

# Example by StudyDriver

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## One Discourse Community Example

In a modern and technologically advanced era, individuals rely heavily on discourse communities to inform them of current trending issues. One discourse community that some 360 million people worldwide have come to partake in is Twitter. Through this app, users can interact with other users through tweeting about topics or issues. By allowing users to access global news, presenting a platform for discussion, giving politicians an updated platform, and allowing youth to become informed and have a voice, twitter has become an effective method of communication.

Through allowing users to access global sources of news, twitter has become an important means of conversation. In 2014, the kidnapping of Chibok schoolgirls in Nigeria by Boko Haram became a global issue after the hashtag Bring Back Our Girls was tweeted about millions of times by individuals from all over the world (Wiser and Thomson). This lead to celebrities such as Beyonce, and activists and political figures such as Michelle Obama and Malala Yousafzai becoming aware of the issue and creating campaigns to help fund the search for the missing girls( Thomson and Shearlaw). Moreover, the popularity of the hashtag urged world forces such as the UN to seek more information about the subject matter . World activists and figures utilized Twitter's platform as a discourse

community to not only express their support, but raise awareness about the issue of the kidnapped school girls.

As a result, world leaders became aware of the issue and were able to help negotiate with Boko Haram's regime to attempt to bring back the missing girls. Additionally, during the summer of 2014, Twitter users trended the hashtag ALSIcebucket challenge to support ALS and raise money for charity. The charity ultimately raised over \$41.8 million dollars and gained over 730,000 new donors all over the world, with every one out of six people participating in the challenge in the UK (Hitchings-Hales and Calderwood). Through exploiting Twitter's large population the charity and all of its participants were able to further their mission and goal and reach individuals worldwide who benefitted or could support the mission. By allowing for users worldwide to communicate with others, Twitter has become an effective discourse community in the course of the world.

By presenting a platform for everyday citizens to convene, twitter has created a larger space for individuals to discuss current issues and make a difference. In terms of the Black Lives Matter movement, many young African-American youth flocked to Twitter to discuss angry sentiments about the constant shooting of unarmed black men. According to the Pew Research Center, the #Ferguson tag dealing with the shooting of Michael Brown was the top used hashtag in the ten year history of the platform, while the hashtag Black Lives Matter followed in third (Anderson and Hitlin). These tags allowed for the Twitter community to band together and generate a larger discussion over the impact of the shootings and what steps could be taken to rectify them.

Such conversations allowed young activists to organize protests as well as create campaigns to help the family members of the victims while garnering a greater understanding amongst people in the country of these fatal shootings. Additionally, in recent news, Twitter has given women a platform to speak out about sexual assault with the MeToo movement. With over 1.7 million tweets, the MeToo hashtag provided a safe space for women all over the world to discuss their experiences amongst other survivors of sexual assault and encourage each other to speak out against their abusers (Codrea-Rado and Park ). With the assistance of Twitter, movements such as these have allowed the marginalized to have a voice in their oppression, and given them a location to discuss their sentiments. Through creating an open space platform where users of like mind can rally together, Twitter has

created an avenue for progressive conversation.

As a consequence of its role as a large discourse community, Twitter has been able to give politicians an updated platform. As seen within the 2016 presidential election, politicians utilized Twitter to bring up important issues to their campaign. According to CIO, many politicians took to Twitter to take advantage of its real-time nature and ability to not only express their political views, but allow themselves to seem more human like rather than machine (Kapko). Within the election cycle 27% of presidential candidate Hillary Clinton's tweets focused on her policy issues while over 794 tweets were sent in the month of June alone by both Clinton and Trump arguing over issues and attempting to illustrate themselves as a desirable candidate for president (Evans, Brown, and Wimberly). Due to its large community, Twitter has become a hotspot for politicians to extend their platform and attempt to reach more people.

Twitter's dual role as a discourse community and social media platform has given adolescents a chance to become informed and have a voice. In the presidential election of 2016, many youth exploited Twitter's large community of youth to encourage voting within their demographic. During this election over 35 percent of individuals between the ages of 18-29 said that social media was the most helpful source to learn more information about the 2016 election (Curry). Through this resource, young people were able to better understand the issues in discussion during the election. Additionally, as a result of employing Twitter as a platform to inform about politics more youth became informed about the nature of the election and the presidential candidates.

Moreover, the net neutrality bill of 2017 sparked a greater discussion amidst young people to speak up about issues that affect them. As adolescence became informed about the possible repeal of the net neutrality act by Congress, many began to speak up and speak out through organizing protests as well as creating campaigns in the hopes of their pleas to keep the bill reaching Congress. Ultimately, over 124,473,847 impressions were made on Twitter concerning the save net neutrality tag, as a result of young people speaking out about the issue (Gallagher). The act of a large amount of youth discussing the issue garnered a better awareness of the topic and allowed youth to speak up and out. Within the presidential election of 2016 as well as the net neutrality issue of

2017, young people were able to become informed and speak about issues that greatly impacted them. By Twitter offering such a large discourse community, adolescence have and will continue to be able to become informed about current affairs.

More than a social media app, Twitter has become a dominant avenue for individuals from all areas of life to convene and discuss important issues impacting our world. Twitter has proved itself an effective discourse community through granting an avenue for international news to be recognized, offering a platform for users to confer, allowing politicians to draft a new platform, and giving youth the opportunity to stand up and speak out. By giving a powerful connotation to the voices of those who seek to be heard, Twitter accomplishes what few other discussion communities have; Allowing individuals from all walks of life to be heard equally.