

• SPRING 2020 •

# Netflix and Twitter

MOULDING A NEW VIEWER EXPERIENCE

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# Outline

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# Abstract

Social media has brought people around the world closer together, and Netflix is doing the opposite by fostering individualism through an AI-powered recommendation system that curates a personalized viewing experience. Social television, which is the marriage of social media and television, is emerging and changing the viewing experience. Guided with the uses and gratifications theory, this research explores the behavior of Netflix viewers on Twitter. This study aims to understand if social television replicates the experience of watching television with other people and the types of needs that viewers gratify through posting messages on Twitter. It also challenges the arguments that viewers post shallow tweets. Instead, the research proves that viewers post substantial tweets when the show is intellectually stimulating. So, the content of the tweets mirrors the content of the shows.



# Research questions

- What needs do the viewers gratify by tweeting while watching series on Netflix?
- Do the viewers tweet about the message that the shows are trying to communicate?

# Methodology

## SERIES

- The Good Place (S1 & S4)
- Sex Education (S1 & S2)
- Orange Is the New Black (S1 & S7)
- The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina (S1 & S3)

800 TWEETS IN TOTAL

200 TWEETS PER SHOW

100 TWEETS PER SEASON

## TWEET CATEGORIES

- Fan production
- Stan
- Unstan
- Information
- Seminar
- Megaphone
- Status update
- Couch
- Woke
- Social invitation

# Tweet Categories

## STAN

Exhibit admiration to a show, character, cast member, couple, scene, or friendship.

## SEMINAR

Discuss the show by making comments, sharing analysis, and stating opinions.

## COUCH

Air thoughts, express feelings, commentate, share quotes, and display humor.

## UNSTAN

Exhibit dislike to a show, character, cast member, couple, scene, or friendship.

## MEGAPHONE

Voice demands regarding the show's plots or its renewal.

## WOKE

Exhibit understanding of the awareness message that the show is disseminating.

## INFORMATION

Share information, facts, and details about the show and cast members.

## STATUS UPDATE

The author of the tweet communicate what they are doing.

## SOCIAL INVITATION

Invite other members of the show's community to connect.

## FAN PRODUCTION

Share fan art.

The research was conducted in light on the uses and gratifications theory.

- Mass communications theory
- People have agency over their media consumption
- Media satisfies needs, including entertainment and socialization

# Uses and Gratifications Theory



# Research Findings & Analysis

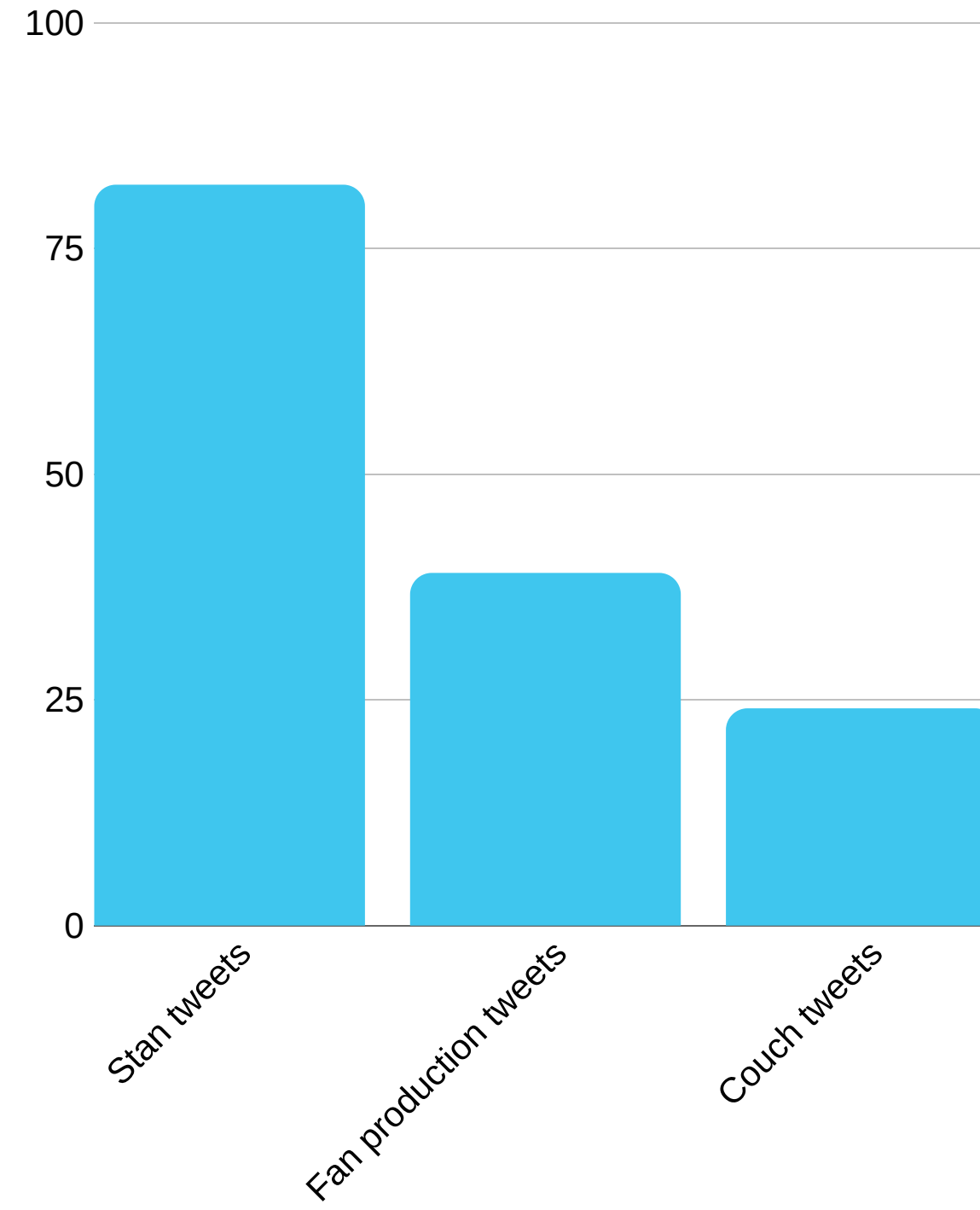


# The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina (CAOS)

CAOS is about 16-year-old girl Sabrina Spellman who is half-witch and half-mortal. She is dealing with her double life while fighting the dark force that is threatening Greendale, her hometown. The show is set in Sabrina's mortal high school and the Academy of Unseen Arts, where she learns magic.

# CAOS Findings

TOP THREE TYPES OF TWEETS



# Analysis of CAOS Tweets

Viewers used Twitter to practice and express their fandom by expressing their admiration, sharing fan art, shipping characters, and buying the show's merchandise.

It is important to note that the viewers expressed their admiration mostly towards older cast members: Miranda Otto and Michelle Gomez. This behavior is surprising, considering that one would expect the viewers to ship the main character of the story with a love interest.

Not only do these actresses play admirable characters, but they were famous before starring in *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*. Michelle Gomez played the recurring character Missy on *Doctor Who*, and Miranda Otto played Éowyn in ***The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*** and ***The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King***.

# Sex Education (SexEd)

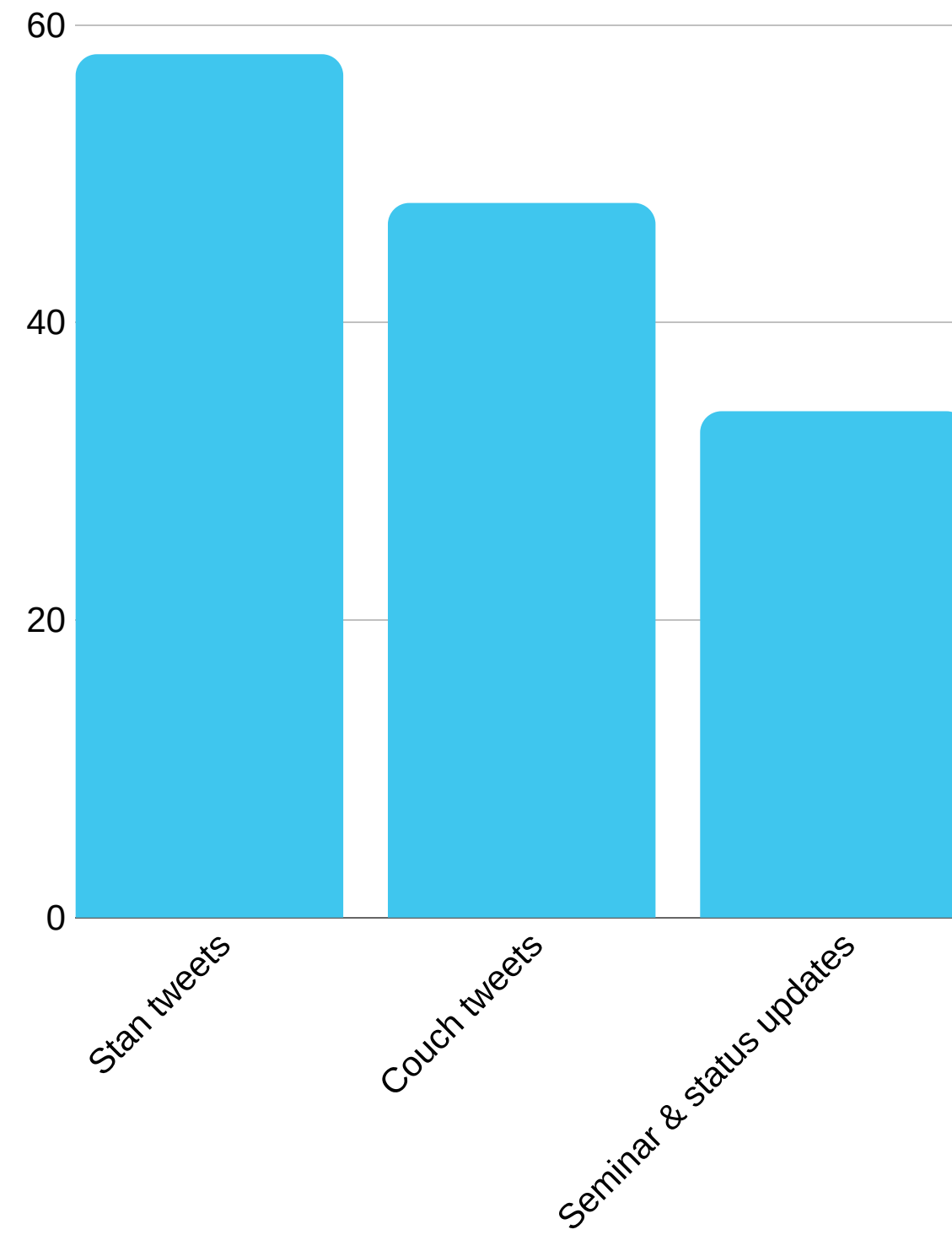


Image Credit: Netflix

SexEd is a British comedy-drama that follows a socially awkward teenager named Otis on his path to sexual discovery. Although Otis is ambivalent about sex, he knows a lot about this topic since his mother, Dr. Jean, is a sex therapist.

# SexEd Findings

TOP THREE TYPES OF TWEETS



# Analysis of SexEd Tweets

SexEd viewers tweeted about the relevant topics that were tackled on the show. The seminar tweets carry comments and information and exhibit comprehension of the message.

SexEd viewers were also pleased that the show tackled sexual harassment. After Aimee has PTSD because she was sexually harassed on a bus, her girlfriends wait for her near the bus station to help her face her fears and take the bus again. The scene was praised with tweets that highlighted its importance, and with tweets that carry emotional reactions.

# Orange Is the New Black (OITNB)

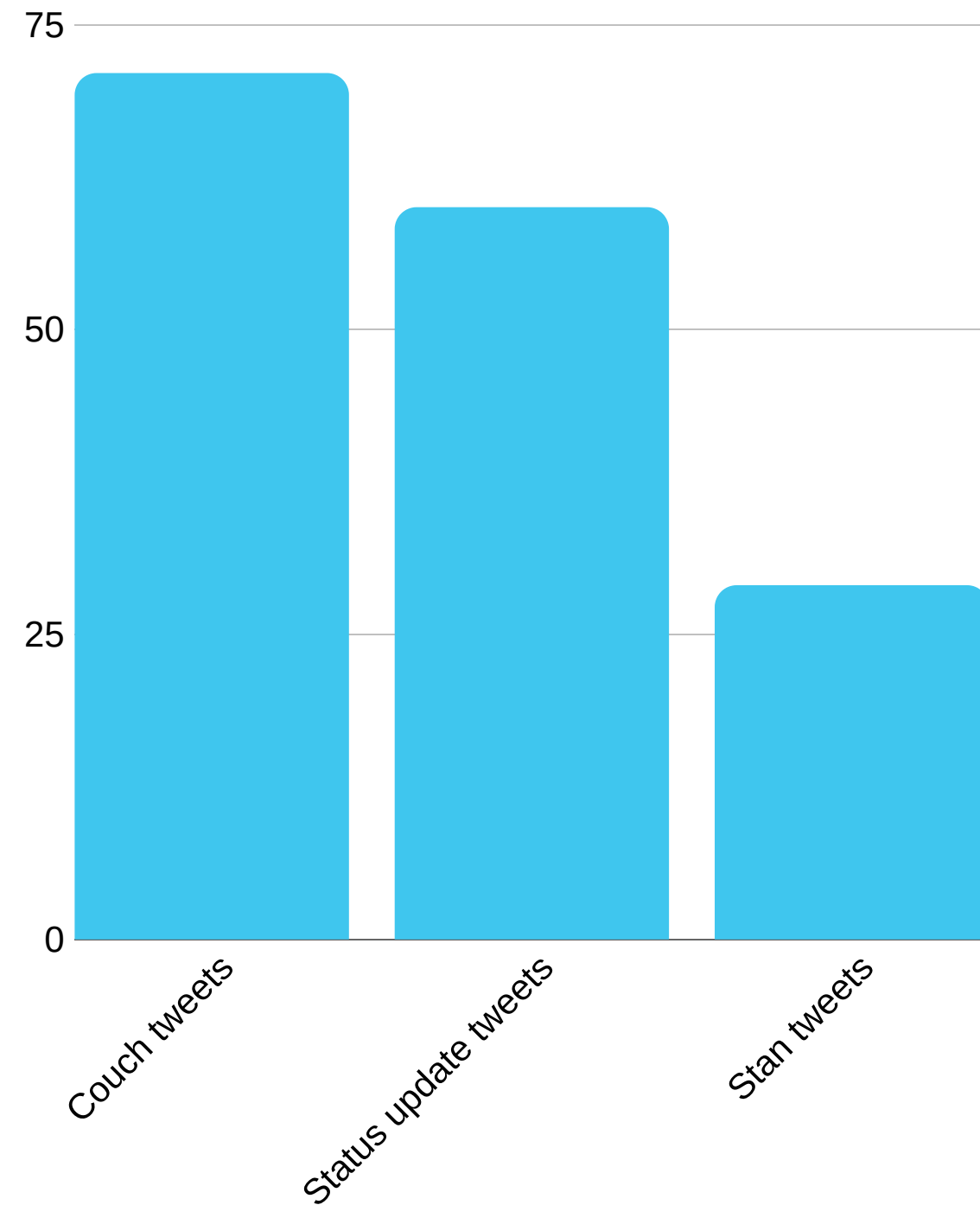
OITNB is based on the memoir of Piper Kerman, which is titled *Orange Is the New Black: My Year in a Women's Prison*. The show follows Piper Chapman in Litchfield Penitentiary after she was sentenced for 15 months for money laundering activities.

OITNB sheds light on different issues in the US prison system: corruption, sexual harassment, racism, transphobia, prisoner abuse, and the horrific situation inside immigration detention centers.



Image Credit: Netflix

# OITNB Findings



TOP THREE TYPES OF TWEETS

# Analysis of OITNB Tweets

The seventh season of OITNB shows the horrible situation inside detention centers. Viewers took their anger to Twitter, where they posted about how they did not know about the situation of detained immigrants and how they are frustrated about the conditions inside the detention centers.

These tweets demonstrate that the viewers are willing to pass on messages that they are learning from the shows they're watching, especially if they are based on reality.

Image Credit: NBC

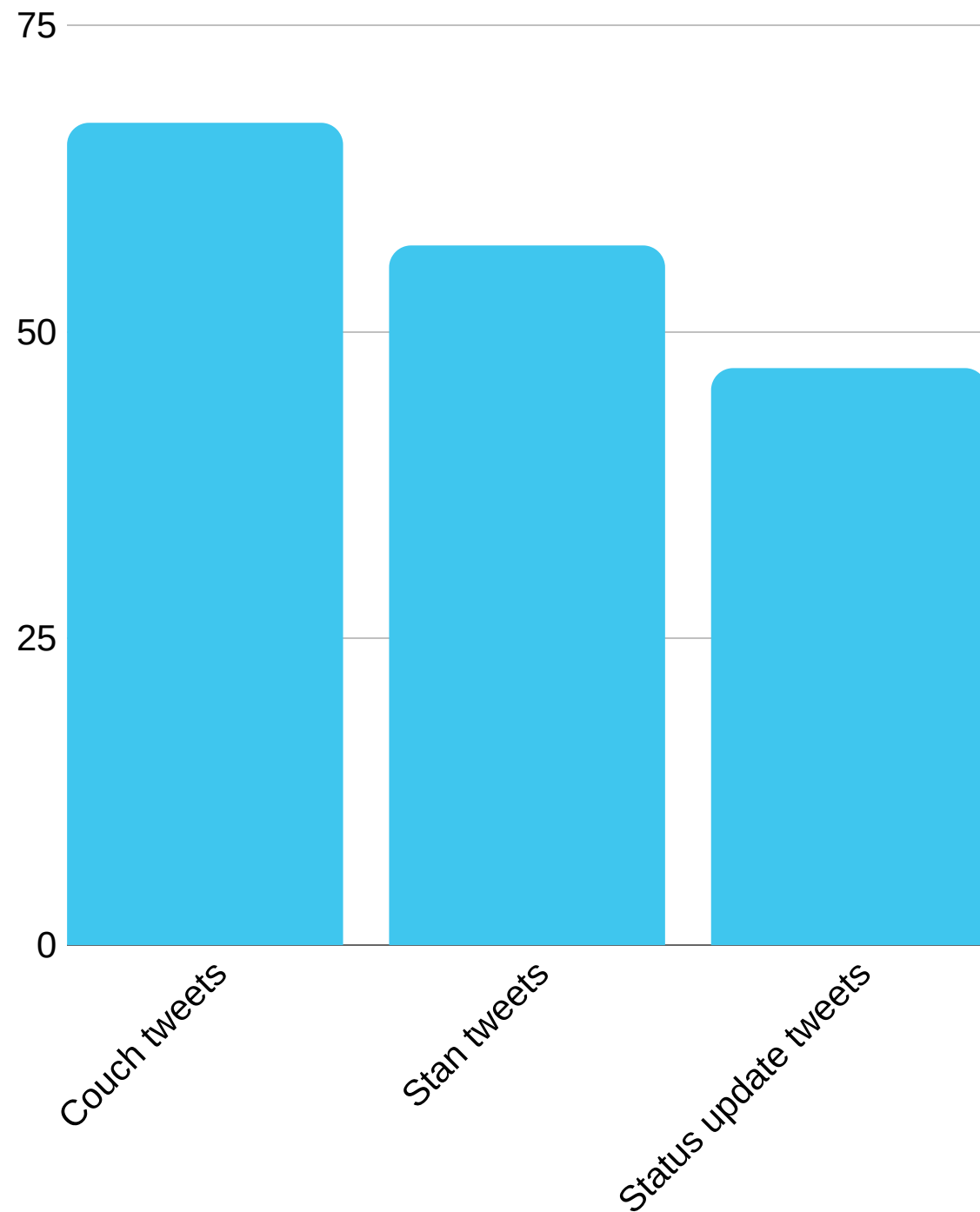


# The Good Place (TGP)

The first season of The Good Place, an NBC fantasy-comedy television series, follows Eleanor Shellstrop in the afterlife. She lands in the Good Place, where people that have done good deeds in their life end up, as opposed to the Bad Place. The Good Place is utopia-like, and Eleanor figures out that she ended up there by mistake.

# TGP Findings

TOP THREE TYPES OF TWEETS



# Analysis of TGP Tweets

The finale of Season 1 left the audience hanging. Through megaphone tweets, the viewers demanded the renewal of TGP for a second season. So, Twitter is bridging the gap between the audience and the creators.

The Good Place teaches the viewers moral philosophy. Season 4 was discussing the afterlife, and viewers expressed their opinions and made comments using seminar tweets.



# Conclusions

Viewers are using Twitter to practice their fandom, share valuable comments, and respond to the show's message by tying it to real life. The needs that they are gratifying through Twitter depends on the show's genre. If it's a supernatural series, like CAOS, viewers are more likely to express their fandom. On the other hand, if the show is based on real-life events, like OITNB, viewers will use Twitter to share their opinions and make comments.

The viewers are gratifying the need for participation with co-viewers.

## SELECTION

Four shows out of hundreds on Netflix.

## SAMPLE SIZE

Data collection was conducted manually. So, 800 tweets out of thousands were collected and analyzed.

## TIME

The research was conducted on a span of five months. More time is needed to collect more data and to study more shows.

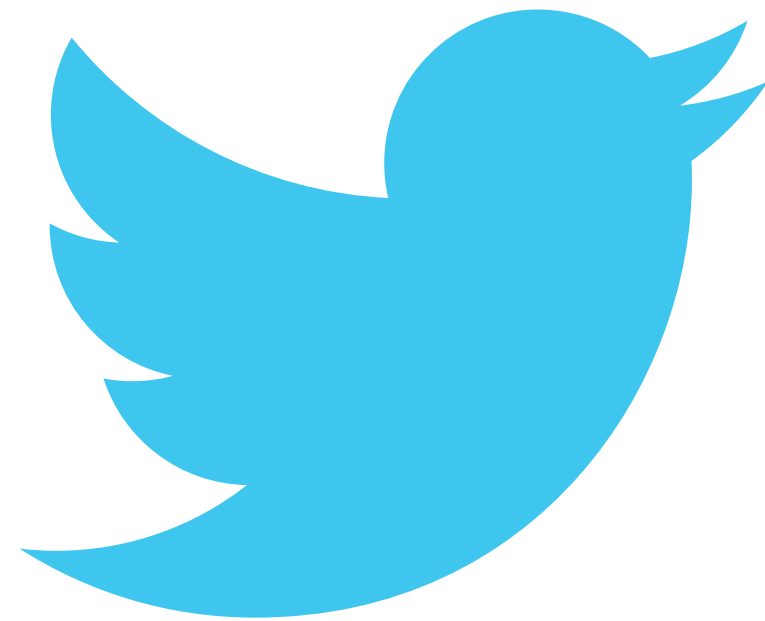
# Limitations

# Avenues for future research

- How much do TV tweets have an impact on influencing Twitter users to watch Netflix shows?
- Are the official Twitter accounts of Netflix shows piloting the conversation of the viewers on Twitter?
- Based on a study of tweets from viewers of different countries, can we say that the comedy series on Netflix are globalizing humor?

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Thank you!



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