Hybrid networking platform for minority groups in accessing labour market

Understanding the role of Online and Offline Social Capital interplay in Resource Accessibility

X23 Science in Society
Cecilia Olivieri
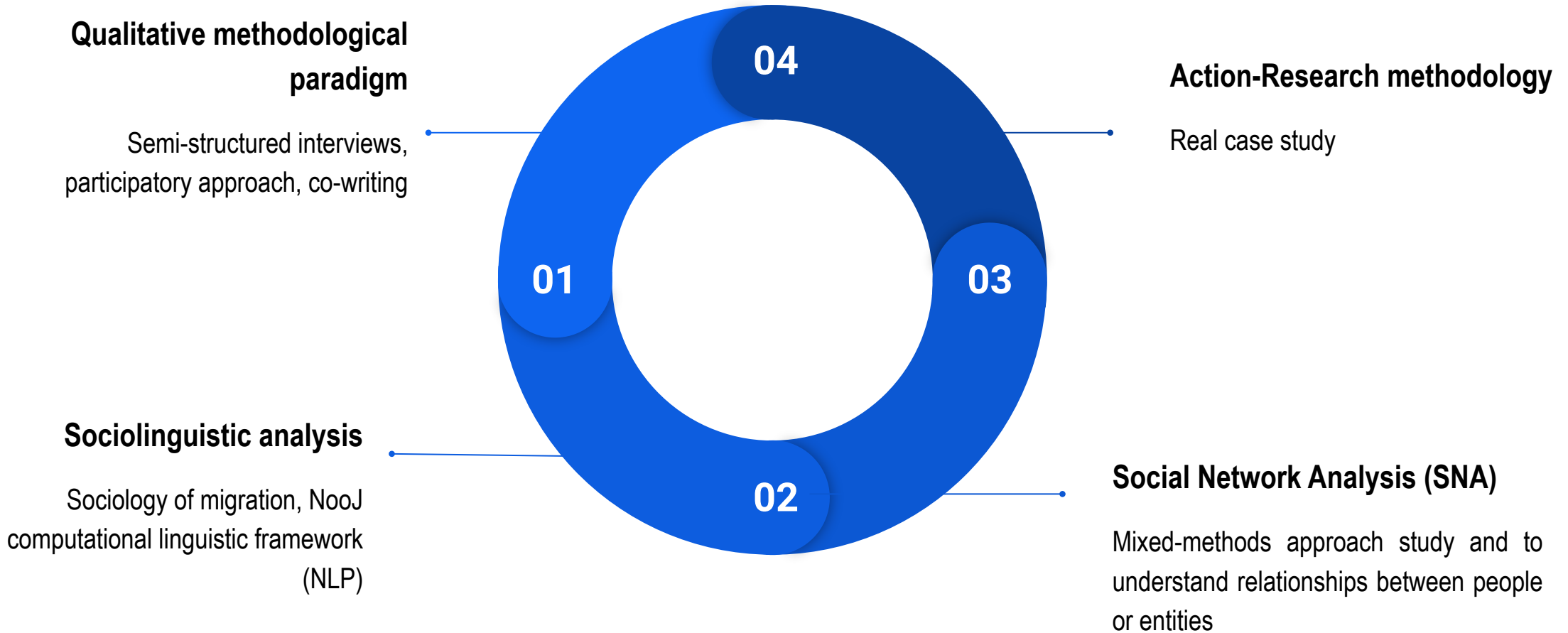Lorenzo Maggio Laquidara
Agathe Semlali
Jiwon Shin

Who are we?
Our study's scope and *history*

X23-Science in Society, a branch of X23 born with the scope of putting its knowledge at the service of community in order to sustain the growth of a more ecological ecosystem, is a private research center based on the outskirts of Milan (IT) with relevant experience in international projects, including the public co-funded ones, in particular on migrants/refugees' self-entrepreneurship. Since 2016, X23 has followed different topics and projects in this field, led together with ~60 partners from all over Europe, Africa, and the world.

Methodological framework

Qualitative methodological paradigm

Semi-structured interviews, participatory approach, co-writing

Action-Research methodology

Real case study

Sociolinguistic analysis

Sociology of migration, NooJ computational linguistic framework (NLP)

Social Network Analysis (SNA)

Mixed-methods approach study and to understand relationships between people or entities

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Social Network Analysis

SNA is a quali-quantitative analysis tool used t**o identify and understand relationships between people or, in other words, social networks.** It visually displays data so researchers can see behavioral relationships at the micro level (individual, institutional) and patterns at the macro or network level.

SNA presents a potentially useful tool for understanding a range of network relationships, including levels of collaboration and exchange; the existence of central actors; excluded populations; and absent connections among individuals, organizations, or groups..(Johnson & Chew, 2021)
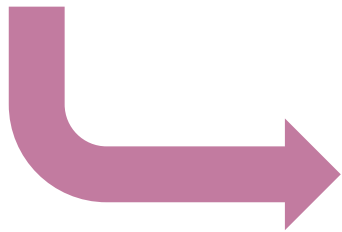
Application examples:

SNA can help answer how differences in individuals' networks explain their risk for contracting COVID-19 or how racially segregated schools affect a young person's friendship networks

Social Capital concept

P. Bourdieu defines *Social capital* as aggregate of the actual potential resources that are linked to the possession of a durable network or, in other words, to membership in a group (1986).

By analysing the patterns of connections, interactions, and exchanges within a network, **SNA** provides a method for assessing the presence and distribution of **social capital** and quantify its variables.

Online and Offline

In today's interconnected world, the rise of **new communication technologies and online social networks** has added a new dimension to social interactions; individuals, including minority groups, maintain ild social capital through both online and offline networks.

Case study: AFROBLOOMY

- Online platform, mainly active in the Ile-de-France area, **orienting young Afrodescendant women to their professional career,**

- **Connecting** young graduates, employees and expert Afrodescendant women and creating an inclusive space for sharing experiences, knowledge and support

- It is a **hybrid platform** with both a **virtual dimension** - mainly oriented towards offering webinars, training activities and digital networking - and an **in-presence dimension** that complements the networking experience with proximity and human involvement through activities and workshops
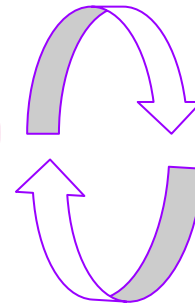
Research plan

Our Research methodology will rely on **mixed-methods Social Network Approach**:

**Qualitative and
Language-based approaches**

Quantitative SNA techniques

Semi-structured
interviews

Ego-networks
building

Map the existing
formal connections
and their
characteristics in
datasets

Longitudinal approach

Outputs

- **Qualitative mapping of online and offline structure and dynamics** (and their mutual influence): the research can provide insights into the structure and dynamics of the online network. By applying SNA, the study can identify key network members, influential nodes, and the overall structure of the network.

- **Measuring Social Capital:** Using social capital theory in conjunction with SNA, the study can quantify the social capital within online and offline networks and their interconnection. This includes identifying the resources, information, and opportunities that flow through both networks and assessing how members can leverage this capital for professional advancement.

- **Identifying Critical Connectors**: The research may reveal individuals, activities or environments that play pivotal roles in connecting various members within both networks. These "triggers" can be crucial for disseminating information, job opportunities, and support, and their identification can inform strategies for enhancing social capital.

Outcomes

Support virtuous network growth: this investigation can provides further critical information on how to develop and sustain the growth of online-offline network systems. Research results will provide virtuous strategies to ensure networks effectiveness and how to leverage their assets for professional opportunities.
Actionable insights that can substantively enhance the efficacy of networking-building and resource access within similar contexts will be thus extracted.

Thank you!:

X23 Science in Society

Cecilia Olivieri -
cecilia.olivieri@x-23.org

Agathe Semlali
agathe.semlali@x-23.org

Lorenzo Maggio Laquidara
lorenzo.maggio@x-23.org

Jiwon Shin
jiwon.shin@x-23.org