

## **Social Networking and the Latino Population**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The evident use of different use of social networking sites is extremely important in the actual creation of different strategic plans for communication. This study focuses on understanding what personal gratifications the Latino population actually receives from taking advantage of these various networking sites that are currently available these days, most especially the two mostly used these days, Facebook and Twitter. The focus here is to have a complete understanding on the actual process of reaching out to the growing population in the United States. Since the Latino communities including the rate in which they actually make good use of social networks are growing rapidly. It is understandable that strategic communicators should understand how this particular group is reached with the use of two of the best and most common social networking platforms that are available currently. This research also focuses on seeking the answer of two extremely important questions for study. The first one is relating to the gratifications that the Latino community actually receives out of their use of these different social networking sites. Second, the actual view of the Latino community towards Facebook users and how they are different from the users of Twitter. In order to get the answers to these questions, this research makes good use of the uses and gratifications approach in order to achieve and understand the social networking pattern that is

commonly used among many Latinos. This particular theory focuses on the way in which individuals decide to use various communication channels, and what they actually receive afterwards as gratification after doing so. These questions are extremely important since it has been observed that there is a lack of available literature that is focused on this topic. At the same time, there are also only a few social networking sites which are also related to the actual uses and gratifications studies that are available. This study works with the purpose of closing the obvious gap in research. This is done by surveying 170 participants, with 45% of them as members of the Latino community. The rest of the participants are non-Latinos. It is based on the participants' use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as their views of other social networking sites. The distribution of survey was conducted mainly through Facebook and Twitter as well as via email. Quite interestingly, the results found show that most Latinos use these social networking sites mainly to kill the time, to search for information, as well as for social advocacy reasons as compared to those who are considered as non-Latinos.

Quite interestingly, the information available regarding the perceptions as well as the views present obvious information that most Latinos look at Twitter users in a positive light when compared to actual Facebook users. This study is quite relevant because it can certainly enable for future researchers with different categories in order to potentially use this particular approach.

## **INTRODUCTION**

There is no question that different social networking sites have now become a very important part of our personal lives. The study conducted by the American Life and Internet Project of PEP

Research Center focuses on measuring “the particular impact of the internet and social networking sites on communities, individuals, families, work and home, daily life, education, health care, including civic and political life” (Haman, 2014), emphasizing on a 5 percent increase in the use of different social networking sites by Americans in a particular period of six months, starting from January of 2012 to June of the same year, showing a good 70% increase in the use of different social networking sites starting from the year 2007, down to the latter part of the year 2012. There is an obvious increase in the actual percentage of use among different Americans to 80 percent (Myle & Cabb, 2011; Myar & Drenn, 2014). Aside from the stable increase in using social networking sites use among majority of the Americans, the percentage of usage among many Latinos, including those who have available access to the Internet has also dramatically improved. The access is either done on desktop computers as well as through modern mobile access. This has resulted to the closure of the so-called digital divide quite effectively.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The method used in the identification of the final output is the uses and gratifications approach. It clearly represents the research done on how certain individuals decide to use mass media and communication channels, including specific gratifications that they also receive from such sources. The team conducting the research began way back in 1950’s when they studied first how and why certain individuals use particular forms of media including newspapers, radio, and television. Along with this theory and approach, the existence of an active audience where viewers, listeners, as well as readers make good use and choose different options for media and programming so as to meet and gratify all their needs. In the end, the discretion as to who uses

these social networking sites actually does not matter, but knowing the underlying reasons have made this project an even better one.

### **CONCLUSION**

This particular study focuses in the determination why the Latino community enjoys Facebook and Twitter, including potentially understanding their perception of the users coming from various social networking sites. Aside from that, it also works in the expansion as well as the strengthening on the knowledge about the social networking sites among Latinos which are also available for the researchers. Most of the time, Latinos make good use of Facebook and Twitter in order to kill time and just let it pass. The researchers have also done a lot for their personal advocacy better as compared to those who are non-Latinos.

### **REFERENCES**

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