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Using Community Visualization to Stimulate Participation in Online Communities

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ABSTRACT

A motivational community visualization was designed to encourage users to participate more actively and to bring more contributions in an online community. The visualization is inspired by the theory of social comparison in social psychology. It evolved through two designs: a fixed and a customizable one for two different communities of students sharing papers – one of graduate students in a research lab and another one for students in an undergraduate class. The article discusses the features of the two communities, each of the two visualization designs, and their advantages and disadvantages.

Keywords: participation, online communities, social visualization

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