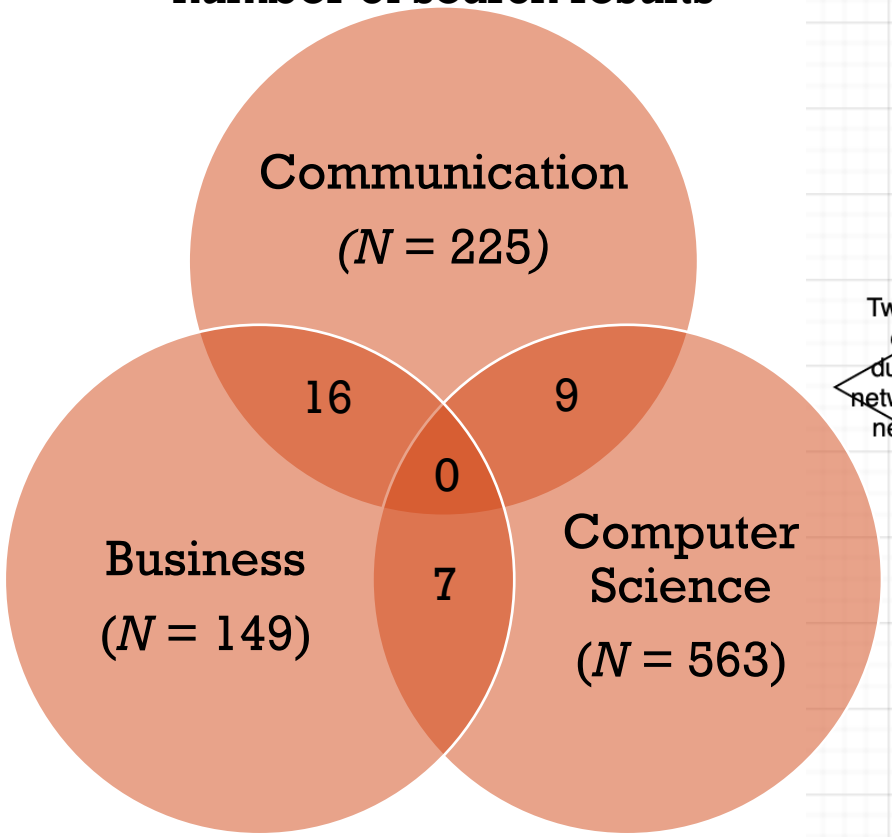
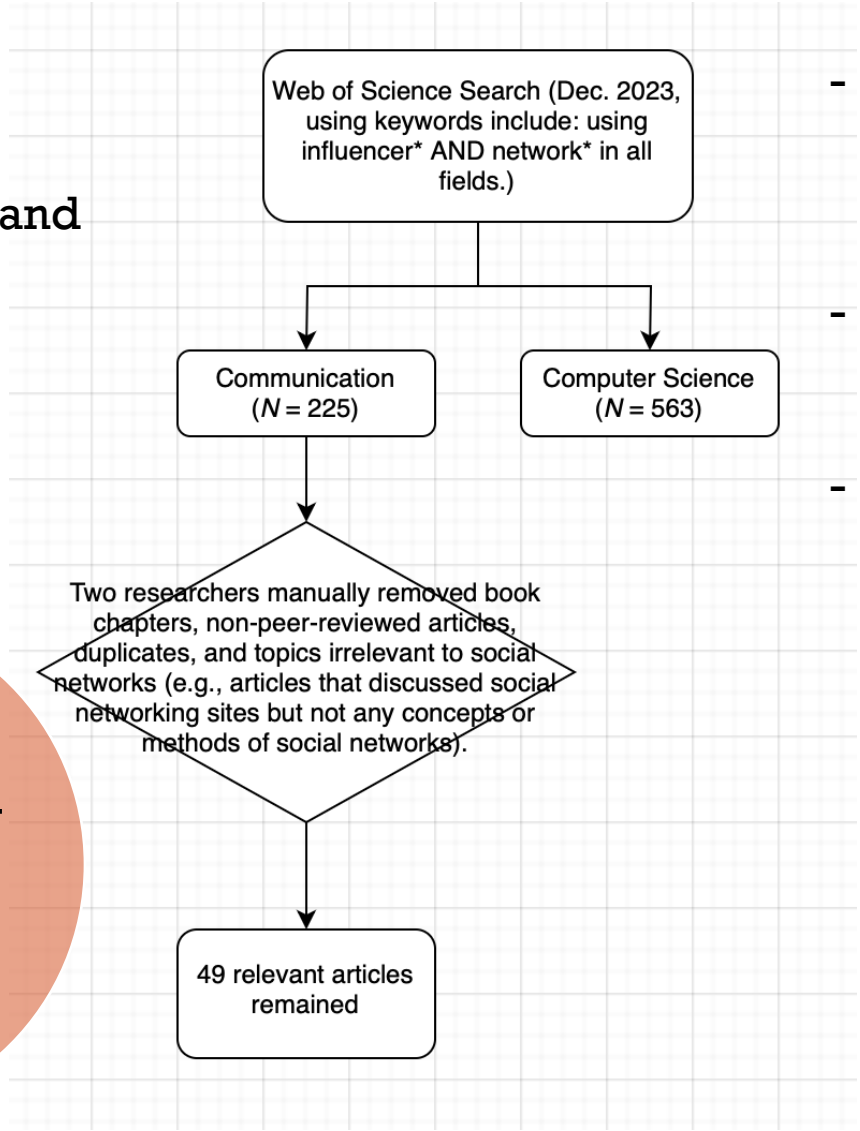
PROJECT GOALS

- 1. Systematic literature review of the topics of "influencer" and "social networks"
- 2. Empirical research misinformation sharing network on Facebook to fill the identified research gaps

SECTION 1: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

Three largest field publishing influencer-network-related studies, and number of search results





- Our systematic literature review follows the PRISMA review guidelines (Shamseer et al., 2015)
- The literature Review of the communication field is done
- The review in the field of CS is still ongoing

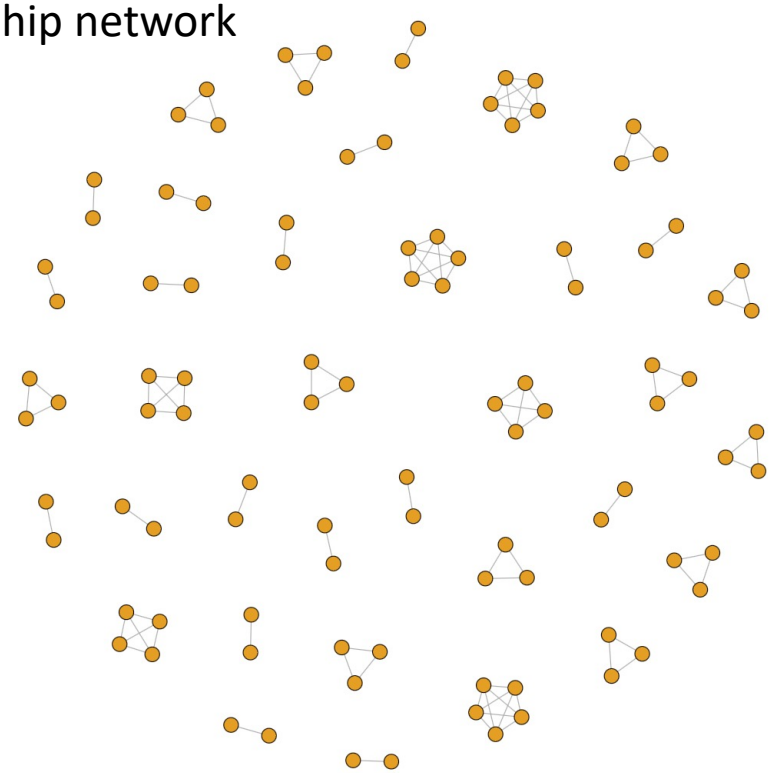
LITERATURE REVIEW CHECKLIST

- The main research question of the article
- Research Goals
- Key concepts and definition
- Theories
- Network-related contribution
- Methods (e.g., data source, analytical methods, network construction, and measures of influencers)
- Relevant findings (related to network and influencer)

KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE COMMUNICATION FIELD

- A social network angle to influencers is still largely lacking, and a research community within the communication field is not yet established. Community is yet to form within the field.

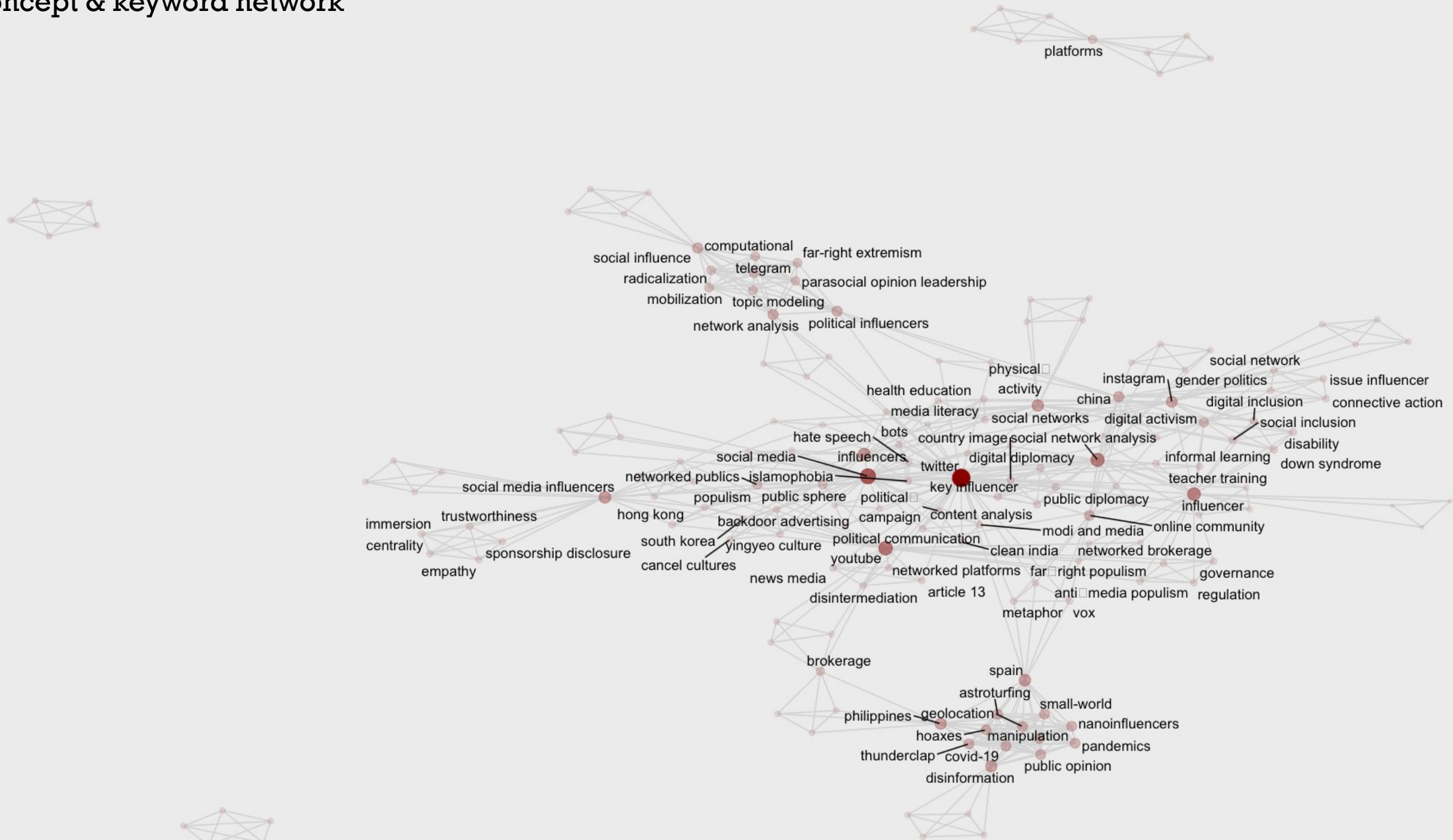
Figure 1. Co-authorship network



KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE COMMUNICATION FIELD (CONT.)

- Most communication research overlooks the network positions of different types of influencers (e.g., micro, macro, mega-influencers)
- The identification of influencers was primarily limited to two types—by their number of followers, number of reposts, or centrality measures. Machine learning algorithms in the computer science realm may inform a more creative way of identifying influencers (e.g., measuring influencers' value influence in others' information adoption patterns; Williams et al., 2023; Yang, 2024).
- Most contributions are empirical or contextual. Methodological and theoretical contributions are rare.

Concept & keyword network



SECTION 2: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

- Context: Two Facebook information co-sharing datasets. Preliminary exploration was conducted in the context of misinformation sharing (i.e., Stolen Election and Climate Denialism).
- The empirical analysis is still ongoing. Our plan is to:
  - - Identify nuanced types of influencers. For example, in addition to existing types of super-spreaders, initiators, and amplifiers (e.g., Liang & Su, 2023), brokers, an additional type could be maintainers, who maintain the conversation through consistent engagement.
  - - We wish to study the outcome of influence from a multilevel perspective: message-level influence, and individual-level, and community-level influence.
- Hypothesis-testing through longitudinal network analysis: bridging between identifying influencers and finding their influence over time in terms of information spread.

THE NEXT STEPS

- Complete the systematic literature review, identify innovative methods from the field of CS, and apply them to the theoretical advancement of a network view of influencers in the field of communication.
- Compare influencer identification methods for their advantages and limitations.
- Apply empirical analysis on multiple contexts and offer theoretical contributions to the synthesis and advancement of the social network view of influencers.

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THANK YOU!

Please reach out with feedback or questions: yli360@syr.edu

Thank you for your time and attention!

I am incredibly sorry for not being able to present my research in progress. I am traveling for the ICA conference, and my return flight schedule conflicts with our meeting time.