



Facebook, Friends, and Fear

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Introduction

Extensive research has been done on social networking sites such as Twitter, MySpace, and Facebook. This research has addressed many aspects of how social networks have changed and continue to change cultural norms. Our research focuses on the barriers, apprehensions, and gratifications survey participants report about use of Facebook.

Purpose

- Identify who uses Facebook and why.
- Identify whether or not different generational cohorts perceive different barriers to using or not using Facebook.
- Identify the perceived barriers, apprehension and gratifications sought by users of Facebook.

Research Question and Hypothesis

- RQ3: What gratification do people get when using Facebook?
- RH4: There is a correlation between frequency of use of Facebook and communication apprehension.

Works Cited

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Generational Cohort	Range in Birth Years	Age Range
Traditionalists	1925-1945	87-67
Baby Boomers	1946-1964	66-48
Generation X	1965-1981	47-31
Generation Y	1982-1992	30-18

Area of Apprehension	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Public communication	301	3.34	.77
Group communication	301	3.78	.64
Dyadic Communication	301	4.02	.60

Data Collection Method

- Produced an online survey through Qualtrics.
- The sampling method used was a purposive convenience sample and we used non-proportional quota sampling (Wrench, 2008).
- Participants self-reported their age. Those less than 18 years of age did not take the survey.
- Participants were self-reported users and non-users of Facebook.
- Total of 343 participants.
- Distribution was done through a Facebook event as well as via email. Over 2100 people were invited to participate through Facebook. Email messages were sent to the heads of Nursing, Communication and Journalism and the English department requesting the survey be distributed widely through email. Additionally, the survey was sent to members of the research team's personal contact lists. We hoped to create a snowball effect and have the survey be passed along.
- The survey was available for participation from November 8th, 2001 through November 14, 2011.

Method Of Analysis

- A survey was distributed through Qualtrics and consisted of open ended and closed ended questions
- Data analysis was based on generational cohort and sex/
- The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS. The tests used were Cronbach Alpha, ANOVA and Pearson Correlation Coefficient
- The qualitative data was analyzed using Thomas' process of inductive coding. Thomas' process consists of identifying key points, or words, are marked with a series of codes. Then, the codes are grouped into similar concepts. From there, categories are formed and patterns are identified (Glaser, 1992).

Results

RQ3: What gratification do people get when using Facebook?

•Gratification sought by Facebook users was analyzed by three dimensions: General information seeking, entertainment and interpersonal utility

•The Cronbach alpha reliability for these items was .86

RH4: There is a correlation between frequency of use of Facebook and communication apprehension.

•Pearson Correlation Coefficient was run to determine the correlation between frequency of use of Facebook and communication apprehension.

•The results of this test were (p=.000, n=301).

Implications

Apprehension

•26% of the participants who report they have their own Facebook account reported no apprehensions to using Facebook.

•.3% of participants reported apprehension in each area measured: Public communication, group communication and dyadic communication.

•77% of users of Facebook reported logging in 7 or more times per week which supports RH4, that the more people log into Facebook, the fewer apprehensions they have.

•Baby Boomers reported significantly more apprehensions than Generation X or Generation Y.

•Overall, all generations reported "time" to be a barrier to frequency of use.

Gratifications

•Generation X and Generation Y participants reported significantly more gratification using Facebook than did Baby Boomers.

•Both generations received the most gratification in the area of entertainment. Posting and viewing pictures was the most commonly self-reported gratification.

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