

COURSE:

Foundations of Communication

INSTRUCTOR:

Dr. Wendy Robinson

COURSE COMPLETED:

Spring 2009

ASSIGNMENT TITLE:

Analysis Summary of Academic Article

ASSIGNMENT PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This assignment was designed to help students understand academic articles and be able to assess their meanings. We were to find an academic article and summarize each section of the article. This summary needed to include the introduction, method, results, and the final discussion.

REFLECTIONS:

Before this assignment I had no clue what any of these academic articles meant. They all seemed to be in a different language. Dr. Robinson did a great job of breaking down academic articles and making them tangible. Although researching academic articles was not the most fun and exciting assignments I have had to complete, it did teach me how to analyze and summarize an article which ended up being invaluable.

Running Head: Analysis Summary

Analysis Summary of Academic Article

Renee Elliott

Foundations of Communication

March 18, 2009

Analysis Summary of Academic Article

Kaye, B. K., & Johnson, T. J. (2002). Online and in the know: Uses and gratifications of the web for political information. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 46 (1), 54-71.

Introduction

The authors of this article were interested in finding out the uses and gratifications of the World Wide Web users in relation to politics. They felt that this was a topic that had not been fully researched. The researchers conducted an online survey to find out why users visiting political sites were on the Internet for their information. The main difference they wanted to uncover was that, in regards to the election, users were not only using the Internet for entertainment, but for informational purposes as well. There were three research questions that they used which were: What needs will those who use the World Wide Web for political information report they fulfill through online use? How strongly do motivations for Web use correlate with interests in politics, strength of party support, likelihood of voting, self-efficacy, and trust in politics? How strongly does self-efficacy predict motivations for using the Web for political purposes after controlling for other demographic, media use, and political factors? These researchers felt that the uses and gratifications approach would be the best way to measure the needs of Internet users and they came up with correlations between the user's needs and wants from these political web sites.

Method

A survey method was used to attract politically-based web users from on-line political sites. Typically when doing a survey it is key to make sure that it is a random drawing of participants for the survey. In this case however, because the goal was to find politically-based web users to

do the survey, it did not have to be random. The online survey was posted the two weeks before and after the 1996 Presidential election, and the survey had links on nine different politically fueled web sites. There were a total of 308 responses to the survey and the results were broken up by demographics and motivations depending on the responses to the three open-ended questions.

Results

From the research questions, the researchers were able to come up with substantial facts as to the motivations behind web users using the Internet for political information. They found that users who were visiting the sites for political information were well educated and were outstanding American citizens, and they were generally interested in educating themselves on political issues, not just using the Internet for entertainment purposes. Another finding was that people who took the survey had low trust in the government and high levels of self-efficiency.

Discussion

The Internet is a form of mass media that can be used for entertainment purposes, education, information seeking and surveillance, and for researching. The goal of this survey was to find and measure the motivations for web users that were visiting political web sites. The researchers realize that the Internet is a growing source of information for Americans and they succeeded in finding information to find the real motivations for on-line users visiting political sites.