Midwestern Latino Information Needs: A Content Analysis of *Cambio de Colores* Presentations from 2005 to 2014

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What is an "information need"?

A facet of information-seeking behavior that "results from the recognition of some need, perceived by the user," that the user feels information will help solve. (Wilson, 1981)

"Information is instrumental; it serves other, more fundamental individual and community needs." (Watson & Cavanah, p. 652)

Individual versus Community Information Needs

- Wilson and his colleagues tend to look at information needs as products of individuals. One person feels a need and seeks information.

- Watson & Cavanah (2015) look at community information needs as aggregated information needs within a community, that illustrate similar patterns of thought and concerns.

Latino Information Needs Studies

- Previous research on Latino information needs has not focused on the Midwest.
  - Information Literacy
  - Research Skills
  - Cultural Reinforcement
  - Health Information (Cancer)

Research Problem

A great deal of research has been done on Midwestern Latino populations. Information needs may underlie other needs identified by researchers. However, none of that research has been focused on their information needs.

Is it possible to determine the information needs of Midwestern Latino populations based on other research?

Method

- Content analysis
  - 402 Cambio de Colores presentations
  - Dates ranging between 2005 and 2014
  - Coded using nVivo 10.0

- Nodes
  - Structural: 15, including Author, Title, Research Methods, etc.
  - Content: 24, including items such as "Health and Wellness" or "Acculturation and Integration"

How do we characterize an information need based on secondary analysis?

- Inference
  - "[program] provides information to consumers"
  - "[they] are often unable to visualize the steps they need to take"

- Direct Statement
  - "strong desire for more information available in Spanish"

- Creation of Tools
  - "these tools are designed to improve personal knowledge"

Co-Occurring Nodes

- Information Needs
  - Education
  - Finances & Money
  - Health & Wellbeing
  - Language

- Information Tools
  - Health & Wellbeing
  - Education
  - Finances & Money

- Information Needs of the Receiving Community
  - Culture & Identity
  - Immigration
  - Education
  - Social Support Networks

Detail Review of 82 Abstracts

- Health Information (56)
- Social Networks and Support Systems (23)
- Acculturation and Integration (22)
- Financial Knowledge (19)
- Language (16)
- Identity and Cultural Preservation (13)
- Civic and Political Engagement (13)
- Mental Health Information (12)
- Education (8)
- Jobs (8)
- Documentation and Citizenship (7)

Emergent Information Needs in the Latino Population

- English language skills often presented as a barrier.
  - Health information in Spanish
- Health information and health outreach
- Financial management skills
- "Access to information, capital, … participating in formal and informal social networks"
- "gain knowledge and resources to prevent drop out"
- "program goal to provide information on [nutrition, hygiene, physical activity]"

Emergent Information Needs in the Receiving Community

- Cultural Awareness
  - "Inform [school personnel] how to better serve this vulnerable population"
  - "understanding of the importance of culture and value systems in designing effective programs and outreach strategies"
- Practical Information
  - Community agencies need "practical information about how to assess Latino community needs"
  - "Preparation for teaching ELL students"
  - Creating profiles to inform policies in integration
  - "explore current regulations"

Future Directions

- Can we use this knowledge to help social service agencies communicate in a culturally- and linguistically-appropriate manner to Midwestern Latino communities?

- How do Midwestern Latinos use social media and mobile technologies to acquire information?

References

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- Watson, B. R., & Cavanah, S. Community information needs: A theory and methodological framework. *Mass Communication and Society, 18*, 651-673.

- Wilson, T. D. (1981). On user studies and information needs. *Information Research*.