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# Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement: A Uses and Gratifications Perspective

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Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement:  
A Uses and Gratifications Perspective

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
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## ABSTRACT

Uses and gratifications theory posits that media use is an intentional and selective process by individuals in order to satisfy emotional needs. Basis this theory, the author conducted an exploratory study to compare social media engagement with four factors of acculturation among Hispanic Americans. These variables were also compared to the variables of education level and generation in order to test for a relationship. An online questionnaire captured data from a sample of Hispanic American participants (N = 85). Correlation analysis was performed, and results indicated that generation had a significant relationship with social media engagement and three out of four of the factors of acculturation.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Hispanics represent the fastest growing segment of the American population over the last decade. In 2010, Hispanics accounted for 16% of the American population at 50.5 million people. By comparison, this same population was 35.3 million people ten years earlier. This represents a 43% growth rate in the Hispanic population over the last decade. The Hispanic demographic also represented over half of the nation's population growth from the year 2000 to the year 2010. Hispanic adults aged 18 and over constituted 14.2% of the American population in 2010, as compared to 12.2% of African-Americans and 4.7% of Asians (Passel, Cohn & Lopez, 2011).

The rapid explosion in the Hispanic population is forecasted to continue. By the year 2050, the Hispanic demographic is estimated to comprise 29% of the U.S. population. This will represent almost one-third of all Americans and a 214% increase in the size of this population group. Conversely, the non-Hispanic white population will decrease from 67% today to an estimated 47% in 2050 (Passel & Cohn, 2008).

In previous years, population growth among Hispanics was attributed to immigration. Recently that trend is in decline, with Hispanic immigration being surpassed by Asians (Yen, 2012). According to Yen, the increase in the Hispanic population is due to higher birth rates among immigrants already settled in the United States. *Acculturation* of the Hispanic demographic is occurring, as well as among other population groups of foreign origin. Acculturation is the process of "cultural modification



of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture” (Merriam-Webster’s).

There is little dispute among academics that mass media is a highly influential and powerful tool in the acculturation process, and many have studied its effects upon creation of knowledge about American culture (Albarran & Umphrey, 1993; Chaffee, Nass, & Yang, 1991; Greenberg, 1986; Kim, 1977; Messaris & Woo, 1991; Tan, 1988; Walker, 1999). The media channel upon which many of these studies focus is television. While television was a relevant media source upon which to focus in previous years, the rapid introduction and diffusion of social media has presented new opportunities for communications research.

User statistics illustrate the relevance of social media in the world today. Facebook recently announced that it has surpassed 1 billion active users on its site, based on monthly traffic (Bilton & Sengupta, 2012). Facebook is far and away the most popular social media site based on number of subscribers, but it exists in a highly crowded social media environment. Other popular sites such as YouTube (4 billion daily views), Google+ (400 million users), and Twitter (140 million users) also compete for attention, among dozens of others with varying degrees of success. Hispanics specifically account for a large number of social media users, as described by Carrasquillo (2011):

*A recent report by the Pew Internet and American Life Project found that while online non-Hispanic whites and non-Hispanic blacks use Twitter at 5 percent and 13 percent respectively, 18 percent of Hispanics online are Twitter users. When it comes to Facebook, it’s more of the same. In all, 54.2 percent of Hispanics online regularly use Facebook, just above non-Latino blacks at 47.7 percent and non-Latino whites at 43 percent.*

With the prevalence of Hispanics on social media, the opportunity exists to explore the relationship between acculturation and social media engagement. One potential theoretical basis for study of this relationship is Uses and Gratifications Theory.

Uses and Gratifications Theory was postulated by Katz, Haas and Gurevitch (1973) as a means of explaining what motivations drive human behavior, and how certain information sources are used to fulfill needs and desires. The underlying premise of the theory is that humans actively seek and process information that fulfills their needs. If an information source does not satisfy their needs, they reject that information and seek alternatives. A historical perspective on Uses and Gratifications Theory is offered in Chapter 2.

Based on existing literature, the influence of traditional media channels such as television upon the acculturation process is apparent. However, a gap in the scholarship exists with regards to the relationship between acculturation and newer communications technology such as social media. This gap affords the opportunity for current study, based on Uses and Gratifications Theory, to collect quantifiable data for the purpose of exploring this topic.

The current study is relevant to the field of strategic communication because it offers insight into the values and motivations that entice Hispanics to engage in social media communications. An understanding of these qualities of Hispanics, particularly in their role as consumers, would benefit corporations who seek an audience with Hispanics for the purpose of marketing to them via social media. Insight into Hispanic motivations would allow businesses to more effectively target, attract and maintain a growing

Hispanic consumer base. This knowledge served as the impetus for the research to pursue the current study.

In the following chapter, a historical literature review of Uses and Gratifications and its compatibility with technology is presented, followed by an introduction and elaboration upon the concept of acculturation.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter provides an historical overview of Uses and Gratifications Theory, as well as an in-depth review of acculturation.

### Origin of Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and gratifications theory (U&G) has evolved over decades of research to become a widely accepted postulate regarding the motivations that drive human consumption of media and information. The historical origin of the theory can be traced back to Herzog (1941), who produced a study of radio listeners and their gratifications for listening to soap opera broadcasts. In her study Herzog identified three gratifications which would form the basis for future research: emotional release, imagination, and adjustment. Emotional release suggested that radio listeners chose to listen in order to relieve tensions of everyday life and empathize with others who shared their feelings. Imagination was the ability of listeners to place themselves into the stories and fantasize about becoming the characters; in other words fantasy became reality for a brief time. Lastly, adjustment reflected an ideology by which listeners could appraise their respective situation and make changes to their lives.

Around this same time Maslow (1943) introduced his theory of human motivation. This theory would later evolve into what is today accepted as Maslow's hierarchy of needs; a theory that is rooted in psychology and offers an explanation for the motivations that allow for human survival and development. The results of the study were

later developed into a pyramid, not created by Maslow himself, with the most basic of human needs at the bottom tier, including breathing, food, and sleep. The pyramid progresses up through the tiers with the assumption that needs in the lower tier have been satisfied. As needs at the lower levels are met, humans move up the pyramid to fulfill their needs in the higher levels. The tiers in sequence from lowest to highest are labeled physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. At any given time, humans work to satisfy needs in all five tiers. Since fulfillment of higher tiers is contingent upon fulfillment of needs in lower tiers, should survival become threatened then people will focus on fulfillment of their lower tier needs and sacrifice fulfillment of their needs in the higher tiers.

The basic needs are those which are physiological in nature, and which humans must fulfill in order to exist. An example Maslow paints of a physiological need is hunger, which is the most dire and basic of human needs. If this need is not satisfied, the person will perish. Hunger and other physiological needs therefore take precedence over all others. Upon achievement of basic needs gratification, the next level of needs is safety. Maslow establishes the need for safety based on the behaviors of infants whose emotional and intellectual capacities are not yet developed. Babies understand only very simple needs; among them the feeling of security. When an infant senses a disturbance in its safety and comfort, such as pain, they immediately and outwardly express it. Adults are trained to inhibit these reactions, but this does not mean they do not exist. Humans never lose their need for security; they just become less reliant upon others to provide it as they mature. With security gratifications met, the next need is love. This need is synonymous with affection and the development of human relationships for the purpose

of social inclusion. The need for love now begins to transcend the physical gratifications obtained for basic and safety needs, and moves into the emotional and cognitive realm of gratifications sought. The need for love is a need for emotional fulfillment, and is disassociated from sex which is a purely physiological need according to Maslow. The next need is esteem, which is reflective of a human desire for self-respect and praise from others. This need satisfies the gratifications of achievement and confidence, as well as recognition and appreciation by others. Fulfillment of these needs affirms self-esteem and provides feelings of strength and capability to overcome the challenges one is destined to encounter throughout life. The final need, once all other needs are satisfied, is that of self-actualization. This need addresses human potential, and the ability of people to surpass their current state in order to achieve more and become more than they currently are. This need can be exemplified through an athlete's desire to win a championship or for an employee to gain a promotion at work. Maslow argues that gratification of all five needs creates a satisfied person, who is content and happy in their life.

The terms uses and gratifications was first penned by are Katz, Haas and Gurevitch (1973), and these three men are often cited as the brain trust behind the formation of uses and gratifications theory. This theory was developed as an alternative to the "hypodermic needle" or "magic bullet" theories of mass communications, which posited that media audiences were easily influenced and susceptible to assimilate any message they received without interpretation or cognition (Severin & Tankard, 2001, p. 262). Although the hypodermic needle theory was never attributed to any particular scholar, it was the overwhelmingly accepted theory of mass communication prior to the research conducted by these three scholars. Over time the magic bullet theory was

shunned in favor of uses and gratifications theory, which gradually chipped away at its credibility and eventually rendered it obsolete.

Based on Maslow, the authors described three principal needs which media can fulfill: cognitive, affective and integrative. Cognitive needs fulfill the desire for information, knowledge and understanding. Affective needs relate to aesthetic or emotional desires. Integrative needs are a mixture of cognitive and affective, and most often relate to the desire for credibility, status and self-actualization. These needs were cross-analyzed with various technological media channels available at the time, such as newspapers, books, television, and radio. The consideration of technology is an important variable introduced by the authors, and one which will be discussed in more detail further on in this study. Among the discoveries made during this research, several stand out. The first is that individuals indicated a hierarchy of importance related to information attainment; newspapers were most important, followed by radio, television, and books. Secondly, affective needs are satisfied by different media types dependent on the specific need. Self-reflection and discovery are supported by books; entertainment is best served by television and books, and self-confidence is promoted through newspapers. The study also briefly touched upon education level as an indicator of media choice; with higher educated individuals selecting books and newspapers while those of lower education prefer television. Another minor aspect of the study was related to media selection as a byproduct of socialization. Television nurtured strong connections with family and friends, but books and newspapers provided users with the necessary information and content to establish communications.

The following year in 1974, Katz and Gurevitch teamed up with Blumler to extrapolate upon uses and gratifications theory they had put forth through a historical narrative of research to date, as well as critique their own work and propose alternatives. One interesting distinction that authors point out was the lack of theory around psychological needs associated with uses and gratifications, and calling for more research into this area. It was fortuitous that around that same time McGuire (1974) offered a detailed perspective on the association between psychological motivations and communication gratifications. McGuire raises the issue of what individual psychological needs are fulfilled through information consumption, and provides an extensive explanation of sixteen human motivations for media use. These motivations are categorized as either cognitive or affective; whereby cognitive motives satisfy a need for information and ideas and affective motives emphasize feelings and emotional states. Within each of these two frameworks, further distinction is given between current equilibrium and growth. Current equilibrium is concerned with maintenance of the status quo and continuity, whereas growth is concerned with development and change. For ease of reference, these sixteen motivations are illustrated in the psychological motivations matrix outlined in Figure 1.

What follows is a brief summation of each of the sixteen motivations:

*Consistency*: Concerned with cohesion to inner experiences and consistency

*Attribution*: Focus on the external orientation and interpretation of environmental stimuli

*Categorization*: Concerned with categorical organization of experiences for ease of reference



*Objectification:* Presents a deficiency in cognitive ability and subsequent reliance on external cues for formation of attitudes

*Autonomy:* Depicts a self-realization through development of an independent identity

*Stimulation:* Emphasizes an external orientation driven by curiosity, novelty and exploration

*Teleological:* Analogous to computer coding, and reflects the degree of acuity between situational perception and pre-defined outcomes

*Utilitarian:* Demonstrates the ability to solve problems and approach situations with a desire for expansion of knowledge or skills

*Tension-reduction:* Seeks escape from arousal and establishment of a Zen-like state

*Expressive:* Obtaining gratification through self-expression and acts of remembrance

*Ego-defensive:* Concerned with self-image development and preservation

*Reinforcement:* Focuses on behavior for attainment of rewards that functioned similarly in past situations

*Assertion:* Seeks competition, achievement and success in order to enhance self-esteem

*Affiliation:* Relates to altruism as a function of seeking affection and acceptance in relationships

*Identification:* The acquisition of role identities for self-acceptance and satisfaction

*Modeling:* Focuses on the human tendency to empathize with others and to model our behavior on that which is observed

		<b>Cognitive</b>		<b>Affective</b>	
		<i>Equilibrium</i>	<i>Growth</i>	<i>Equilibrium</i>	<i>Growth</i>
Active	Consistency	Autonomy	Tension-reduction	Assertion	
	Attribution	Stimulation	Expressive	Affiliation	
Passive	Categorization	Teleological	Ego-defensive	Identification	
	Objectification	Utilitarian	Reinforcement	Modeling	

Figure 1: Psychological Motivations Matrix (McGuire, 1974)

### Evolution of Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and gratifications theory has been replicated in recent years through new research. Bracken and Lombard (2001) performed a study which copied the methods employed by Katz et al., and tested for motivations toward media selection among college students. Subjects were asked to rate the importance of goals, and then asked to rate the usefulness of various media channels toward achievement of those goals. The purpose of the study was a comparative analysis among historic media to gauge any potential shift in the importance of these media in needs fulfillment. Results indicated that over half of respondents felt that media remains important; however these same respondents indicated low levels of trust in the media. This suggests that students perceive a loss of objectivity among media coverage of global events. Consistent with findings from 1973 study by Katz et al., the current study also discovered a correlation between need “distance” and media importance. This means that subjects view media as a tool which facilitates access to events occurring outside their local environment and sphere of influence. Lastly subjects indicated agreement with the idea of media

specialization; a new concept as compared with the original research. This can be attributed to the fact that media selection is greater today than it was at the time of Katz et al's study. Media have become far more segmented and specialized than they were in the three decades prior to the current study.

Emotions also play a vital role in media use, as explored by Bartsch, Mangold, Viehoff and Vorderer (2006). Several concepts related to emotional gratifications are outlined. Mood management reflects behaviors that solicit an increase in positive feelings and a decrease in negative feelings. Sensation seeking refers to a pattern of risk-taking for the arousal of heightened emotions. Intrinsic motivation is the conquest of challenges that contributes to feelings of success and confidence. Modes of reception is a state of connecting emotional experience with the overcoming of other goals related to those emotions. Mood adjustment indicates an ability to adapt emotions to a current situation. Meta-emotion describes the tendency to view specific feelings in a gender-centric positive or negative light. Downward social comparison refers to the use of media for self-esteem reinforcement through visualizations of others in worse situations. Seeking an integrative approach to emotional motivations toward media use, the authors posit a model to illustrate the process. A media offer is received and immediately analyzed by the receiver. This analysis stimulates an emotional response which now guides the receiver's evaluation process of the offer; placing the offer temporarily aside. These emotions are now analyzed for three types of gratifications: stimulus, intent, and symbolism. Stimulus gratification infers whether the emotion raised is pleasant or dissatisfying. Intentional gratification determines if the emotion is useful for goal attainment. Symbolic gratification appraises the potential benefits to self-esteem from the

emotion. These three gratifications combine to produce meta-emotions, which determine media selection. The proposal of this research therefore is that receivers focus less on the external communication itself and more on their internal emotions when making a decision regarding media use.

### **Technology and Uses and Gratifications Theory**

Technology is an important consideration with regards to uses and gratifications. Advances in technology have brought about changes in human behavior with regards to mass communications. As technology evolves, so too must theoretical scholarship to keep pace with changes in human behaviors associated with communications. One of the most significant inventions of communication technology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was television. Its effects upon society and human life were profound, as discussed by Schramm, Lyle and Parker (1961) in their research regarding the effects of television upon children. At the time of their study television was still in its infancy, which presented ideal conditions for the study of television use as a determinant of human attitudes and behavior. This study was also important for its focus on children as consumers of media. As explained by the authors, “a child is a young animal learning to be human” (p. 142). This description paints a vivid picture of children as emotionally vulnerable creatures, highly susceptible to influence from multiple sources. Some examples of the needs of a child include a sense of belonging, the opportunity for self-expression, and a feeling of security in an uncertain world. These needs resemble those posited by Maslow, suggesting that while these needs are manifested at an early age they also remain with individuals throughout adulthood. Several variables influence the

interaction level between television and children receiving needs gratification from it.

Mental ability refers to a child's ability to learn, explore, and discern from the information presented. Social norm implies the degree to which a child has adopted "middle of the road" cognitions and recognizes television as a reflection of reality. Social relationships favor healthy, loving relationships with parents and peers to the extent that a child uses television as a source of entertainment instead of an escape from problems. Based on these assumptions, it is argued that television is unlikely to provide the same level of needs gratification as can be obtained through real life and physical relationships.

Television was therefore a medium that received great scrutiny upon its arrival for its ability to satisfy human needs. As a result, uses and gratifications research fell out of favor for several years but experienced a revival with the arrival of telecommunications technology such as cable television and home computing. A strong advocate for uses and gratifications theory is Ruggiero (2000), who suggests why the theory has added relevance in the age of computer mediated communication. The author suggests three characteristics of the Internet which allow it to surpass older forms of media. The first of these is *interactivity*. Based upon the concept of the active user, the Internet satisfies three distinct personality types who use this medium. For those seeking diversion and fun, the choices available online provide a source of entertainment. Task-oriented users receive a multitude of information options to satisfy their needs. Expressive users are able to share and reciprocate information with other users of common interest. The second characteristic is *demassification*. This implies that the Internet offers users the ability to select from an abundance of choices which were previously reserved for an exclusive few. This feature also allows for customization of online content, so users receive only

messages they deem relevant and important. The final characteristic is *asynchronicity*.

This aspect refers to the ability of Internet users to retrieve information at their leisure, at a time and location that suits them. Combined these three attributes form a powerful medium which has once again attracted the attention of uses and gratifications researchers.

Ruggiero endorses U&G because it is a communications model that is flexible and adaptable through technological innovation and the passage of time. He suggests that the focus of inquiry has shifted from the media to the audience, and that new technologies have freed researchers to study a variety of topics related to uses and gratifications. These include media dependency, rituals, communication enablement, social education, and role reinforcement. The foundational core of needs remains the psychological bedrock upon which the theory is constructed and upon which many other communications theories are based. Ruggiero states that U&G is not about reaching a definitive conclusion of absolute certainty. To coin a phrase, uses and gratifications research is about the journey; not the destination. Ruggiero expresses confidence that the theory is well positioned, based on a combination of traditional methods as well as developmental models, to address communications issues going forward.

At the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century many scholars are reexamining uses and gratifications theory as it relates to online interaction. Shao (2009) explored the appeal of user-generated media (UGM), which is media content delivered online that requires creative effort and is manifested outside of the professional establishment. UGM according to Shao has three distinct levels of interaction. *Consumption* is the basic activity of receiving content without input or feedback from the user. This behavior is

typically motivated by the need for information seeking and entertainment. Information seeking is motivated by the desire to increase awareness and knowledge about self and the outside world. Entertainment motivations can include diversion, escape from personal crises, killing time, and emotional release. Of the three uses of UGM, consumption is the most passive in nature. *Participation* steps up the level of user engagement through actual interaction over the internet. Users can immerse themselves into user-to-content interaction which includes activities such as rating content or sharing with others, and user-to-user interaction which involves direct contact with other individuals through forums such as message boards or instant messaging. Participation is synonymous with the desire for social interaction, which is facilitated through a more informal online setting. Participation can also lead to the formation of virtual communities, which is discussed in more detail below. *Production* is the highest level of UGM engagement as it involves creating original content and posting it online. This content can take the form of blogs, photos, or videos. Motivations for production include self-expression for the purpose of identity and personality presentation, and self-actualization which entails reflection upon one's own personality for the purpose of self-efficacy.

Tonteri, Kosonen, Ellonen, and Tarkiainen (2011) carried the exploration of online engagement further through research on a sense of virtual community (SOVC), which is defined “as human experience of a community feeling in a virtual environment” (p. 2216). This concept has five primary motivational attributes: a feeling of *membership* with associated community rights and responsibilities, a feeling of community *influence*, a feeling of *identity* and individuality in the community, a feeling of shared *social identity* within the community, and a feeling of *emotional connection* with other community

members. SOVC also provides four benefits to its members. *Cognitive benefits* confer knowledge and learning. *Social integrative benefits* establish relationships for the purpose of inclusion and belonging. *Personal integrative benefits* contribute to a sense of self-efficacy and having influence upon the social group. *Affective benefits* foster pleasure and enjoyment within the user. Based upon numerous hypotheses, the authors cross referenced each of these attributes and benefits with two levels of online participation: reading and posting messages. It was determined that participation by reading messages was motivated by the desire for cognitive and personal integrative benefits. In other words, community members read messages for the purpose of gaining knowledge and improving social status. The act of posting messages, on the other hand, was motivated by social integrative and personal integrative benefits. This discovery suggests that community members create online content based on the desire for self-realization and social interaction.

Another application of uses and gratifications theory to online media was conducted by Dimmick, Ramirez, Wang, and Lin (2007). Although this study was concerned with telephone, email, and instant messaging, and not Internet activity, the communication framework offered by the researchers could be applicable to online interaction as well. The two variables of network characteristics and gratifications utility were compared to three communications technologies to explore the relationship among these variables. Network characteristics include size, intimacy level, and geographic location. Gratification utility simply refers to the ease by which gratifications are satisfied. Most notably it was discovered that instant messaging, which is the newest of the three forms of communication media studied, received the strongest association with



the variables of network characteristics and gratification utility. It was also discovered that network size in particular was a significant determinant of gratification utilities obtained through the use of communication media. This finding is relevant to this study because social networks will be similarly explored based upon perceived ability to satisfy gratifications.

### **The Uses and Gratifications of Social Media**

The latest communications technology to receive attention from scholars is social media; a new form of online communication which has experienced rapid adoption and revolutionized how people, as well as organizations, communicate with one another. There are countless choices available within the social media environment; however the most prevalent and arguably most popular social media sites are Facebook and Twitter.

Quan-Haase and Young (2010) compared social media use between Facebook and instant messaging based on U&G theory. In their study the researchers investigated what needs compelled social media users to interact via Facebook and instant messaging, as well as what gratifications were obtained by doing so. The specific purpose was to identify what motivations drive social media use. Disregarding instant messaging for purposes of this study, insight into Facebook utilization as well as motivations for its use are practical. Six primary gratifications from Facebook use were defined. *Pastime* is related to qualities of entertainment and relaxation, and offers users the opportunity to escape the daily stresses of life temporarily. *Affection* encompasses the opportunity to express friendship and compassion toward others. *Fashion* relates to appearances of social popularity and trendiness; or put simply the act of associating with others as a means of social inclusion and avoidance of solitariness. *Sociability* describes the

willingness to meet new people and overcome social inhibitions. *Sharing problems* relates to the ability among users to share concerns with others and solicit empathy. Finally *social information* concerns acquisition of knowledge about friends and peers in order to feel involved in the lives of social acquaintances. Through surveys and qualitative interviews it was determined that sociability served as the highest gratification users obtained from interaction through social media. These findings reinforce the idea that social media use is driven by the need to engage with others, while simultaneously forging a sense of community among its members.

Building off the concept of sociability, Chen (2011) also explored social media use and its effect upon human connectedness based on uses and gratifications theory. The central social media component analyzed in this study was Twitter; a newer entrant to the social media universe that was founded after Facebook and therefore has received less scholarly examination. Chen explored the capability of Twitter to satisfy the need for human connection and the gratifications acquired which motivated users to use the medium again. The focus of the research was on frequency of social media use and its effect on feelings of social connectedness. It was hypothesized that active Twitter use would constitute the strongest factor leading to fulfillment of the gratification to connect with others. Once again the “active” user terminology was employed and in this case operationalized as two separate variables; the length of time that had passed since users had joined Twitter (measured in months) as well as how much time they spent using the medium (measured in hours per day and days per week). The principal discovery of the research was that length of time on Twitter since enrollment was more responsible for gratification of the need for human connection than daily usage time. The caveat to this

finding was that actual usage of the medium through sending messages and replying to others' tweets were more important to this gratification than simple Twitter presence; i.e. creation of a profile. Therefore a positive correlation between active Twitter use and social connectedness gratification was supported.

Muntinga, Moorman and Smit (2011) related social media use to the concept of consumer behavior, defined as online brand-related activities (COBRAs). Types of COBRAs were placed into one of three categories based on ascending involvement level with brand-related online content. The *consuming* type includes participants with minimum activity level, such as reading others posts or downloading content from brand sites. The *contributing* type is a moderately active participant who comments on others posts or engages a brand through their social media page. The *creating* type publishes original brand content, such as blogs about a certain product or videos, pictures and other media related to a brand. Based on U&G the authors also propose six motivations for social media use:

- 1) *Entertainment* covers activities related to diversion from responsibility, relaxation or cultural enjoyment.
- 2) *Integration and social interaction* covers behaviors toward affiliation with others, including family and friends.
- 3) *Personal identity* covers gratifications related to self, such as reinforcing values or gaining recognition from colleagues.
- 4) *Information* covers surveillance of events in society for the sake of knowledge and risk avoidance.

- 5) *Remuneration* covers engagement for the purpose of gaining future benefit or reward.
- 6) *Empowerment* covers exertion of influence or power over others.

While the focus of this current study is not related to branding, it is evident how these motivations, as well as three levels of brand-related content, are similar to the three levels of basic social media engagement as posited by Shao (2009). This similarity will be explored further in the methodology section of this research.

### **Uses and Gratifications in Demography**

Since the focus of this study concerns Hispanics, it would be remiss not to address the concept of race as related to online activity. Correa and Jeong (2011) investigated the relationship between ethnicity and online content creation. The stimulus for this study was based on historical data which suggested that racial minorities are disadvantaged when it comes to technological adoption, yet demonstrate higher online participation rates than the traditional white demographic. The study employed a two-pronged approach. Survey methodology was used to measure frequency of online engagement within various ethnicities. Examples of online activities included instant messaging, posting blogs, Twitter participation, Facebook networking, chat room discussion, uploading videos or photos, and file sharing. Focus groups were also held with undergraduate students of various races to obtain elaborative information about motivations for online engagement. Quantitative data supported the notion that minorities are more active online than whites. Asians were ranked highest overall in online participation rates, followed closely by Hispanics in activities such as Twitter and social

networking via Facebook. Focus groups revealed several prominent themes regarding motivation for social network use. Staying connected to family and friends was identified as a strong motivation, especially for Hispanics who often have family spread out across various geographic areas. Family is a bedrock of Hispanic social culture, so keeping those connections intact is of vital importance. Panelists also identified the need to stay connected with niche community groups reflective of their culture. Relating to others with similar values or interests was also identified as a strong motivator for online activity. Other motivations including self-expression and self-promotion were discussed, but these related prominently to Asians and African-Americans and were of little importance to Hispanic participants. The combined survey and focus group data suggest that Hispanics are a highly engaged demographic online with two motivations: maintaining relationships with family and establishing relationships with others of common interest.

### **Acculturation**

One of the preeminent scholars on the topic of acculturation is Berry, who cites acculturation as “phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups” (Berry, 1997, p. 7). Put another way, acculturation is the degree to which a foreign demographic adapts to and adopts behaviors and customs of the culture in which they reside. Immigration leads to cultural plurality, which is the concept of many cultures coming together to form a new and diverse society. Within this society a power structure develops based on a combination of

economic, political and other factors, with different levels of power categorized into cultural groups. Berry classifies these cultural groups as dominant and non-dominant (p. 8). The dominant group is presumed to be the group upon whose values and behaviors cultural norms are established. The non-dominant group typically describes the immigrant, who faces the ritual of acculturation upon entry into a new society. This power structure gives rise to terms such as “majority” and “minority” to describe each social group within the larger society.

There are four acculturation strategies immigrants can employ, according to Berry (p. 9). *Assimilation* is when individuals relinquish their native cultural identity in order to interact with other cultures. *Separation* is when individuals hold onto their original culture and eschew contact with others. *Integration* is the process whereby individuals seek to maintain their original culture and simultaneously interact with members of the greater society. Lastly, *marginalization* is the abandonment of native culture and avoidance of interaction with others. These four strategies are organized into an orthogonal model with four quadrants, one for each strategy. The horizontal axis represents a positive or negative perception of self-identity maintenance, while the vertical axis represents a positive or negative perception of societal relationships maintenance. The method of acculturation is not always freely chosen by the immigrant however. Some dominant group societies are inherently diverse and open to new cultures. In such countries immigrants may employ the integration or separation modes of acculturation as they choose. Other dominant group societies may be more segregated or homogenous, thereby forcing immigrants to acculturate through assimilation or marginalization.

Berry indicates that several pre-existing environmental factors also contribute to the acculturation process (p. 21). These factors include age, education, social status, and cultural distance. Age has a significant impact upon acculturation. The earlier in life one begins the acculturation process, the higher the likelihood of a smooth transition. Those who begin acculturation later in life tend to have a harder time adapting to a new cultural norm. Education is a typical predictor of acculturation success. This is attributed to higher capacity for problem solving; an attribute which comes in handy when adapting to a new culture. Education also correlates to other resources, including occupation and income, which facilitate acculturation. Finally, education introduces immigrants to the language, customs and norms of their new cultural surroundings. Social status can be a challenge to acculturation, since immigrants tend to lose any previously attained status as a result of entry into a new culture. In a sense, any status achievements from one's native culture are rendered neutral and individuals have to "start from scratch" as the saying goes. Cultural distance refers to the dissimilarities between the two cultures in an individual's life. Generally speaking, the greater the distance between the two cultures, the more difficulty the individual will encounter during the acculturation process. Of these four environmental factors, the concept of education is an important consideration for the current study and will be further elaborated upon in the research methodology.

Of the four acculturation strategies posited by Berry, integration is usually the most successful. This is attributed to the elements of mutual cooperation and accommodation, involvement across dual cultural communities, and flexibility on the part of the individual. Another reason for the attributed success of the integration mode of acculturation is the fact that many societies today are multicultural by definition. There

are very few purely homogenous and exclusive societies in existence in the world today, with the exception of nations ruled by autocratic governments (for example; North Korea). Since many societies are inclusive to foreign cultures, and therefore integrative in nature, it stands to reason that integration would be the most successful acculturation strategy in a society of similar premise.

The principle of acculturation has also been studied from a dimensional perspective. Ryder, Alden, and Paulhus (2000) examined two competing acculturation models: the *unidimensional model* and the *bidimensional model*. In both models the relationship between two cultures is examined. *Heritage culture* is the culture of birth or upbringing, and *mainstream culture* is the surrounding cultural environment. The unidimensional approach places individuals on a continuum where heritage falls on one end of the spectrum and mainstream falls on the other. The core belief of the unidimensional model is that movement along the continuum implies a simultaneous increase in one culture with a decrease in the other. In other words, as an individual becomes more acculturated into the mainstream culture, they lose behaviors and values from the heritage culture. An increase in one culture must result in a decrease of the other, and vice versa. Therefore heritage and mainstream culture are inversely related in the unidimensional model. The bidimensional model suggests that heritage and mainstream culture are independent of one another, and that an increase in one culture is not contingent on a decrease in the other. This phenomenon can occur, but it is not mutually exclusive. According to the bidimensional model, mainstream and heritage cultures can both increase or both decrease as well. The bidimensional model closely



resembles Berry's acculturation strategies, with four distinct quadrants and axes indicating high or low heritage and mainstream culture.

The purpose of study by Ryder et al. (2000) was to compare the unidimensional model against the bidimensional model to determine which model provided the more useful conceptualization of acculturation. Three separate studies were performed to explore the validity of the two models against other variables of interest, including personality traits, self-identity, psychosocial adjustment, and interpersonal adjustment. Personality traits included characteristics such as conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism. Self-identity refers to the dichotomy of individualism (autonomy and independence) versus collectivism (interconnectivity with others). Psychosocial adjustment refers to the ability of people to cope with stresses related to acculturation. Interpersonal adjustment considers the ability of an individual to socialize with others in a comfortable manner. Across all variables the bidimensional model received greater support statistically as the more thorough framework for acculturation processes. This discovery is significant because it lends credibility to the orthogonal model posited by Berry, whereas acculturation variables of self-identity and social interaction can be independently measured. The findings of Ryder et al's study support the idea that acculturation is not necessarily a process whereby one culture is sacrificed in favor of another.

Focusing specifically on Hispanics, Cuéllar, Arnold, and Maldonado (1995) developed the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans II (ARSMA), which is based off a previously published measurement tool of the same name developed years earlier by Cuéllar and other associates (Cuéllar, Harris & Jasso, 1980). The original

ARSMA was linear in scope, similar to the unidimensional model studied by Ryder et al., which limited acculturation to falling somewhere along a continuum. In the case of the original ARSMA, the polar ends of the cultural scale were categorized as either Mexican or American. This model limited individuals going through the acculturation process to lean toward either category, but did not allow for multiculturalism. Similar to previous linear models, the original ARSMA suggested that Mexicans favored either Mexican or American culture, but could not incorporate both. Therefore Cuéllar et al. developed the ARSMA II which was based upon the orthogonal model put forth by Berry. In the revised ARSMA II scale, bicultural Mexicans were now able to be measured independently for the variables of Mexican and American acculturation. The four quadrants of the ARSMA II scale resemble the four quadrants of Berry's scale; however they are labeled differently to capture acculturation specific to Mexican immigrants. Acculturation can also be measured linearly along each axis for each culture; however the predominant benefit of the revised scale is the ability to categorize acculturation within one of the four quadrants.

The ARSMA II includes questions designed to measure four factors of acculturation: 1) language use and preference, 2) ethnic identity and classification, 3) cultural heritage and ethnic behaviors, and 4) ethnic interaction. Within the ARSMA II instrument are two distinct scales. Scale 1 measures the acculturation modes of integration and assimilation. Scale 2 measures the acculturation modes of separation and marginalization. Each scale can be measured and scored independently of the other, or in conjunction to present a multidimensional aspect of acculturation. The ARSMA II scale

will be replicated for the current study to assess factors of acculturation. The reasoning behind selection of this instrument will be explained in further detail in the methodology.

The ARSMA II was utilized by Cuéllar, Nyberg and Maldonado to explore the acculturation level among young Mexican-origin college students (1997). Acculturation was explored with relation to the concept of ethnic identity; a term that encompasses choices regarding values and beliefs, as well as a respect for one's past and future goals. The ethnic identity measure was performed using a different instrument called the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM), which is different from the ARSMA in that it focuses strictly on identity and behavioral factors, and excludes language factors. The research indicated that ethnic identity diminishes with increased acculturation. This suggests that as Mexicans become more acclimated to American culture, their Hispanic values and beliefs are minimized or possibly eliminated entirely. It was also proposed by the researchers that highly acculturated individuals sense greater openness and affiliation with people from ethnic groups outside their own. While ethnic identity is not a focus of the current study, it is interesting to note the inverse relationship that exists between this concept and acculturation.

Education, as previously referenced by Berry (1995), is an important component of the acculturation process. Recent data shows that more Hispanics are enrolling and graduating from college than at any previous time in American history. Perez-Peña (2012) states, "46 percent of Hispanics were enrolled in college last year, up from 37 percent in 2008," while Fox News Latino reports, "just over 14 percent of ... Latinos had a bachelors degree in 2011, compared with 11.1 percent in 2001" (2012). As Hispanic

education levels rise, members of this demographic should become more acculturated through higher accommodation and familiarity with American cultural norms.

Education was the focus of an acculturation study by Roche, Ghazarian, and Fernandez-Esquer (2012). These researchers examined how cultural orientations impacted educational attainment by Mexican-origin immigrant children in the United States. While not overtly stated, the assumption is that a majority of Hispanic immigrants in America originate from Mexico due to its geographical proximity to the United States as opposed to other Spanish speaking countries. Traditionally children of Hispanic immigrants suffer in terms of education due to their parents' poor education level or family values which place emphasis on work above education, or a combination of these attributes. Either way, acculturation proves difficult for Hispanic children brought up in these conditions. The authors discovered that a combination of proficiency in English and high family placement on family correlated positively with educational attainment among Hispanic youth. Ironically, socialization of youths' parents with U.S. born individuals had a negative effect on educational attainment. This was theorized to be attributed to lack of social ties and values necessary for development of cultural identity, which benefited youth educational success. Another obstacle to educational attainment was the value youth placed on work for income. As noted earlier, lack of family education may impose cultural dissonance with regards to children achieving education. When work with immediate short-term financial benefit to family arises, children may feel compelled to sacrifice education that would provide long-term benefits. For purposes of the current study, it was important to note that educational achievement excelled in youth who

received a balance of Hispanic heritage in the home and American cultural values in school. Therefore the principle that education contributes to acculturation is suggested.

Another factor highly salient to the acculturation process is media choice. One particular study by Moon and Park investigated the effects of mass media upon Korean immigrants' acculturation process (2007). The study by Moon and Park sought to determine if Korean immigrants used television and other media to establish bicultural norms (consistent with Berry's integration acculturation mode), or if they would favor one culture over another (consistent with the assimilation or separation modes of acculturation). Results of the study indicated that Koreans did develop positive associations toward American culture as a result of media consumption, which influenced their behaviors, beliefs, and values. However, the study did not support the concept of biculturalism among the Korean community. One caveat of the study, and a possible explanation for this discovery, is that the Korean population is small in comparison to other nationalities. There is not an abundance of media choices available in the Korean language in the United States, and those that are available are greatly overshadowed by American media. This lies in sharp contrast to Hispanic media, which caters to a much larger percentage of the population and features nationwide media channels such as Univision and Telemundo (Allen, 2012).

Lee (1993) studied acculturation with regard to Taiwanese immigrants and susceptibility to American advertising. Immigrants typically fall into two categories of acculturation: accommodation and ethnic affirmation. *Accommodation* occurs when individuals move away from their culture of origin and embrace behaviors and values consistent with their surrounding culture. *Ethnic affirmation* is the opposite response;

individuals shun their adopted culture and maintain cultural behaviors and attitudes from their native homeland. This is similar to the unidimensional model of acculturation studied by Ryder et al. (2000), where accommodation and ethnic affirmation lay on opposite ends of the continuum. Accommodation lies toward mainstream culture, and ethnic affirmation lies toward heritage culture. Immigrants undergoing the acculturation process also tend to trust advertising as an information source about their adopted culture, despite the inherent consumer-directed messaging. This is due to the fact that advertising presents value statements and symbolic representations of the American way of life. Lee's research indicates that acculturating individuals possess more favorable attitudes toward advertising than resident Americans. Whereas Americans develop negative attitudes toward advertising due to a media-saturated environment, immigrants are unaccustomed to this phenomenon and are more tolerant of advertising messages. Acculturating Taiwanese view advertising as simply another information source about American culture; similar to a newspaper or television program. Television is a trusted source of information for immigrants going through the acculturation process, and they perceive the images on television as representative of the cultural norms of their adopted homeland.

Stilling (1997) investigated the relationship between television viewing and acculturation level among Hispanic viewers. The study was divided into three phases. Phase 1 tested the correlation between acculturation and three measures of television viewing: absolute total television exposure (overall number of hours of television viewing), total exposure to English-language television (content-specific television viewing hours), and a proportional measure of content-specific exposure to the total

number of hours spent watching television. These three measures were hypothesized to have a positive correlation with acculturation level, which was measured based on Cuéllar et al's 1980 ARSMA scale. Of the three measures, proportional television viewing was found to have the strongest correlation with acculturation. This suggests that immigrants who spent the majority of their television viewing time watching English content experience higher acculturation levels. Phase 2 of the research introduced the mediating variables of information seeking motivation and perceived reality as they related to English-language television viewing. Put another way, the researcher hypothesized that the effect of television exposure on acculturation would increase as immigrants increasingly used English-language television for information gathering and forming perceptions of reality. Results indicated that information seeking motivation for television viewing was slightly stronger than forming perceptions of reality, although both correlated positively. This suggests that immigrants use television primarily for information gathering about their new cultural surroundings, and secondarily to develop perceptions of their new reality. Phase 3 of the study explored the relationship between duration of residence in a new culture and level of television exposure (low or high). It was predicted that among immigrants with low television exposure, those whose duration of residence was longer would experience higher acculturation levels. It was also predicted that among those immigrants with high television exposure, there would be no significant difference between short-term and long-term duration towards acculturation level. The research supported the conclusion that longer duration resulted in higher acculturation level among the low television exposure group. This makes sense considering that immigrants who have resided in a foreign culture longer have been

exposed to other cultural influences besides television, such as social groups and cultural activities. The research also discovered that high television exposure surprisingly made little difference between low and high duration immigrants with regards to acculturation. This is attributed to the short amount of time that newly arrived immigrants have had to process the information gathered from television viewing, despite the high frequency. The overall discovery from Stilling's study is that acculturation level increases with higher amount of content-specific television viewing, although duration of residency also plays a significant role in this relationship.

Media use also contributes to acculturation with regards to linguistic development. Specifically related to English proficiency among immigrants, Dalisay (2012) analyzed the association between English language media use and two variables: English proficiency and favorability towards English use in social interactions. Results of a survey indicated that immigrants used English language media more frequently than native language media upon establishment of residency in the United States. The results also showed that English language media use facilitated higher English proficiency in immigrants; particularly those who were exposed to English language media prior to immigration. Findings also demonstrated a preference among immigrants to use English in daily social interactions with use of English language media post-immigration. Increases in English language media use correlated positively with English language ability. This study demonstrates that media not only helps immigrants acclimate to American behaviors and values; it also provides a practical tool for immigrants to become proficient in a new language.



## **Purpose of Study**

Based on the literature, the influence of traditional media channels such as television upon the acculturation process is apparent. However, a gap in the scholarship exists with regards to the relationship between acculturation and newer communications technology such as social media. This gap affords the opportunity for current study, based on uses and gratifications theory, to collect quantifiable data for the purpose of exploring this topic.

For purposes of this study, acculturation was measured based upon the four factors of acculturation posited by Cuéllar et al (1995) in the ARSMA II scale: 1) language use and preference, 2) ethnic identity and classification, 3) cultural heritage and ethnic behaviors, and 4) ethnic interaction. Citing the lack of previously identified research, each of these factors of acculturation were studied against the concept of social media engagement to determine if a relationship exists, and if so to what degree each acculturation factor correlates to social media engagement. The variable of social media engagement (SME) will also provide insight into motivations and needs fulfilled, based upon research by Shao (2009) and Muntinga et al. (2011).

This leads to the following research questions:

*RQ1: Are there significant differences in social media engagement among Hispanic Americans due to education level?*

*RQ2: Are there significant differences in social media engagement among Hispanic Americans due to generation?*

*RQ3: Are there significant differences in four acculturation factors among Hispanic Americans due to education?*

*RQ4: Are there significant differences in four acculturation factors among Hispanic Americans due to generation?*

*RQ5: What relationship exists between acculturation and social media engagement?*

*RQ6: How do Hispanic Americans use social media to engage with others among the Hispanic and American populations?*

The next chapter provides the methodology used to collect data to inform the research questions of importance in this study. It includes a review of the data collection procedure, a brief description of the variables of acculturation and social media engagement, and an explanation of the data analysis procedure.

### CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationships between three indicators of acculturation and social media engagement. The three indicators of acculturation are education, language proficiency, and generation. Each of these three indicators will be measured against social media engagement to determine if a relationship exists, and whether that relationship is positive or negative in nature. Furthermore, the extent of social media engagement will be categorized based upon the three levels of UGM as posited by Shao (2009).

#### Data Collection

An online survey instrument was used to gather data for this study. The purpose of conducting a survey, which also happens to be one of its advantages, was the ability to select a representative sample from among the general population.. One of the strongest arguments in support of survey research is its generalizability. Put simply, the researcher can form conclusions about a larger population from examination of a sample chosen from that same population (“Survey Research,” n.d., Strengths). Survey methodology was also ideal for the nature of this study due to some of its other advantages. The cost of survey distribution was low, especially online where there is no financial overhead. Surveys could be administered around the world instantaneously online, allowing for greater reach and the potential for a larger sample. A larger sample also increased the opportunity for statistically significant results. Surveys were also standardized, which

means that every participant received the exact same research instrument. This increases survey uniformity and reliability, allowing for survey duplication, while it also minimizes the possibility for respondent subjectivity and data skewing. Finally, confidentiality was also increased because online survey respondents were not required to login or present any identifying information about themselves (“Survey Research,” n.d., Strengths).

The survey was published using SurveyMonkey; a popular online method of gathering survey data (Leland, 2011). Distribution of the survey was to be accomplished via the researcher’s Twitter account through snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is a form of convenience sampling with the intent of recruiting an initial sample group who, upon completion of the survey, recruit further participants to take the survey.

Historically, this method is used to recruit research participants for studies involving risk to the subjects; for example illegal drug users who risk arrest should their identity be revealed. There is no such risk associated with this study, since it is strictly a measure of benign activities focusing on social media use. Snowball sampling empowers the initial research subjects perform the work of the researcher via networking within their social framework, thereby recruiting further survey participants from among their friends, family, business colleagues, etc. (“Snowball,” n.d., Advantages, para. 7-9).

The motive for selection of the snowball sampling distribution method was based on two assumptions: the opportunity for a larger sample and respondent confidentiality. Some of the primary survey participants who were approached over Twitter are Hispanic social media professionals, including a news director with a major Hispanic media outlet with over 7,000 followers and the founder of a Latino social advocacy group with over 3,000 followers. Therefore, the researcher presumed to gain high survey response rates

because the Twitter followers recruited for this research would not only be asked to participate in the survey themselves but also encourage their followers to participate; hence the snowball sampling method alluded to previously. The other consideration for snowball sampling was confidentiality. Since the majority of respondents were expected to be recruited through virtual word of mouth online, it would not be possible to tell which respondents fell within the primary recruitment group and which did not. In addition, the online survey instrument required no login or other such identifying characteristics that could be associated to any of the respondents.

The recruitment procedure via Twitter was considered the ideal method of attracting the most possible survey participants quickly, due to time restraints associated with the USF academic calendar. Under ideal circumstances, the researcher would have several months or longer to collect survey responses. In this case however, there was a very brief time frame of only a few weeks during which the researcher could gather data. This was another justification for using Twitter for survey distribution. By its very nature, Twitter is a social network with rapid access and communication capability. It was the speed aspect of Twitter that the researcher sought to capitalize upon in order to distribute the survey expediently.

The anticipated effect of snowball sampling failed to manifest a sufficient number of participants in the opening days after the survey went live, however. Therefore the researcher adapted the recruiting procedure to initiate more one-on-one direct contact with potential survey respondents via Twitter. On Twitter, the researcher located Hispanic social groups with large numbers of followers and began sending tweets on an

individual basis to followers of each of those groups. Tweets contained the following script:

*Please take brief survey on #Hispanic social media use for #USF graduate study:  
<http://svy.mk/VpWMV3> Please RT! Thank you.*

The words Hispanic and USF were incorporated with hashtags, which are a method via Twitter of having tweets be presented in search results when users search for specific keywords or phrases. In order to create a Twitter hashtag, users simply precede any desired search term with the # symbol. This creates an active link in the tweet which can be clicked on to initiate a search. The purpose of these two hashtags was therefore to make the tweets visible to members of the Hispanic as well as USF communities. The survey link was created using a bitly, which is shortener for uniform resource locators (or URLs, which in common jargon means a Web address) for the purpose of including it in an online post with space limitations. This was done because Twitter restricts tweets to 140 characters, thereby necessitating a shorter URL that could be incorporated within the tweets and also meet USF research study regulations. Finally, people contacted via Twitter were asked to RT, which is acronym for “retweet;” a process on Twitter whereby a user retransmits tweets in their news feed to their followers. The assumption was that other Twitter users would see the tweet being retransmitted and also participate in the survey, since the message came from a trusted source. The retweet strategy was moderately successful from the perspective that many users who were contacted did retweet the survey link; however it is not known if any survey participants were actually recruited through this method.

Due to the fact that many survey participants were recruited directly via Twitter, absolute confidentiality was not satisfied (meaning total anonymity was absent). However due also to the structure of survey instruments created on SurveyMonkey, whereby no identifying information is requested or captured from participants, confidentiality was still protected. This is to say that although many participants were recruited directly via Twitter and their identities were known, there is no way to associate individual survey responses to those people who participated in the survey. Survey respondents may be known, but how they answered the survey is not.

Twitter was not used exclusively for recruitment of survey participants. Other survey respondents were also recruited via the researcher's professional contacts and personal network. Several colleagues from the researcher's employment were asked to participate in the survey, as well as personal friends. In both cases their identities were known; however participant responses to the survey remained anonymous because it was not known how each individual completed the questionnaire.

## **Variables**

There were two variables of interest in this study. The first variable was the concept of *acculturation*, which was measured employing a survey framework adapted from the ARSMA II scale developed by Cuéllar et al (1995) to test for the four factors of acculturation, as well as the variables of education and generation based upon the same scholarly framework. Education was a progressive interval ranking of highest completed education level that included high school, bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctoral degree. Generation probed whether respondents were first generation immigrants

to the United States (born overseas) or descendants of prior generations of immigrants (born in America). The five categories of generation were defined as follows:

1. *First generation = you were born in another country.*
2. *Second generation = you were born in USA; either parent born in another country.*
3. *Third generation = you were born in USA; both parents born in USA and all grandparents born in another country.*
4. *Fourth generation = you and your parents were born in USA; at least one grandparent born in USA.*
5. *Fifth generation = you, your parents and all grandparents were born in USA.*

Age was also presented as an optional open-ended question for respondents to complete.

The four factors of acculturation reexamined in this study were adapted from Scale One of the ARSMA II (Cuéllar et al., 1995) framework: 1) language use, 2) ethnic identity, 3) cultural heritage and 4) ethnic interaction. A series of Likert-type statements of frequency probed how often respondents performed certain activities related to the four factors of acculturation. Each item was ranked by subjects on a five-point frequency scale, with qualifiers of never, rarely, occasionally, frequently, and very frequently.

These four items were used to measure the acculturation factor of language use:

- *I enjoy English language movies*
- *I enjoy English language TV*
- *I enjoy reading (books, etc.) in English*
- *I write (letters, etc.) in English*



These three items were used to measure the acculturation factor of ethnic identity:

- *My mother identifies herself as Hispanic*
- *My father identifies himself as Hispanic*
- *I like to identify myself as Hispanic*

These eight items were used to measure the acculturation factor of cultural heritage:

- *I enjoy speaking Spanish*
- *My thinking is done in Spanish*
- *I speak Spanish*
- *I enjoy reading (books, etc.) in Spanish*
- *I write (letters, etc.) in Spanish*
- *I enjoy listening to Spanish language music*
- *I enjoy Spanish language movies*
- *I enjoy Spanish language TV*

These seven items were used to measure the acculturation factor of ethnic interaction:

- *I associate with Americans*
- *My thinking is done in English*
- *I speak English*
- *My friends are now of American origin*
- *My friends while I was growing up were of American origin*
- *I like to identify myself as American*
- *I associate with Hispanic-Americans*

It is necessary to point out that Cuéllar et al explained that the ARSMA II was designed and intended for use strictly with the Mexican-American demographic (1995, p. 276). However the authors also mention that the survey could have limited applicability to other Hispanic populations. In order to capture data about a diverse Hispanic demographic, the survey items used in this study were modified from the original ARSMA II to replace the terms “Mexican” or “Mexican-American,” with the term “Hispanic.” This term conveys a general inclusion of all members of the Hispanic race, regardless of nationality, which was the goal of the current study. Also, the term “Anglo” as originally used in the ARSMA II was replaced with “American” so as not to differentiate between other nationalities that may not fall under the “Anglo” vernacular.

The second variable of interest in this study was *social media engagement*. The variable of social media engagement was measured following a framework based on a combination of the three tiers of UGM interactivity posited by Shao (2009) and the COBRA categorizations detailed by Muntinga et al (2011). Subjects were evaluated on their social media engagement level based on questions that measured how often they participate in certain online activities. These activities were categorized according to three tiers of social media use: casual, contributory and creative. *Casual use* is defined as activities that involve the least amount of effort, such as viewing videos or reading news stories. *Contributive use* is defined as activities which involve a greater amount of interaction but stop short of new ideas, such as sharing content or posting comments. *Creative use* requires the highest degree of involvement as it includes activities such as publishing a blog or managing a personal Web site, which demand innovative thought and original ideas.

Similar to language measurement, each activity was also ranked by subjects on a five-point frequency scale, with qualifiers of never, rarely, occasionally, frequently, and very frequently. A higher frequency selected for each activity would be considered a higher indicator of social media engagement. These activities would also shed light on the motivations and needs fulfilled through uses and gratifications theory.

### **Pretest**

A pretest of the survey instrument was conducted by the supervising professor on the researcher's thesis committee; a faculty member of the School of Mass Communications at the University of South Florida; prior to distribution to survey panelists via Twitter. During pretest the professor was asked to consider the following questions regarding the instrument's validity:

- What did you understand to be the purpose of the survey?
- Was the survey designed in a manner that was easy to complete?
- Were any questions confusing or misleading?
- Please describe any difficulties you encountered in completing the survey.
- Please provide any other feedback you wish to share about the survey.

Finding the survey well-organized and without difficulty, the professor authorized survey distribution to begin.

### **Data Analysis**

To inform the research questions asked in this study, a variety of data analysis procedures were used. First, frequencies and descriptives were run in order to view

individual and cumulative percentages of item responses. Next, the internal consistency of the multi-item scales used to measure SME and the four factors of acculturation were examined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Composite measures were created using items that demonstrated alpha coefficients above .70 (Stacks, 2011). To inform for RQ1 through RQ4, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used. For RQ1, the independent variable was education level and the dependent variable was SME. For RQ2, the independent variable was generation and the dependent variable was SME. For RQ3, the independent variable was education level and the dependent variable was acculturation factors. For RQ4, the independent variable was generation and the dependent variable was acculturation factors.

To inform for RQ5, correlation analysis was used. *Correlation* tests for the existence of any relationship between previously unrelated variables. The term "correlation" was first proposed by Sir Francis Galton in 1885 (Rodgers & Nicewander, 1988). Ten years later, Karl Pearson published his formula for the correlation coefficient. Prior to the work of Galton and Pearson, many researchers sought to establish a causal relationship; whereby the independent variable was identified as the root cause of changes in the dependent variable. Correlation focuses not on causality, but on the strength of relationships. "Today, the correlation coefficient – and its associated regression equation – constitutes the principal statistical methodology for observational experiments in many disciplines" (Rodgers & Nicewander, 1998, p. 61). Correlation is therefore a useful tool for measuring how the value of an independent variable affects the value of a dependent variable. The results of the correlation analysis will provide better understanding of the relationships between acculturation factors and social media

engagement among Hispanic Americans. In addition, a close examination of the correlation analysis should reveal information to better understand how Hispanic Americans use and engage with various types of social media. This analysis will inform RQ6.

The next chapter summarizes results of the data analysis, including scores obtained through the various tests, and explains their significance.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter summarizes data analysis for the following research questions:

*RQ1: Are there significant differences in social media engagement among Hispanic Americans due to education level?*

*RQ2: Are there significant differences in social media engagement among Hispanic Americans due to generation?*

*RQ3: Are there significant differences in four acculturation factors among Hispanic Americans due to education?*

*RQ4: Are there significant differences in four acculturation factors among Hispanic Americans due to generation?*

*RQ5: What relationship exists between acculturation and social media engagement?*

*RQ6: How do Hispanic Americans use social media to engage with others among the Hispanic and American populations?*

### Sample Descriptives

Ninety-two (92) individuals participated in the survey. However, seven participants failed to complete at least half of the questionnaire; therefore they were omitted from analysis. This resulted in eighty-five (N=85) valid responses for analysis. This represents a 92.3% response rate among those who initiated the survey and answered all questions through to completion.

The first item on the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their highest completed education level. Six respondents completed high school (7.1%), 55 completed college (64.7%), 18 completed masters degrees (21.2%), and six completed doctoral degrees (7.1%). These results are shown in Table 1:

*Table 1: Frequency of Education Level among Hispanic-American Sample*

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
High School	6	7.1	7.1	7.1
College	55	64.7	64.7	71.8
Masters	18	21.2	21.2	93.0
Doctorate	6	7.1	7.1	100.0
Total	85	100.0	100.0	

The second item on the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their generation, based on categories identified by the ARSMA II scale. Thirty-two respondents indicated they were first generation immigrants (37.6%), 33 respondents indicated they were second generation (38.8%), nine indicated they were third generation (10.6%), six indicated they were fourth generation (7.1%), and five indicated they were fifth generation (5.9%). These results are shown in Table 2:

*Table 2: Frequency of Generation among Hispanic-American Sample*

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
First Generation	32	37.6	37.6	37.6
Second Generation	33	38.8	38.8	76.4
Third Generation	9	10.6	10.6	87.0
Fourth Generation	6	7.1	7.1	94.1
Fifth Generation	5	5.9	5.9	100.0
Total	85	100.0	100.0	

The third item on the questionnaire, which was optional, asked respondents to specify their age. Sixty-three participants responded to this question, with a minimum age of 20 and a maximum age of 70. The mean age of respondents was 34 years old.

The fourth item on the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their frequency of performance of items that measured the four factors of acculturation: cultural heritage, ethnic interaction, language use, and ethnic identity. Eight items were used to measure the acculturation factor of cultural heritage, and results are shown in Table 3:

*Table 3: Items Measuring Acculturation Factor of Cultural Heritage*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
I enjoy speaking Spanish	84	4.1310	1.07300
My thinking is done in Spanish	85	3.2706	1.45887
I speak Spanish	85	3.9176	1.21706
I enjoy reading (books, etc.) in Spanish	85	2.8941	1.42280
I write (letters, etc.) in Spanish	85	2.9176	1.50564
I enjoy listening to Spanish language music	85	4.2353	.99579
I enjoy Spanish language movies	85	3.3294	1.29457
I enjoy Spanish language TV	85	3.0588	1.28501

Seven items were used to measure the acculturation factor of ethnic interaction, and results are shown in Table 4:

*Table 4: Items Measuring Acculturation Factor of Ethnic Interaction*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
I associate with Americans	85	4.4235	.83633
My thinking is done in English	85	4.3882	.93978
I speak English	85	4.8353	.55307
My friends are now of American origin	85	4.0353	.86530
My friends while I was growing up were of American origin	83	3.3976	1.39633
I like to identify myself as American	84	3.7024	1.47084
I associate with Hispanic-Americans	85	4.3647	.82875

Four items were used to measure the acculturation factor of language use, and results are shown in Table 5:

*Table 5: Items Measuring Acculturation Factor of Language Use*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
I enjoy English language movies	84	4.5833	.74782
I enjoy English language TV	84	4.4762	.76798
I enjoy reading (books, etc.) in English	85	4.3059	.98831
I write (letters, etc.) in English	84	4.2619	1.03107



Three items were used to measure the acculturation factor of ethnic identity, and results are shown in Table 6:

*Table 6: Items Measuring Acculturation Factor of Ethnic Identity*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
My mother identifies herself as Hispanic	83	4.0723	1.54433
My father identifies himself as Hispanic	83	4.1446	1.53124
I like to identify myself as Hispanic	85	4.1765	1.38165

Next, respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of visitation to specific social media sites. Of the five social media selections offered to participants, Facebook was the most frequently visited and Pinterest was the least frequently visited. Results are shown in Table 7:

*Table 7: Frequency of Visitation to Social Media Sites*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Facebook	84	4.5595	.99821
YouTube	83	3.8916	.93720
Twitter	84	4.3095	1.23187
Google+	84	2.6548	1.47668
Pinterest	82	2.6098	1.44663

Finally, respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of performance of online activities. The most frequently performed social media activity was reading news stories, and the least frequently performed activity was participating in chats. Results are shown in Table 8:

Table 8: Frequency of Online Activity Performance

Item	Frequency	Mean	Standard Deviation
Watch videos	85	3.9765	.97561
Read news stories	85	4.5176	.83967
View friends' posts	85	4.4118	1.00350
Listen to music (not downloading)	85	4.4353	.94424
Look at photos	85	4.3882	.86043
Read a blog	84	3.6310	1.16970
Rate online content	85	2.8941	1.28196
Download music	85	3.0118	1.34070
Comment on posts	85	3.6588	1.21060
Participate in chats	85	2.6118	1.21591
Upload videos or music	85	2.5765	1.31273
Publish a blog	85	2.6588	1.46021
Manage a website	84	2.8929	1.62820
Share photographs	85	3.9176	1.17728
Create original posts	84	3.7857	1.21310

The multi-item scales used to measure social media engagement (SME) and acculturation were assessed for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. The 20 item scale for SME yielded an alpha coefficient of .876, indicating a strong internal consistency. Thus the items were collapsed to create a composite measure, or average, of SME ( $N = 79$ ,  $\bar{x} = 3.6108$ ,  $St.Dev. = .64513$ ). The dimensionality of the 25 items used to measure the four acculturation constructs – 1) language use, 2) ethnic identity, 3) cultural heritage, and 4) ethnic interaction – were assessed using maximum likelihood factor analysis. First, the factorability of the correlation matrix was assessed. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .817, indicating an adequate sample. In addition, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $p=.000$ ).

Further analysis of the acculturation variables was conducted in two stages, according to the procedures outlined by Green, Salkind, and Akey (2000). Factor extraction in stage one was conducted using principal components analysis and a scree plot. In the first factor analysis test, principal components analysis indicated a six factor

solution, based on Eigenvalues above 1.0. However, a priori assumptions suggested a four factor solution. Therefore, a four-factor solution was forced using the Maximum Likelihood procedure with Varimax rotation. Three items from the survey (7, 20, and 22) did not load on any factor, so they were dropped and the analysis was repeated. The repeated analysis produced four unique factors with clean loadings. The 22 items were examined for fit with the conceptual definitions of the four aspects of acculturation identified by Cuéllar, et al (1995). A goodness of fit was determined, and the four factors were labeled: cultural heritage, ethnic interaction, language use, and ethnic identity. Finally, the internal consistency of the multi-item scales for the four acculturation factors was examined using Cronbach's alpha. The alpha coefficient for all four factors was high, suggesting strong internal consistency. The rotated factor matrix is shown below in Table 9. Composite measures of the four factors of acculturation were also created. Composite mean scores are shown in Table 10.

Tables 9 and 10 are shown below:

Table 9: Rotated Factor Matrix

	Cultural Heritage	Ethnic Interaction	Language Use	Ethnic Identity
I enjoy speaking Spanish	.901			
My thinking is done in Spanish	.875			
I speak Spanish	.871			
I enjoy reading (books, etc.) in Spanish	.764			
I write (letters, etc.) in Spanish	.760			
I enjoy listening to Spanish language music	.629			
I enjoy Spanish language movies	.623			
I enjoy Spanish language TV	.555			
I associate with Americans		.758		
My thinking is done in English		.684		
I speak English		.680		
My friends are now of American origin		.672		
My friends while I was growing up were of American origin		.563		
I like to identify myself as American		.445		
I associate with Hispanic-Americans		.425		
I enjoy English language movies			.847	
I enjoy English language TV			.840	
I enjoy reading (books, etc.) in English			.744	
I write (letters, etc.) in English			.533	
My mother identifies herself as Hispanic				.923
My father identifies himself as Hispanic				.757
I like to identify myself as Hispanic				.728
<i>Eigen Values</i>	<i>6.230</i>	<i>5.064</i>	<i>1.934</i>	<i>1.628</i>
<i>Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient</i>	<i>.914</i>	<i>.795</i>	<i>.852</i>	<i>.884</i>

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood  
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization  
 Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Table 10: Composite Mean Scores for Acculturation Factors

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Language Use	82	1.00	5.00	4.4085	.74795
Ethnic Identity	83	1.00	5.00	4.1245	1.34317
Cultural Heritage	84	1.00	5.00	3.4524	1.01678
Ethnic Interaction	82	1.00	5.00	4.1585	.69189

## Data Analysis Related to Research Questions

### RQ1 and RQ2

Research questions 1 and 2 were designed to test the relationship between the dependent variable of social media engagement (SME) and the independent variables of education level and generation, respectively. The first research question explored whether SME was influenced as a result of education level. The results of one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences in SME due to education level,  $F(3, 78) = 1.565$ ,  $p = .205$ . Post hoc tests were then performed upon each group within education level. Results indicate a statistically significant difference in SME between college graduates ( $\bar{x} = 3.7010$ ,  $St.Dev. = .55523$ ) and those with doctoral degrees ( $\bar{x} = 3.1417$ ,  $St.Dev. = .87374$ ). This result is shown in Table 11.

*Table 11: Significance of Education Level upon Social Media Engagement*

Education Level 1	Education Level 2	Mean Difference	Significance
College	Doctorate	.55929	.046

The second research question explored whether SME was influenced by generation. The results of one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences in SME due to generation,  $F(4, 78) = 1.23$ ,  $p = .306$ . However, post hoc analysis revealed a statistically significant difference in SME between second and third generation Hispanics. Specifically, second generation Hispanics ( $\bar{x} = 3.7677$ ,  $St.Dev. = .60863$ ) reported higher overall SME than third generation Hispanics ( $\bar{x} = 3.2438$ ,  $St.Dev. = .69253$ ). This result is shown in Table 12.

*Table 12: Significance of Generation upon Social Media Engagement*

Generation 1	Generation 2	Mean Difference	Significance
Second generation	Third generation	.52399	.043

RQ3 and RQ4

Research questions 3 and 4 examined differences in acculturation among Hispanic Americans due to education level and generation, respectively. A series of ANOVA tests indicated no significant differences in the four factors of acculturation due to education. The acculturation factors were language use,  $F(3, 81) = .528, p = .664$ ; ethnic identity,  $F(3, 82) = 1.239, p = .301$ ; cultural heritage,  $F(3, 83) = .472, p = .703$ ; and ethnic interaction,  $F(3, 81) = .427, p = .735$ .

However, ANOVA tests did indicate significant differences in acculturation factors due to generation. The acculturation factor of *language use*,  $F(4, 81) = 2.662, p = .039$  indicated that second generation Hispanics ( $\bar{x} = 4.6515, \text{St.Dev.} = .38497$ ) had higher language use than third generation Hispanics ( $\bar{x} = 3.7857, \text{St.Dev.} = .97285$ ). These results are shown in Tables 13 and 14.

*Table 13: One Way ANOVA – Language Use Based on Generation*

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>
First Generation	31	4.3871	.87283	.15676
Second Generation	33	4.6515	.38497	.06701
Third Generation	7	3.7857	.97285	.36770
Fourth Generation	6	4.1667	.99582	.40654
Fifth Generation	5	4.1000	.62750	.28062
<i>Total</i>	82	4.4085	.74795	.08260

*Table 14: Post Hoc Test – Language Use Based on Generation*

<b>Generation 1</b>	<b>Generation 2</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Third Generation	Second Generation	-.86580	.005

The acculturation factor of *ethnic identity*,  $F(4, 82) = 4.622, p = .002$  indicated that fifth generation Hispanics ( $\bar{x} = 1.8333, \text{St.Dev.} = 1.10554$ ) had lower ethnic identity than all of the other generations. Fourth generation ( $\bar{x} = 3.9444, \text{St.Dev.} = 1.06284$ ), third generation ( $\bar{x} = 3.5556, \text{St.Dev.} = 1.92931$ ), second generation ( $\bar{x} = 4.4545, \text{St.Dev.} =$

1.00284), and first generation ( $\bar{x} = 4.2688$ , St.Dev. = 1.26906) all showed more significant relationships to ethnic identity. These results are shown in Tables 15 and 16.

*Table 15: One Way ANOVA – Ethnic Identity Based on Generation*

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>
First Generation	31	4.2688	1.26906	.22793
Second Generation	33	4.4545	1.00284	.17457
Third Generation	9	3.5556	1.92931	.64310
Fourth Generation	6	3.9444	1.06284	.43390
Fifth Generation	4	1.8333	1.10554	.55277
<i>Total</i>	83	<i>4.1245</i>	<i>1.34317</i>	<i>.14743</i>

*Table 16: Post Hoc Test – Ethnic Identity Based on Generation*

<b>Generation 1</b>	<b>Generation 2</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Fifth Generation	First Generation	-2.43548	.000
	Second Generation	-2.62121	.000
	Third Generation	-1.72222	.023
	Fourth Generation	-2.11111	.010

The acculturation factor of *cultural heritage*,  $F(4, 83) = 5.045$ ,  $p = .001$  indicated that first generation Hispanics ( $\bar{x} = 3.9609$ , St.Dev. = .95748) had higher cultural heritage than all other generations. Second generation ( $\bar{x} = 3.3594$ , St.Dev. = .90460), third generation ( $\bar{x} = 2.7917$ , St. Dev. = .64952), fourth generation ( $\bar{x} = 2.8542$ , St.Dev. = 1.11640), and fifth generation ( $\bar{x} = 2.7000$ , St.Dev. = 1.11313) all showed less significant relationships to cultural heritage. These results are shown in Tables 17 and 18.

*Table 17: One Way ANOVA – Cultural Heritage Based on Generation*

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>
First Generation	32	3.9609	.95748	.16926
Second Generation	32	3.3594	.90460	.15991
Third Generation	9	2.7917	.64952	.21651
Fourth Generation	6	2.8542	1.11640	.45577
Fifth Generation	5	2.7000	1.11313	.49781
<i>Total</i>	84	<i>3.4524</i>	<i>1.01678</i>	<i>.11094</i>

*Table 18: Post Hoc Test – Cultural Heritage Based on Generation*

<b>Generation 1</b>	<b>Generation 2</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Significance</b>
First Generation	Second Generation	.60156	.012
	Third Generation	1.16927	.001
	Fourth Generation	1.10677	.009
	Fifth Generation	1.26094	.006

The acculturation factor of *ethnic interaction*,  $F(4, 81) = 5.836$ ,  $p = .000$  indicated that first generation Hispanics ( $\bar{x} = 3.7143$ , St.Dev. = .82243) had lower ethnic interaction than all other generations. Second generation ( $\bar{x} = 4.3766$ , St.Dev. = .43568), third generation ( $\bar{x} = 4.5079$ , St. Dev. = .60234), fourth generation ( $\bar{x} = 4.3333$ , St.Dev. = .53959), and fifth generation ( $\bar{x} = 4.4571$ , St.Dev. = .30971) all showed more significant relationships to ethnic interaction. These results are shown in Tables 19 and 20.

*Table 19: One Way ANOVA – Ethnic Interaction Based on Generation*

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>
First Generation	29	3.7143	.82243	.15272
Second Generation	33	4.3766	.43568	.07584
Third Generation	9	4.5079	.60234	.20078
Fourth Generation	6	4.3333	.53959	.22029
Fifth Generation	5	4.4571	.30971	.13851
<i>Total</i>	82	4.1585	.69189	.07641

*Table 20: Post Hoc Test – Ethnic Interaction Based on Generation*

<b>Generation 1</b>	<b>Generation 2</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Significance</b>
First Generation	Second Generation	-.66234	.000
	Third Generation	-.79365	.001
	Fourth Generation	-.61905	.029
	Fifth Generation	-.74286	.016

#### RQ5 and RQ6

The final research questions explored the relationship between SME and acculturation. Correlation analysis was run to inform these questions. The first correlation test revealed that only the variable of language use was found to have a statistically



significant and positive relationship with SME ( $r = .237$ ,  $p = .038$ ). Results are shown in Table 21.

*Table 21: Acculturation Factors and Social Media Engagement Correlations*

		SME	Language Use	Ethnic Identity	Cultural Heritage	Ethnic Interaction
SME	Pearson Correlation	1	.237	.187	.208	.079
	Significance (2-tailed)		.038	.103	.068	.499
	N	79	77	77	78	76
Language Use	Pearson Correlation	.237*	1	.261	.222	.483
	Significance (2-tailed)	.038		.019	.046	.000
	N	77	82	80	81	79
Ethnic Identity	Pearson Correlation	.187	.261	1	.241	.091
	Significance (2-tailed)	.103	.019		.029	.419
	N	77	80	83	82	81
Cultural Heritage	Pearson Correlation	.208	.222	.241	1	-.173
	Significance (2-tailed)	.068	.046	.029		.123
	N	78	81	82	84	81
Ethnic Interaction	Pearson Correlation	.079	.483	.091	-.173	1
	Significance (2-tailed)	.499	.000	.419	.123	
	N	76	79	81	81	82

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

A second exploratory correlation analysis added the variables of generation and education level to test the relationship between these variables with SME and acculturation factors. The most meaningful relationship was established between generation and the acculturation factors of ethnic identity, cultural heritage, and ethnic interaction. These results are shown in Table 22.

Table 22: Correlations Including Generation and Education Level

		SME	Language Use	Ethnic Identity	Cultural Heritage	Ethnic Interaction
SME	Pearson Correlation	1	.237	.187	.208	.079
	Significance (2-tailed)		.038	.103	.068	.499
	N	79	77	77	78	76
Language Use	Pearson Correlation	.237	1	.261	.222	.483
	Significance (2-tailed)	.038		.019	.046	.000
	N	77	82	80	81	79
Ethnic Identity	Pearson Correlation	.187	.261	1	.241	.091
	Significance (2-tailed)	.103	.019		.029	.419
	N	77	80	83	82	81
Cultural Heritage	Pearson Correlation	.208	.222	.241	1	-.173
	Significance (2-tailed)	.068	.046	.029		.123
	N	78	81	82	84	81
Ethnic Interaction	Pearson Correlation	.079	.483	.091	-.173	1
	Significance (2-tailed)	.499	.000	.419	.123	
	N	76	79	81	81	82
Generation	Pearson Correlation	-.002	-.161	-.323**	-.419**	.352**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.984	.148	.003	.000	.001
	N	79	82	83	84	82
Education Level	Pearson Correlation	-.175	-.093	-.119	.127	-.068
	Significance (2-tailed)	.122	.407	.283	.251	.541
	N	79	82	83	84	82

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The next chapter presents interpretation and discussion of data results.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

What follows is an interpretation and discussion around the data collected from those who participated in the survey process.

### Research Question 1

Findings indicate no significant difference in social media engagement (SME) due to education level. However, post hoc evaluation between education levels with regards to the dependent variable of SME did reveal an interesting discovery. Those with a college education did display a higher level of SME than counterparts with a doctorate degree. There are several possible explanations for this. According to Perez-Peña (2012), more Hispanics are enrolling college than in years past; however there is no specific mention of graduation rates among this demographic. Also no mention is given to those Hispanics who progress past the undergraduate level to achieve a Masters or Doctorate level education. This suggests that many Hispanics are reaching for an undergraduate college education, but few reach higher. This assumption is supported by the descriptive education statistics, which indicate that 64% of survey respondents completed college; whereas only a cumulative 28% went on to achieve Masters or Doctorate degrees. Therefore, a higher level of SME may exist among college graduates simply because there are more of them among the Hispanic population.

Another possible explanation for this variance is that social media by its very nature appeals to the younger members of society. According to research by Pingdom

(2012) on social media demographics, just over half (51%) of social media users fall within the age range of 25 to 44 years of age. This was an overall finding across 24 social media sites, including Twitter. Specifically related to Twitter, the survey indicated that 55% of Twitter users are over the age of 35; however this is practically an even split with those under the age of 35. It is presumed that Masters or Doctorate graduates are more likely to be older, due to the time commitment required to complete these degrees. Earning a Doctoral degree specifically can be a long process, sometimes lasting up to ten years (Mason, 2012). Also many who earn Doctorate degrees are likely to enter into academic employment, where there is simply not enough time to participate in social media networking due to professional commitments. Mason wrote, “In a survey we conducted of all doctoral students at the University of California, more than 70 percent of women and over half of all men said they considered a career at a research university to be too hard-driving and unfriendly to family life” (2012). These factors may also explain why college level graduates possess higher SME scores than doctorate level individuals.

## **Research Question 2**

There was no significant difference in SME due to generation considered as a whole. However, post hoc analysis revealed a significantly higher level of SME for second generation Hispanics than among those of third generation. This may be explained due to differences between stages of acculturation. According to Correa and Jeong (2011), Hispanics were identified as heavy social media users; second only to Asians. Motivations for social media use among Hispanics included maintenance of family ties and establishment of relationships with others of similar culture. Second

generation Hispanics were born in the United States but either parent was born overseas; whereas third generation Hispanics and their parents were all born in the United States. While not explicitly stated, second generation Hispanics may still have their parents residing in another country, or they may simply live far apart within the United States. In either case, maintenance of family relationships was previously established as a strong motivation among Hispanics to engage in social media. Because second generation Hispanics have parents who were born overseas, their parents may still be undergoing the acculturation process. As mentioned by Berry (1997), those who begin acculturation later in life tend to have a more difficult transition into a new cultural environment. Second generation immigrants would possess more familiarity with cultural norms in America than their parents would; simply due to lifetime exposure to these norms having been born and raised in that culture. Contrast that with third generation Hispanics, whose parents were both born in the United States. For this generation, acculturation has most likely become even more inherent since American cultural norms were previously instilled in their parents from birth, and subsequently passed down to the third generation individual. In a sense, the further down the generational scale an individual resides, the more diluted the acculturation process becomes. In other words, less acculturation occurs since prior generations have spent more time and become more assimilated into the native culture. This suggests a dichotomy with regards to SME. With a lower degree of acculturation attributed to generation, combined with an emphasis on maintenance of family relationships, it becomes apparent why second generation Hispanics may score higher for SME than third generation Hispanics.

### **Research Question 3**

No significant difference was evident between acculturation factors and education level. This is a surprising discovery considering the emphasis that Berry (1997) placed upon education as an indicator of acculturation success. Berry suggested that education contributes to variables similar to language use and cultural heritage from current study. This is attributed to frequent exposure to foreign speech, behaviors and customs which immigrants receive in an educational setting. Unfortunately, no significant relationship was discovered through current study to support these assumptions. This presents the opportunity for more refined future study regarding the relationship between education and acculturation factors.

### **Research Question 4**

There were several significant relationships discovered between generation and the four factors of acculturation, each one considered separately. The first acculturation factor of language use showed significant association with generation. Post hoc tests specifically revealed that third generation Hispanics ranked higher in language use than first or second generation Hispanics. This is consistent with findings by Cuéllar et al (1995) during their introductory study employing the ARSMA II scale. The authors' results showed that Mexican orientation scores decreased with each passing generation, while Anglo orientation scores increased. This is similar to what occurred in the current study, where language use factors (i.e. those factors associated with English use) were higher among third-generation Hispanics than among first or second-generation Hispanics. This discovery is logical considering that third-generation Hispanics would

have more exposure to language use descriptors, such as English language television and books, than higher-tiered generations who may receive exposure to these descriptors infrequently or later in life.

The second acculturation factor of ethnic identity also demonstrated strong significance with generation. Post hoc tests showed a relationship approaching significance between second-generation Hispanics and third-generation Hispanics; although the ANOVA value of .057 registered just shy of the significance value. Two relationships that did surpass the value for significance were between third and fifth generation Hispanics, as well as fourth and fifth generation Hispanics. In both cases, the higher tiered generation (i.e. that with a lower numerical prefix) ranked higher for ethnic identity than the lower generation. That is to say that third generation Hispanics demonstrated higher ethnic identity scores than fourth generation Hispanics. Likewise fourth generation Hispanics scored higher on ethnic identity than fifth generation Hispanics. This discovery also closely resembles the findings by Cuéllar et al (1995) regarding orientation along the Mexican-Anglo continuum of the ARSMA II scale, whereby each passing generation scores lower in Mexican orientation and scores higher in Anglo orientation. Substituting terms salient to the current study, results of the post hoc tests suggest a higher degree of ethnic identity among second generation Hispanics over third generation Hispanics. The same is true between third and fifth generation, as well as fourth and fifth generation. What is surprising about these findings is that no significant relationship of ethnic identity was present between first and second generation Hispanics. Significant scores of ethnic identity among generations did not manifest until the second generation. It was assumed that a first generation Hispanic would experience

the highest levels of ethnic identity, especially when compared to second generation Hispanics, since that person was born outside the United States and raised with a different set of linguistic and cultural behaviors. This assumption was formulated basis prior study by Cuéllar et al (1997), which stated, “a diminishment in one’s sense of ethnic identity occurs for Mexican Americans with increased acculturation into the Anglo or mainstream culture” (Cuéllar et al, 1997, p. 545). While not overtly stated, the underlying implication from this statement is that the acculturation factor of ethnic identity would be strongest upon initial entry into the dominant culture. This assumption was not supported by the data.

The third acculturation factor of cultural heritage showed strong significance to generation. This was shown in post hoc tests to be especially true for first generation Hispanics, who were born in another country, as compared to all other generations of Hispanics who were born in the United States. Cultural heritage, as adapted from the ARSMA II scale by Cuéllar et al (1995), identifies those behaviors which are reflective of the individual’s native culture of birth. In the case of current study these behaviors were classified according to participation in activities conducted in Spanish, such as speaking Spanish and enjoying Spanish language movies or television. The fact that first generation Hispanics show the highest degree of cultural heritage is consistent with the unidimensional model of acculturation studied by Ryder et al (2000), which suggests that Hispanic and American cultures lie on opposite extremes of a continuum. According to this model, an individual undergoing the acculturation process moves away from their *heritage culture* of birth and progresses toward the *mainstream culture* in their new surrounding environment. This model implies that at the onset of acculturation, heritage



culture is highest; an implication which is supported by post hoc tests. Cultural heritage behaviors include such statements as “My thinking is done in Spanish” and “I enjoy Spanish language TV,” among others. The basis of the acculturation factor of cultural heritage in current study is that the behaviors are indicative of the individual’s native culture. A first generation Hispanic by definition was born in another country; therefore their behaviors would be consistent with their culture of origin. Second generation, as well as subsequent generations, would be more acclimated to American culture and would therefore score lower on cultural heritage indicators. Put another way, second through fifth generation Hispanics progressively display higher acculturation tendencies toward the mainstream culture as their generation level moves into the lower tiers (i.e., a third generation Hispanic is on a higher tier of the generation scale than a fifth generation Hispanic). This is evidenced by decreasing recurrence of statistically significant relationships between the variables of generation and cultural heritage as the generation level moves down. Stated simply, the native culture of second through fifth generation Hispanics is the United States.

The final acculturation factor of ethnic interaction also showed strong significance to generation. Similar to cultural heritage, post hoc tests revealed higher levels for this acculturation factor among first generation Hispanics as compared to second through fifth generation Hispanics. This finding is curious from the perspective that it appears to contradict previous findings regarding cultural heritage. Whereas the acculturation factor of ethnic interaction is concerned with behaviors associated with the *mainstream culture*, the acculturation factor of cultural heritage relates to behaviors synonymous with the *heritage culture*. The outward appearance is that first generation Hispanics scored higher

for both acculturation factors of ethnic interaction and cultural heritage, which according to the unidimensional model lie on opposing sides of the acculturation spectrum and should therefore not be possible. This occurrence is actually possible when based on the bidimensional model of acculturation, which forms the theoretical framework for the ARSMA II scale posited by Cuéllar, et al (1995). In the bidimensional model, mainstream and heritage cultures can either increase or decrease independently of one another. For example, an increase in behaviors associated with the mainstream culture is no longer contingent upon a decrease in behaviors associated with the heritage culture. The benefit of the bidimensional model is that individuals can maintain their native culture while simultaneously adopting and adapting to the mainstream culture. This is what has occurred in the current study based upon significance scores among first generation Hispanics. Post hoc tests for ethnic interaction reveal high significance scores for first generation Hispanics. This suggests that first generation Hispanics engage in ethnic interaction behaviors with increased regularity over other generations. These behaviors include concepts such as “I associate with Americans” and “I speak English,” among others.

The relevance of strong significance scores among first generation Hispanics for both acculturation factors of cultural heritage and ethnic interaction suggests that these immigrants place equal importance on maintenance of native cultural norms, as well as adoption of new cultural practices associated with their surroundings. This behavior is consistent with the acculturation strategy of *integration* posited by Berry (1997), whereby individuals seek to maintain their original culture and simultaneously interact with

members of the greater society. Results of the post hoc tests for cultural heritage and ethnic interaction support this conclusion.

### **Research Questions 5 and 6**

A significant relationship was discovered between SME and the acculturation factor of language use, which is associated with mainstream culture activities such as “I enjoy English language TV” and “I write (letters, etc.) in English.” Based upon the user-generated media (UGM) framework established by Shao (2009), SME measured a baseline of social media activity which could be compared to the four acculturation factors. The relationship between SME and language use was found to be a positive correlation of moderate strength. A positive correlation between SME and language use suggests that Hispanics use social media as an information source about the American mainstream culture. As established by Moon and Park (2007), media is a trusted source of information used by immigrants to gain knowledge about a new culture. Although that study focused on Koreans, the implication is not lost on the Hispanic population. It could be argued that the idea of media use as information source would carry more widespread applicability, since the Hispanic population in the United States is larger than the Korean population. This correlation therefore points to the suggestion that Hispanics use social media in combination with other traditional media forms, such as television and books, in order to advance the acculturation process. This utilization of social media is consistent with the *social information* gratification from the six motivations for social media use established by Quan-Haase and Young (2010); although this motivation goes beyond acquisition of knowledge solely about personal acquaintances. Media choices of movies,

television, and books serve more than an entertainment purpose; they also educate and inform Hispanics about American culture.

A separate correlation was run adding the variables of generation and education level, to compare with SME and the four acculturation factors. No correlations were discovered between the variables of education level and acculturation factors. However, a few significant correlations did manifest between the variable of generation and acculturation factors; specifically ethnic identity, cultural heritage and ethnic interaction. Generation and ethnic identity were found to have a negative correlation of moderate strength. Generation and cultural heritage also displayed a negative correlation of moderate strength. Finally, generation and ethnic interaction showed a positive correlation of moderate strength.

The negative relationship between generation and the acculturation factors of ethnic identity and cultural heritage suggests that a Hispanic person's generation inversely affects their involvement with native cultural behaviors and attitudes. The data indicates that as Hispanics progress through generations, their engagement in activities related to cultural heritage and ethnic identity diminishes. This suggests that a first generation is more likely than a second generation Hispanic to engage in cultural heritage behaviors, such as speaking Spanish, as well as ethnic identity behaviors, such as identifying themselves as Hispanic. Likewise a second generation Hispanic displays these behaviors more frequently than a third generation Hispanic, and so on. The negative correlation between generation and the acculturation factors of ethnic identity and cultural heritage strongly suggests that as Hispanics become more incorporated into

American mainstream culture, they relinquish attitudes and behaviors reflective of their Hispanic heritage culture.

Conversely, generation was found to have a positive correlation of moderate strength with the acculturation factor of ethnic interaction. The data indicates that as Hispanics progress through generations, their engagement in activities related to ethnic interaction increases. This suggests that a second generation Hispanic is more likely than a first generation Hispanic to engage in ethnic interaction behaviors, such as associating with Americans and identifying themselves as American. The positive correlation between generation and the acculturation factor of ethnic interaction strongly suggests that as Hispanics become more integrated into American mainstream culture, they embrace behaviors and attitudes consistent with their surrounding environment.

This correlational data lends credibility to the unidimensional model of acculturation; whereby an increase in mainstream culture simultaneously accompanies a decrease in heritage culture. This is consistent with research by Ryder et al (2000) and detracts from the bidimensional model, where mainstream and heritage cultures lie on distinct axes of an orthogonal grid with four distinct quadrants. Results from the current study do not support the orthogonal model of acculturation. Instead they suggest that from one generation to the next, the acculturation factors of cultural heritage and ethnic identity decrease while ethnic interaction increases. This is consistent with findings by Cuéllar et al (1997), where the authors discovered “a diminishment in one’s sense of ethnic identity ... with increased acculturation into the mainstream culture” (p. 545). The current study also calls into question the reliability of the ARSMA II scale of acculturation; however Cuéllar et al (1995) also point out that “ARSMA II is a ...

orthogonal acculturation scale that is also capable of generating linear acculturation scores” (p. 295). The orthogonal model therefore remains reliable; however it was not supported based on results from current study.

## **Conclusion**

This research was an exploratory study into the relationships between the variables of Hispanic acculturation and social media engagement. A review of the literature suggests that prior studies have focused on social media engagement with regards to basic demographic qualities, such as gender, age, race, etc. However a gap in the literature was identified with a more specific approach toward the aspect of Hispanic acculturation and its comparison to social media use. This formed the impetus for this research.

A few limitations were identified in the current study. The most glaring handicap to the data collected is the sample size, which is extremely small. Eighty-five (85) survey participants is a weak representation of the larger Hispanic population. This small sample size is attributed to the time period restraints under which the researcher was able to gather data. Data was gathered over a period of only three weeks; this short time frame was a result of the compact schedule to which the researcher was constrained due to the academic calendar at University of South Florida. With a longer time period, the likelihood of recruiting more participants would increase and allow for more data gathering. The small sample size therefore limits the generalizability of the study results.

The use of Twitter for recruiting participants was extremely time-consuming, since the anticipated benefit of retweets did not materialize. It was anticipated that

retweets would attract more survey participants through word of mouth “snowball” sampling. The researcher’s tweet soliciting survey participation was retweeted several times to estimated thousands of people. However no noticeable increase in survey completion immediately followed these retweets. The researcher was forced to improvise and approach potential survey participants on an individual basis; sending over 500 tweets to followers of influential Hispanic groups on Twitter. The success (or failure) of the Twitter distribution strategy, particularly with regards to retweets, cannot be ascertained with certainty however because participants were not asked to disclose how they learned of the survey. While this information would have proven valuable, it may also have presented a violation of participant confidentiality.

One positive quality of Twitter distribution was that participants recruited for the survey were collected from all across the United States. This was the anticipated benefit of using Twitter for survey distribution; the ability to reach many people quickly and independent of geographic limitations. Many users include information on their Twitter profiles that shows their location of residence. This information is usually limited to city and state; however it still reveals a basic geographic proximity. While participant location was not solicited nor recorded in the survey (again for purposes of protecting respondent confidentiality), the researcher was able to see that respondents were located in various regions across the United States. Twitter represents the “cutting edge” method of rapid communication in the Internet age, and it was this characteristic of Twitter that the researcher anticipated would result in a larger sample population. This did not materialize however, most likely due to the perception of inconvenience by those individuals contacted of completing a survey. In addition, the researcher was unknown to those

people contacted for participation. Many people approached for survey participation most likely ignored the tweets due to the nature of receiving communication from a complete stranger.

Due to primary reliance on Twitter for recruitment of survey participants, results also do not count for individuals who do not use social media. This is an important distinction to be made. As the focus of this study was on social media engagement, the researcher determined that using the very same tool as that which was studied would prove advantageous. Results do not support this assumption; however this is most likely attributed again to the small sample gathered and not the method of data collection. However, what cannot be ignored is that a randomly selected representative sample of Hispanic Americans was not collected. While many Hispanics are social media users, the opinions of those who do not use social media were not included in this research. This is a difficult quandary to balance. On the one hand, recruitment of only those people who use social media is desirable because they would have familiarity with the tool being studied and could competently answer the survey instrument. The downfall is that those who do not use social media are excluded from the sampling population. On the other hand, going outside of social media for survey recruitment would be a more objective and random method of sampling. However the opportunity exists to gather less reliable data since those who do not use social media would not be able to provide any useful data about the research topic. Future research should aim to replicate the results of this study using a formal approach with more rigorous random sampling methods.

Alternatives for data gathering could include direct mail or direct recruitment in person of a Hispanic social club or organization. However, there are cost considerations



with these methods of recruitment; both financial and time. The advantage of using Twitter was also its cost, which is free. It is an inexpensive and rapid method of information dispersal, which was the allure of using it for survey distribution. More information regarding the success of Twitter as a survey distribution method is needed; and should be collected in future research.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL LETTER



DIVISION OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE  
 Institutional Review Boards, FWA No. 00001669  
 11901 Bruce B. Downs Blvd. MDC035 • Tampa, FL 33613-7199  
 (813) 974-5638 • FAX (813) 974-6618

February 7, 2013

Roland Massa, B.A.  
 Mass Communication  
 8510 Queen Brooks Ct.  
 Tampa, FL 33637

RE: **Exempt Certification** for IRB#: Pro00011394  
 Title: Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement: A Uses and Gratifications Perspective

Dear Mr. Massa:

On 2/7/2013 the Institutional Review Board (IRB) determined that your research meets USF requirements and Federal Exemption criteria as outlined in the federal regulations at 45CFR46.101(b):

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:  
 (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

As the principal investigator for this study, it is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted as outlined in your application and consistent with the ethical principles outlined in the Belmont Report and with USF IRB policies and procedures. Please note that changes to this protocol may disqualify it from exempt status. Please note that you are responsible for notifying the IRB prior to implementing any changes to the currently approved protocol.

The Institutional Review Board will maintain your exemption application for a period of five years from the date of this letter or for three years after a Final Progress Report is received, whichever is longer. If you wish to continue this protocol beyond five years, you will need to submit a new application. When your study is completed, either prior to, or at the end of the five-year period, you must submit a Final Report to close this study.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

Kristen Salomon, Ph.D., Vice Chairperson  
 USF Institutional Review Board

## APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

### **Informed Consent to Participate in Research Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study**

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to take part. This page is called an informed consent form. Please read this information carefully and take your time making your decision. The nature of the study, risks, benefits, and other important information about the study are detailed below.

The title of this research study is called Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement. The person in charge of this research study is Roland Massa; a graduate student at the University of South Florida (USF). This person is called the Principal Investigator. However, other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. Roland is being guided in this research by Dr. Kelly Werder, Ph.D; a graduate level instructor at USF.

The research will be conducted online via survey instrument administered at SurveyMonkey.com.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between the concept of acculturation, which is the process of adapting new cultural surroundings, and social media engagement. You have been selected for this research due to your cultural

background. This study is being conducted by a graduate level student for a Masters Degree thesis project.

### **Alternatives**

You do not have to participate in this research study. If you wish you may exit the survey now.

### **Benefits**

We are unsure if you will receive any benefits by taking part in this research study.

### **Risks or Discomfort**

This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

### **Compensation**

You will receive no payment or other compensation for taking part in this study.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

We will keep your survey responses private and confidential. At no point during this study will your name or any other identifying information be requested. Certain people may need to see your survey responses. By law, anyone who looks at your responses must keep them completely confidential. The only people who will be allowed to see these responses are the Principal Investigator and a committee of three USF professors.

The only others who may review the results of this study are the USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and its related staff who have oversight responsibilities for this study, staff in the USF Office of Research and Innovation, USF Division of Research Integrity and Compliance, and other USF offices who oversee this research.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, your name or any other identifying information will not be included. We will not publish anything that would let people know who you are.

### **Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal**

You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. You should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study. You are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits you are entitled to receive if you stop taking part in this study. If you are a student or employee of USF, decision to participate or not to participate will not affect your student status (course grade) or job status.

### **Consent to Take Part in this Research Study**

If you consent to participate in this research study and are in agreement with all previously given statements, please proceed to the next page to begin the survey.

Otherwise you may exit the survey now.

*Please select the highest education level you completed in school:*

1. Elementary
2. High School
3. College
4. Masters
5. Doctorate

*Please indicate the generation that defines you best. Please select only one:*

6. First generation = you were born in another country.
7. Second generation = you were born in USA; either parent born in another country.
8. Third generation = you were born in USA; both parents born in USA and all grandparents born in another country.
9. Fourth generation = you and your parents were born in USA; at least one grandparent born in USA.
10. Fifth generation = you, your parents and all grandparents were born in USA.

*Please indicate your age (optional): \_\_\_\_\_*

*Please select a response from the following scale that indicates how often you perform each of the following activities: Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Frequently, Very*

*Frequently*

1. I speak Spanish
2. I speak English
3. I enjoy speaking Spanish
4. I associate with Americans
5. I associate with Hispanic-Americans

6. I enjoy listening to Spanish language music
7. I enjoy listening to English language music
8. I enjoy Spanish language TV
9. I enjoy English language TV
10. I enjoy Spanish language movies
11. I enjoy English language movies
12. I enjoy reading (books, etc.) in Spanish
13. I enjoy reading (books, etc.) in English
14. I write (letters, etc.) in Spanish
15. I write (letters, etc.) in English
16. My thinking is done in English
17. My thinking is done in Spanish
18. My father identifies himself as Hispanic
19. My mother identifies herself as Hispanic
20. My friends while I was growing up were of Hispanic origin
21. My friends while I was growing up were of American origin
22. My friends are now of Hispanic origin
23. My friends are now of American origin
24. I like to identify myself as Hispanic
25. I like to identify myself as American

*Please select a response from the following scale that indicates how often you perform each of the following activities online: Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Frequently, Very Frequently*

1. Watch videos
2. Read news stories
3. View friends' posts
4. Listen to music (not downloading)
5. Look at photos
6. Read a blog
7. Rate online content
8. Download music
9. Comment on posts
10. Participate in chats
11. Upload videos or music
12. Publish a blog
13. Manage a website
14. Share photographs
15. Create original posts

*Please indicate how often you visit each of the following social media Websites: Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Frequently, Very Frequently*

1. Facebook
2. YouTube
3. Twitter
4. Google+
5. Pinterest



## APPENDIX C: ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

### Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement

#### Informed Consent to Participate In Research

Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study

USF IRB # 11394

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to take part. This page is called an informed consent form. Please read this information carefully and take your time making your decision. The nature of the study, risks, benefits, and other important information about the study are detailed below.

The title of this research study is called Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement. The person in charge of this research study is Roland Massa; a graduate student at the University of South Florida (USF). This person is called the Principal Investigator. However, other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. Roland is being guided in this research by Dr. Kelly Werder, Ph.D; a graduate level instructor at USF.

The research will be conducted online via survey instrument administered at SurveyMonkey.com.

#### Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between the concept of acculturation, which is the process of adapting new cultural surroundings, and social media engagement. You have been selected for this research due to your cultural background. This study is being conducted by a graduate level student for a Masters Degree thesis project.

#### Study Procedures

If you take part in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey consisting of 45 agreement-type questions, in addition to basic demographic questions. Please complete these questions as openly and honestly as possible. The total expected time for survey completion should be no more than 20 minutes, and the survey can be completed in one session. There are no follow-up or additional visits required.

#### Alternatives

You do not have to participate in this research study. If you wish you may exit the survey now.

#### Benefits

We are unsure if you will receive any benefits by taking part in this research study.

#### Risks or Discomfort

This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

#### Compensation

You will receive no payment or other compensation for taking part in this study.

#### Privacy and Confidentiality

We will keep your survey responses private and confidential. At no point during this study will your name or any other identifying information be requested. Certain people may need to see your survey responses. By law, anyone who looks at your responses must keep them completely confidential. The only people who will be allowed to see these responses are the Principal Investigator and a committee of three USF professors. The only others who may review the results of this study are the USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and its related staff who have oversight responsibilities for this study, staff in the USF Office of Research and Innovation, USF Division of Research Integrity and Compliance, and other USF offices who oversee this research.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, your name or any other identifying information will not be included. We will not publish anything that would let people know who you are.

## Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement

### **\* Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal**

You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. You should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study. You are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits you are entitled to receive if you stop taking part in this study. If you are a student or employee of USF, decision to participate or not to participate will not affect your student status (course grade) or job status.

### **Minimum Age Requirement**

By agreeing to participate in this research study, you acknowledge that you meet the minimum age requirement of 18 years or older. If you do not meet this requirement, please exit the survey now.

### **Consent to Take Part in this Research Study**

If you consent to participate in this research study and are in agreement with all previously given statements, please type "agree" in the following box; then proceed to the next page to begin the survey. Otherwise you may exit the survey now.

## Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement

**\*Please select the highest education level you completed in school:**

- Elementary       High School       College       Masters       Doctorate

**\*Please indicate the generation that defines you best. Please select only one:**

- First generation - you were born in another country.
- Second generation - you were born in USA; either parent born in another country.
- Third generation - you were born in USA; both parents born in USA and all grandparents born in another country.
- Fourth generation - you and your parents were born in USA; at least one grandparent born in USA.
- Fifth generation - you, your parents and all grandparents were born in USA.

**Please indicate your age (optional):**

## Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement

**\* Please select a response from the following scale that indicates how often you perform each of the following activities:**

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1. I speak Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I speak English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I enjoy speaking Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I associate with Americans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I associate with Hispanic-Americans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I enjoy listening to Spanish language music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I enjoy listening to English language music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I enjoy Spanish language TV	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I enjoy English language TV	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I enjoy Spanish language movies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I enjoy English language movies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I enjoy reading (books, etc.) in Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. I enjoy reading (books, etc.) in English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. I write (letters, etc.) in Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. I write (letters, etc.) in English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. My thinking is done in English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. My thinking is done in Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. My father identifies himself as Hispanic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. My mother identifies herself as Hispanic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. My friends while I was growing up were of Hispanic origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. My friends while I was growing up were of American origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. My friends are now of Hispanic origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. My friends are now of	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement

American origin

24. I like to identify myself  
as Hispanic

25. I like to identify myself  
as American

## Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement

**\* Please select a response from the following scale that indicates how often you perform each of the following activities online:**

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1. Watch videos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Read news stories	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. View friends' posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Listen to music (not downloading)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Look at photos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Read a blog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Rate online content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Download music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Comment on posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Participate in chats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Upload videos or music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Publish a blog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Manage a website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Share photographs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Create original posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Hispanic Acculturation and Social Media Engagement

Please indicate how often you visit each of the following social media Web sites:

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
YouTube	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Google+	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pinterest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Roland*