ABSTRACT

Internet social networking devices like Twitter have increased in popularity between 2005 and 2010. Often tweets have hyperlinks to other Web sites. This thesis employs an experiment to determine what motivates Twitter users to click the hyperlinks in tweets.

A total of 153 Twitter users completed surveys about how they use Twitter. Rodgers and Sheldon’s Web Motivation Inventory was used to gauge how they use the Internet. Those answers were compared to the responses they gave from looking at tweets they had never seen before. It was hypothesized that there is a “match” between a person’s main Internet motivation and how they interact with tweets. The experiment also sought to find a difference between tweets from a person versus an organization.

A combination of motivation research, the functionalist theory of psychology and the uses and gratifications theory support the hypotheses.