

Moving Away from the Margins: The Peruvian Indigenous Response to Social Media

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The purpose of this research is to understand how social media is affecting the identities of indigenous cultures. Using the indigenous population in Peru as research subjects, this research explores how indigenous cultures experience social media and how these media influence cultural perceptions. Using a grounded theory approach, in-depth interviews were conducted in various locations of Peru. The results of those interviews indicate that media can aid individuals within indigenous populations to

reconcile their identities (indigenous, Hispanic, and Peruvian) and thereby form a stronger sense of self. This research suggests that new media might be helping to reduce the impact of discrimination against indigenous people that has existed for centuries in Peru.

Keywords: double consciousness, indigenous Peruvians, adaptation, identity

Social media are reshaping the way cultures view themselves and others (Azzaakiyyah, 2023; Johnson & Callahan, 2015; Ross Altarac, 2008). These media are creating new social contexts that provide alternative psychological outlets for communicative action (Ahmed, 2023; Lévy, 2000) and remake the communal identity of their users (Zhu & Dawson, 2023; Arnett, 2002). While traditional forms of media communication are still viable, scholars such as Lévy (2000) and Rudyansjah and Rasidi (2022) have posited that online communities are creating unique communicative cyberscapes/cyberplaces which transcend traditional geographic, ethnic, linguistic, or religious single-point definitions of culture. This argument extends to the elimination of spatial identifications for culture and implies that cultures are no longer geographically-based (Chen et al., 2023; Callahan et al., 2018; Mitchell, 1995). Because new media are creating these geographically transcendent cyber-environments, there are

now a variety of new cultural responses that can alter identity (Luders et al., 2022; Arnett, 2002).

Valenzuela and McCombs (2009) argued that individuals within a particular culture have a psychological need for orienting themselves to new environments. The purpose of this research is to understand how minority cultures are reorienting themselves with the larger social media milieu. To do this, the research focused on the experiences of the indigenous people in Peru. The indigenous population in Peru are represented by great diversity in language, culture, and living conditions, but they share similar life experiences within the larger Peruvian culture. All have experienced centuries of racial and geographical discrimination (Babb, 2020; de la Cadena, 2000) which has been documented in numerous studies (de la Cadena, 2000). But how this discrimination has changed or not changed based on the exposure to new and social media has not been studied within this population and is the subject of this research.

Minority Cultures and Social Media

As media use has increased worldwide, changing cyberscapes have significantly impacted both majority and minority global psychological structures. Arnett (2002) claimed that the largest psychological consequence of this change is that it results in transformations of identity or “how people think about themselves in relation to the social environment” (p. 777). Increased global participation is more than simple media consumption. While the exploration of global media participation is important, the conversation needs to shift from a discussion of the digital divide to the new cultural digital construction. Scholars (Kitirattarkarn et al., 2018; Singh et al., 2010) have claimed that this is because global media participants are increasingly engaging in message and content creation rather than mere passive consumption.

While there are many studies that detail how minority cultures participate in media—such as how minority cultures adapt to new media technologies (Callahan et al., 2019; Leonardi, 2003), how culture influences the use of media technologies (Cheng et al., 2021; Barker & Ota, 2011; Lin et al., 2012; Scott et al., 1998), cultural perceptions of technology (Fulk & Boyd, 1991), the globalizing effect of media (Ross Altarac, 2008), and minority representations within new media (Ncube, 2022; Jimenez, 2011)—the amount of research regarding how cultures use new media structures to augment their own cultural

identity is lacking. Most of these studies focus on comparative media selections (Jacob et al., 2021), which includes correlating demographic variables with contextual adaptation (Khan & Khan, 2007), and on the impact of media use on adaptation (Miglietta & Tartaglia, 2009). Some research has noted that incidental exposure to pro-minority social media content can increase tolerance of the minority culture (Masood et al., 2024), but more work needs to be done to augment and recognize how social media is influencing group identities. While valuable, these types of studies do not address the construction of cultural cyber-enclaves as does the present research. In addition, this research uses the indigenous population of Peru to investigate the added element of discrimination and its relationship to minority social media usage.

Minority groups and developing countries participate in the global media for different reasons than those of dominant groups. The traditional view of global media is that it diffuses the values of dominant media producers to global consumers and has a homogenizing effect on global culture (Ifigeneia & Dimitrios, 2018). Historically, countries that could not or would not participate in the dominant global media were termed “off the map” (Allen & Hamnett, 1995) and were left out of the global conversation. When developing countries did decide to participate in the global media system, it was usually for different reasons than dominant countries. Kramer et al. (2013) argued that there have been three main motivations for minority cultures to participate in global media: (1) as an apparatus for foreign national use, (2) to preserve indigenous culture, and (3) to forge a national identity from diverse ethnic groups.

While the one-way downloading of culture homogeneity has been a trendy topic (Friedman, 2005, 2007), there have been greater efforts to study the usage of cyberscapes in providing a locus of influence (Rudyansjah & Rasidi, 2022). Notable among these efforts is the concept of co-constitutionality between culture and media—the idea that media shape cultural identity and cultures shape media through usage (Kramer, 1993, 1995, 2012). If this is true, it means that cultures do not evolve into whatever is downloaded by the dominant media; rather, they co-evolve, or form a unique media ecology. The concept of co-evolution between media and culture is an important part of the media ecology perspective, which privileges the individual culture’s ability to adapt to the changing environment.

Identity Management within Social Media

Perhaps the most significant source of stress within intercultural communicative contexts is the renegotiation of one's identity (Kramer et al., 2013). This includes a change in "social and work activities as well as thinking patterns, values, and self-identification" to match the most prevalent surrounding culture (Allison & Emmers-Sommer, 2011, p. 139). Although family, friends, and coworkers can help relieve any stress that occurs with this shift in identity, immersion in media can also help immigrants adapt to new cultures.

For instance, Moon and Park (2007) suggest that American mass media can play an important role in helping immigrants learn which practices are acceptable within the American culture. This continues to be true with newer forms of social media (Callahan et al., 2018). Ultimately, immigrants that viewed more of the host nation's television programming were found to be "acculturated more quickly than those who viewed less host programming" (Raman & Harwood, 2008, p. 297). Similarly, immigrants have used interactive media, such as the Internet, satellite television, and other accessible forms of communication, to "ease their 'cultural shock'" (Allison & Emmers-Sommer, 2011, p. 140) and find tips on how to fit in with the majority cultural view. Because indigenous Peruvians have experiences similar to those of immigrants from other countries, they are likely to use media to accomplish similar goals.

Minority Identity Management

Perhaps one of the most well-known theoretical approaches to minority identity management, especially in relation to the majority view, is Du Bois' (1903) concept of double consciousness. Du Bois coined the phrase "double consciousness" to describe the internal state of an individual with two identities. For Du Bois, who identified both as a Negro and as an American, these differing identities gave way to both conflict and strength. According to Du Bois (1903), "One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (p. 3). Du Bois did not want to rid himself of his Africanism nor Africanize America, but rather believed the both facets of his identity could work together to create "a better and truer self" (Du Bois, 1903, p. 9).

While Du Bois emphasized its positive aspects, double consciousness often coexists with mental conflict (Moore, 2005) and discrimination. For example, Moore (2005) argued that Black Americans often feel pressured to take on the characteristics of the dominant group and diminish their Blackness, or else risk social isolation. Similarly, Rawls (2000) noted that, due to inequalities between the two groups, Black Americans are frequently forced to examine themselves through the perspective of White Americans. As a result, Black Americans are held accountable to two separate communities and value sets, which can cause internal distress.

While there have been many works published about double consciousness within the African American community, double consciousness has also been used across disciplines and applied to other groups of people and is still in use (Meer, 2018). For example, Arab-American poets have frequently written about duality and acculturation through the lens of characters who feel “caught between two worlds” (Abraham, 2010, p. 125). These Arab-American poets have described feeling both Arab and American and explained that their identities cross back and forth between the two (Abraham, 2010).

Russians in Israel also have experiences akin to double consciousness. Although they may share a common religion, cultural heritage, and even ethnic identity with the Jewish people, the Russians see themselves as having a unique identity apart from the Jewish people (Caspi et al., 2002).

Other immigrant communities appear to have similar experiences with double consciousness, including the Welsh in Argentina (Laugharne, 2007), the Arabs in Canada (Abdul-Jabbar, 2019), and Black Caribbean immigrants in America (Lorick-Wilmot, 2014).

Many indigenous Peruvians may similarly hold multiple identities. Although they are citizens of Peru, the indigenous are typically darker skinned than other Peruvians and have clear facial features common to their race. They speak a language that differs from the dominant Spanish language and have a provincial lifestyle – commonly seen by city-dwelling Peruvians as “backwards.” When they move to the city, they have to blend into a new culture and often speak Spanish with a clear accent which frequently provokes ridicule. Traditionally, indigenous Peruvians have been pressured to abandon their native language and speak only Spanish – similar to other minority cultures (Johnson & Callahan, 2015). They have already been raised with a sense of double consciousness.

Based on the above discussion of new media's influence on culture, cultural responses to the new media environment and how identity is managed culturally, the following research question emerges:

RQ1: How do minority cultures manage identity through social media, particularly when separated geographically from their native culture?

METHODS

The changing nature of minority identity management detailed above points to a new way of conceptualizing the minority responses to dominant media forms. These media trends include (1) an increase in minority voices through social media, (2) an increase in new media use, (3) identity management through social media (e.g. social media outlets), and (4) the emergence of cultural cyberscapes. In selecting a subject pool for this research, care was given that the subjects would reflect these newer trends.

Participants

The authors chose indigenous Peruvians for this study for three main reasons. First, there is a general lack of research on the indigenous Peruvians and social media use. Second, many indigenous Peruvians have succeeded to varying degrees in maintaining their identity and language, despite the pressure from the surrounding host culture and language. Finally, this broad grouping of indigenous cultures fits within the general definitions of a "minority culture." This cultural group experiences both physical and psychological pressures from the dominant culture. Although there are great differences among indigenous Peruvian groups, all share the same overarching dynamics of exclusion. These elements lead to an ideal population to study cultural interactions, including acculturation, home/host culture, and new media use to form virtual cultural spaces.

A set of subject pool criteria was developed in order to select participants. Subject pool selection criteria addressed two main components: (1) the changing nature of cultural identification and (2) the minority population's use of social media. While researchers sought to determine the extent of media use among participants, subjects were not excluded based upon their access to social media. Researchers first determined the participants' access to social media and the forms of social media available. Then,

participants were queried about their usage of social media. Indigenous Peruvian cultural participants were selected because they fit these two pre-established categories in the following ways:

1. These individuals are members of a minority culture spread over a large geographical area – generally coming from (or still living) in areas identified as provincial or indigenous.
2. Many indigenous members are currently living outside of their ancestral provinces.
3. The individuals were highly motivated to stay connected with their home culture or with loved ones outside the home culture through social media.

In all, 61 members of this culture living in three distinct areas were involved in this research. Participants were identified and solicited based on their age, gender, and geographical location. The intent was to construct a sample reflecting indigenous Peruvian demographics in age and gender. Geographically, the intent was to sample the same demographic diversity among those living in various locations. Among the researchers is one Peruvian, who helped identify potential participants based on specified criteria and helped establish local contacts to identify potential research subjects. No effort was made to select participants based on their use or non-use of media, in order to reflect a degree of randomness. The local contacts did not know the complete intent of the research ahead of time but were informed that the researchers were asking questions about the indigenous culture. The geographical background of the participants was diverse, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Locations of Garifuna Participants

Geographic Location	Participants
Lima	28
Huancayo and surrounding provinces	22
Cuzco and surrounding provinces	11

The participants in Lima all represented indigenous people who had migrated to the city for either family, work, or studies. Some came as a family unit. Others came alone. In Huancayo and Cuzco, the researchers spent significant time both in the cities and in

the surrounding provinces. Researchers observed that even larger cities like Cuzco and Huancayo were considered provincial in many ways by Peruvians in Lima. They also observed similar attitudes in those cities about people living in rural areas. The average age of respondents was 37, with a median age of 38, and a mode of 34.

Qualitative Interviews

The researchers used an open-ended interview consisting of seven different lines of questioning to illuminate the process of minority media use. While this study was primarily interested in newer forms of media use, such as the Internet, the questions were purposefully general in order to investigate the extent to which new media responses would surface. The goal was to understand the impact of newer media forms on minority cultural magnification. In other words, this study investigated how minority groups use media to create cultural cyberscapes. The interviews and procedure received Institutional Review Board approval. Each question was designed to reveal personal experiences in the media process, including new media. Areas of questioning included:

1. what it means to be indigenous and their feelings about this identity,
2. the difference between indigenous and the rest of Peruvians,
3. what types of media are the most important to indigenous, and whether or not the participants had access to and used the indicated types of media,
4. the ways in which various types of media were used—particularly social media,
5. the ways in which indigenous Peruvians used media to maintain ties with friends and family across large distances,
6. the differences in perceived connectedness when using various types of media,
7. the feelings of the participant about the use of social media in strengthening or weakening his/her culture,
8. the perceived presence/absence of discrimination within social media.

Interviews were conducted in the language most convenient to the participant—all were conducted in Spanish. Researchers were fluent in both English and Spanish. Each interview was recorded and transcribed. Researchers conducted interviews in locations most comfortable to participants. Many interviews were conducted in participants' homes. However, a few were conducted in parks, government offices, places of employment, and even in marketplaces where indigenous people worked.

Using Constant Comparative Analysis, this analysis inductively approached data collection with no a priori scheme (Charmaz, 2000; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Each interview was transcribed, read, and reread. During open coding, similar responses were identified by moving back and forth within the dataset as the categories were formed (Bisel & Arterburn, 2012; Lindloff & Taylor, 2011). Next, similar categories were grouped together, and the analysis moved to compare and contrast these larger categories of data. Lastly, these categories were compared back with individual responses to ensure that the categories accounted for the level of nuance and force within the participant responses (Bisel & Arterburn, 2012). Constant comparative analysis is useful for establishing categories from qualitative data (Dey, 1993; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Patton, 1990). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that this method “stimulates thought that leads to both descriptive and explanatory categories” (p. 341). The advantage of comparative analysis is that it demonstrates the basic mode of understanding and how it structures the experience of reality. The analysis gave special attention to statements or stories describing the application of media experiences and how these statements were communicatively framed by the participants. This analysis of firsthand adaptation narratives allows researchers to identify theoretical elements and show their role in the adaptation process.

RESULTS

The research findings highlight several important elements regarding minority media use and cultural identity. These include 1) the presence of a double consciousness, 2) the relatively recent adoption of social media by indigenous Peruvians, and 3) a relative resurgence in pride of the indigenous identity.

In-depth interview results indicated that the indigenous Peruvians experienced a double consciousness prior to immigrating to the big city, and more so afterward. Following the move to Lima and the process of adapting to the new environment, new cultural contexts created an additional dimension to participants’ cultural identity. This research will also discuss issues of conflict between those cultural identities and the role social media played in that process. Finally, it will examine indigenous Peruvians’ usage of social media and discuss the impact of that usage.

The Double Consciousness of Indigenous Peruvians

For many decades, indigenous Peruvians have experienced a double consciousness akin to that defined by Du Bois (1903). Although the details of their situation differ from that of the black Americans described by Du Bois, the indigenous people of Peru have similarly experienced overt discrimination and racial harassment. According to past research, belonging to an indigenous group in Peru has a high social and economic cost (Patrinos, 2000). Indigenous Peruvians face labor market discrimination and social exclusion, which leads to lower incomes and low social mobility (Barron, 2008; MacIsaac & Patrinos, 1995). Our findings suggest that the interactions between indigenous people and the dominant Peruvian group are frequently characterized by this discrimination.

One interviewee, whom researchers will call “Maria,” stated that she felt immediate discrimination upon moving to Lima to pursue higher education. She described feeling pressured to change the way she dressed and eliminate the provincial accent with which she spoke. For Maria, double consciousness is a reality:

“I’ve gotten used to things now. But at first it was really hard because I missed my family and everywhere I went in Lima people looked at me like I didn’t belong. So many people thought I was stupid. But I know I belong here (at the university). We are as smart as anyone from the city and I will be able to go back to my home and work there.”

Maria’s comments demonstrate how she is coming to terms with her various identities. Her comments reveal the strength of conviction felt by many indigenous Peruvians in regard to their heritage and what their identity means to them. Such praise and devotion to their heritage was unanimous across all interviewees. Frequently, subjects expressed pride that their communities provided all the things that people in the city need to live and recognized their communities’ role in making Peru a great nation.

The indigenous consciousness is easily identified when subjects talk about the difference between life in Lima and life in the provinces. One respondent, called Rafael, came from the highland to Lima because of the greater opportunity for his business. He spoke fondly of the food from his homeland and the open space to have his own land. Rafael has adapted to life in the big city, but also has kept his native language (Aymara) alive by conversing and associating mostly with others from his homeland.

Excerpt 1: Rafael

The differences are huge in Lima. Back home we ate what we produced from the land, potato, yuca, rice and the animals. What we eat here comes from there mostly and it's not as fresh. Also, transportation is very different. Everything here is so fast. Back home we walk for miles every day on foot. And we had our little house on some land we could call our own. It was a very peaceful life. Not like here.

Rafael and others said they continue to speak in their native languages with the many other immigrants to the city. He considers Spanish to be his second language – one that does not replace his native tongue. But not all interviewees expressed this same belief. Several interviewees said they gave up speaking their native tongue in the home in an effort to help their children speak better Spanish and avoid the discrimination that speaking with an accent would cause their children to endure. For indigenous Peruvians, a double consciousness is a reality they live with.

Another interviewee, identified as Sheida, emotionally indicated the differences in culture within the same country by talking about the “fiestas” they used to hold back home. She said even the parties are different with indigenous people and if one tried to celebrate important cultural events while in Lima, “the people look at you like you were an animal and not the same as they are. And it's worse in some parts of Lima than in others. Maybe places where there are more indigenous living in Lima, it feels more like home.” Such findings are consistent with other studies of minority cultures.

Social Media: A Relatively New Arrival

This research found social media has been a relatively new phenomenon for most indigenous Peruvians – especially outside the city of Lima. Much of this can be explained by the fact that in the highlands and jungle of Peru, cellular data coverage and internet penetration has been slow to develop. This is a theme that was identified in the majority of interviews. As such, much of the growth in social media usage has occurred among the younger generations. A good example of this was found in interviews conducted with participants that researchers found in an artisan market in Lima. These older respondents were happy to discuss cultural and language issues, but when it came to technology and social media, they deferred to their children.

The same dynamic was observed in the highlands of Huancayo and Cuzco. Respondents in these locations spoke of this data coverage being relatively new, especially for remote locations. But young people as well as technologically-inclined members of older generations said they had embraced this technology as soon as it arrived. Researchers were immediately connected with online Facebook groups that supported and offered classes on indigenous languages, embraced the fight of indigenous people to gain electoral representation, and supported indigenous people's business and professional goals.

One interviewee, identified as Paola, said indigenous people are gaining a new voice they never had before through embracing social media.

Excerpt 2: Paola

I don't know about other cultures, but I can tell you that all the indigenous peoples in Peru are adopting social media. Do a search on Facebook right now and you can find just about anything. We never had a way to stay connected before when media was only TV, radio and newspapers because those were controlled by others, just like the government was. But now we can organize and communicate and work together for all kinds of goals. Sometimes we even do it in the various languages some of us speak.

Researchers also spoke to a subject who is a journalist and part of a group working through social media to get more indigenous people employed as journalists in an effort to increase representation in popular media.

Another student, identified as Tomas, is part of a group of indigenous Peruvians receiving a prestigious scholarship called "Veca 18" for post-secondary studies at a university in Lima. This is a scholarship program supported by the government to bring top indigenous students to the city to earn their degrees. Tomas was one of several students interviewed who indicated the use of social media to maintain contact with family and friends back home. For these indigenous Peruvians, social media helps transcend geography to create a space where members of their culture can communicate.

Excerpt 3: Tomas

I don't know. Maybe it was the holidays and festivals they had back home. They feel different. Here in Lima there aren't as many of those and the ones they do have just aren't the same. I can use Facebook and my friends and family back home can keep

me in touch with what's going on. It's almost as good as being there and the feeling is the same. I miss home a little less when I keep in touch like that.

All interview subjects in Lima indicated using social media as a means of connecting with friends and family from their communities of origin, and many of them expressed that this usage provided a shield from the culture shock of arriving in the big city. On the other hand, our findings also supported previous studies showing that the relative anonymity of social media creates avenues for discrimination (Alkiviadou, 2018). The majority of respondents acknowledged that they had witnessed inflammatory speech on social media platforms. However, they noted that these types of speech are easily avoided and argued that the benefits of having an online cultural space outweighed any drawbacks. For example, one student defended his use of social media by explaining that there is more freedom in cyberspace than in normal spaces.

Excerpt 4: Martin

I've seen (discrimination) in social media. People can say anything they want to say. But I think it's easy to delete those words or to just go elsewhere in social media where it's safe. You can ignore people better that way than in person. I've blocked several people who still talk the way people talked 50 years ago. They think they can say that stuff online and it doesn't get back to them. But you can block those words easier now too. Then you just add people to your network that you feel comfortable with. Then you can be yourself.

Martin and several others said that they thought the problem of discrimination and racism in Peru is improving and that it is not as overt as it once was. He credits social media for speeding up that improvement.

Excerpt 5: Martin

Before, even on TV, they could say racist things and nothing happened. I don't know if anyone even complained. But now on social media, if someone says something racist, all of a sudden, everyone comes out and gets mad at the person for saying those things. And everyone sees it. On social media you can find everything, but I think the more popular thing is to get rid of discrimination and call people out for backward ways of thinking.

Clearly, according to this data, discriminatory language is becoming less acceptable in Peru, and many people accredit social media for being a factor in that change. Like other minority cultures being researched, the Peruvian indigenous population is beginning to embrace social media as a cultural space transcending geography and using it to strengthen their culture.

Social Media Away from Lima

Social media and new technology are increasing their presence outside of the city of Lima. The terrain in the highlands and jungle of Peru is so difficult that access to these technologies has been slow to spread throughout these areas. However, penetration of data transmission has steadily improved over the last five years and with it, usage of social media. Researchers interviewed several respondents who are currently, or have been previously, involved as elected government representatives, including one provincial mayor. One of those respondents, whom researchers will call Mario, indicated that data penetration into even the capitals of provincial areas like Huancayo has been a recent development, but that social media usage is spreading rapidly with data penetration.

Excerpt 8: Mario

One would assume that because Huancayo is a large city, that data would have gotten here much faster. But oddly enough, it's only really been in the last five years or so. And access into the provinces still hasn't happened in all areas. But as fast as the access comes, people start adopting. And now, where once only Cuzco had good access because of tourism, other areas are getting access. And businesses are using that to connect to each other and to customers all over Peru and the world.

Mario's comment demonstrates the eagerness of Peruvians in provincial areas to adopt social media. As a result of this eagerness, indigenous Peruvians have been able to create political and professional groups and advocate for social change online.

DISCUSSION

Despite the claim that global media is marginalizing minority cultures and causing global homogenization, this research found that newer forms of social media are in fact creating virtual cultural cyberscapes that are reshaping minority identities. The

indigenous Peruvian cultural response to social media demonstrates the positive impact of social media minority perspectives. The findings here are in agreement with Mitchell (1995), Callahan et al. (2018) and Johnson and Callahan (2015) that culture can be extended out from traditional geographical models. Based on this research, cultural spaces seem to be more than points on a map.

This research suggests that indigenous Peruvians experience a double consciousness within Peru that is magnified upon migration to Lima. Additionally, sometimes these identities are in conflict with each other, but they can be resolved into an identity that makes indigenous Peruvians happy, more comfortable with themselves, and more active in changing the old discriminatory practices of the past.

This research has also shown how media is helping indigenous Peruvians reconcile their double consciousness by allowing them greater freedom to express both sides of their identity. The results show a strengthening of indigenous identity within individuals and society. One respondent, identified as Pablo, best sums up the main finding of this research:

Excerpt 9: Pablo

There used to be a reluctance to speak indigenous languages in many parts of Peru. I don't think that was ever the case in the provinces, but it was in Lima. Now, from my perspective, I see it becoming more popular to speak those languages. Little by little in Lima it is happening, but even more so in the highlands. There are more groups now than I've ever seen speaking those languages. And they are more vocal. I'm seeing the acceptance of more indigenous politicians than ever before. Some of that is just due to progress we've made naturally. But I think social media is certainly playing a role now – perhaps speeding up the development. Certainly among young people.

This study does not discount the myriad of voices decrying acculturation or cultural adaptation (Finch et al., 2006; Hyman & Dussault, 2000; Ortega et al., 2000). However, it does shed new light on the issues once brought forth by Du Bois about race and identity. Having cultural identities that clearly pull from both indigenous and Hispanic culture, the indigenous Peruvians have a unique understanding of the experience of double

consciousness. As they endeavor to blend those two consciousnesses, a better sense of personal identity may emerge.

The implications of this research extend beyond the indigenous Peruvian cultures. The impact that social media is having on cultural perspectives can create significant alterations to cultures in a variety of contexts. These alterations include outward manifestations of culture, what Appadurai (1996) termed cultural “substantialism.” The language a culture employs, its rhythm (dance, etc.), foods, dress, and social structure are all observable, substantial identifications of culture. For Ong (1980), Appadurai (1995), and the technological determinists, though, it is the perceptual differences that constitute the social force behind cultural actions. The construction, maintenance, and evolution of these perspectives are determined in part by how the culture communicates. Thus, cultures that use media, and specifically social media, to magnify outward cultural expressions to some degree could be altering internal perspectives. This implication could have an important impact on the way that social media research is conducted in relation to culture.

Directions for Future Research

This study returned data that suggest implications in other areas that warrant further investigation. The data indicate a possible weakening of the impact of geography in the formation and maintenance of cultural spaces. Another potential area for further research enlightened by the data in this study is the use of social media between the indigenous cultures and other cultures. This study found initial data that suggest the need for further investigation of how indigenous Peruvians are using new media to learn about and interact with other cultures – both in the provinces and beyond the geographical provincial borders. Shuter (2012) agrees that this is an area of need for future investigation and the indigenous Peruvians provide insight into this fertile field.

As an exploratory look at minority use of new media, this research is limited in its ability to apply the findings to any sort of broad minority/social media model. More work needs to be done to understand the process of how indigenous Peruvians specifically adapt to their surroundings in a new host culture. A larger sample that utilizes a specific indigenous population, rather than broadly categorizing all indigenous populations into a single category, could provide more insight – especially to understand the process beyond

the use of social media. More work needs to be done to understand and better be able to generalize this process among indigenous Peruvians living outside their homeland. More research needs to be done to identify and document those changes in Peruvian culture.

Mumford (1974) has argued that, “Every manifestation of human culture, from ritual and speech to costume and social organization, is directed ultimately to the remodeling of the human organism and the expression of human personality” (p. 10). Social media is changing the nature of expression for globally dispersed minority cultures. This research has demonstrated the importance of going beyond behavioral or usage studies. Social media is not only changing the questions asked by cultural researchers, it is also shifting the focus of those questions. This study’s findings are in agreement with Lévy (2000). Minority cultures are using social media to create their own cultural cyberscapes, and, by doing so, are rewriting their own cultural identities.

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