

ONLINE PRIVACY CONCERNS: GENDER DIFFERENCES AMONG HISPANIC UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the attitudes of Hispanic undergraduate college students toward online privacy and data security using a sample of students from a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in a southwestern U.S. state. The findings indicate that both males and females express high levels of concern about online privacy and data security, and that the level of concern for females is consistently higher than for males. Neither males nor females consider Facebook particularly trustworthy in terms of protecting or using their personal information, and both expressed concerns about privacy issues. Males had more concerns than females about harm from Facebook's sharing of personal information with third parties. Females were less concerned about third party information releases but were more concerned with other invasions of privacy that might come from the public or those with free access to information through the social network. Designers and marketers can respond to female concerns by creating features and controls to limit access to sensitive information transparently. Developing privacy policies that limit possibilities for sharing information with third parties that could harm the user may alleviate some male fears.

Keywords: *Social Networking, Hispanic Serving Institution, Privacy, Security, Transparency, Internet*