

Use of Social Media in Adult Education: A Needs Analysis

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Abstract

Social media, digital tools that allow immediate interaction, such as Facebook, TikTok, and LinkedIn, are popular tools today. Grounded in Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, this study employed a mixed-methods sequential approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to determine the extent to which, and for what purposes, social media are used at a specific postsecondary campus. A survey was used to determine how social media is used as a tool in the classroom. Numerical results were analyzed using a confirmatory factor analysis. Five factors were extracted and accounted for 78.535% of the variability, including 1) professional development, 2) current use, 3) reasons for use, 4) about yourself, and 5) barriers. Follow-up face-to-face and audio interviews were conducted with educators at the postsecondary campus to clarify their reasons for using and not using social media. After analyzing the data via a thematic analysis, four themes were identified, including 1) professional development and training, 2) resources and suggestions for use, 3) clarity of definition of social media, and 4) benefits of using social media in the classroom. By examining the reasons educators do and do not use social media in the classroom, strategies were developed to improve school policy practices and instructional support at this southern postsecondary campus. Presented are recommendations to include professional development strategies and resources to inform educators and administrators on the southern campus about utilizing social media in the classroom.

Introduction/Background

The concept of social media is prevalent in society, but few people know precisely how it can be leveraged in the classroom. As a relatively new buzz phrase in business and society, social media can have different meanings for different groups of people. One common understanding of social media is that it is a platform used for social networking, providing individuals with newer, more innovative ways to communicate and connect socially. People have begun searching for ways to leverage social media as emerging modes of communication and as enhanced tools for interacting with others to further their strategic objectives. This is especially true in educational institutions, where recent research has indicated educators are using the most popular social media websites as business tools to network with others. For example, aside from using Facebook and TikTok, the world's most popular social media platforms, universities also utilize these websites for marketing purposes. Social media is penetrating many aspects of human life, and its benefits in educational settings are still not fully known. As new technologies evolve in the classroom, so does the ability of professional educators to push the evolution of educational technologies.

This research examines and analyzes the use of social media within a particular postsecondary campus in Tennessee. This research offers a deeper understanding of how social media is integrated into instruction, as well as how it can be more effectively utilized as an educational tool. To understand the uses of social media in the classroom, the researcher explored the extent to which and for what purposes social media can be used in the higher education institution studied. The topic of this research emerged following the announcement of a social media policy at the Tennessee campus under study. The policy outlined the expectations for employees and explained that social media is a powerful communication tool that can significantly impact the school's reputation. The policy aimed to ensure that employee participation was either personal or on behalf of the campus. To clarify how best to enhance and protect personal and professional reputations, the policy included guidelines for employees who participate in social media platforms such as Internet message boards, personal web logs (blogs), online journals, wikis, social networks, social media, and virtual worlds, or any other form of online communication. The policy was established to help employees understand and utilize social media effectively while maintaining a professional representation of the campus. The researcher and two colleagues discussed the social media policy on campus in Tennessee, and one of the colleagues was unsure which social media methods were used in the classroom.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, faculty, instructors, instructional designers, and staff are aware of social media platforms, but they are less aware of how to utilize them effectively in the classroom. They are just beginning to explore how social media technologies can effectively enhance student learning and promote digital literacy among college students. Despite the popularity of social media, many instructors do not utilize it for educational purposes. This research examined social media usage among faculty members in higher education. According to the Tennessee campus study, social media refers to technologies used for communication, development, and knowledge sharing. Social media refers to online platforms where people share opinions, experiences, photos, videos, music, insights, and perceptions (Lai & Turban, 2008).

The use of social media in the general field of education has been approached with some caution. The use of technology in education is an increasingly popular trend among teaching professionals through platforms such as e-learning. Social media platforms are digital technologies designed to support users in exchanging content (video, pictures, text) with their network. Today, 81% of emerging adults in North America regularly use social media, with Instagram (71%) and Facebook (70%) being the most popular platforms, and most check social media at least daily (Pew Research Center, 2024).

Social media has become a part of daily life and is a relatively new technology compared to traditional media. The traditional educational system on the Tennessee campus has utilized social media as a means of support for educational learning. This research included a discussion on the significant changes that have resulted from using technology to support students in the academic community. Most students in higher education belong to the digital generation and frequently use online technology to interact with instructors and other learners, as well as to access online materials (Aghaee, 2010).

Literature Review

Defining Social Media

The term social media came into the limelight in the early 1990s, and now, it has become an inseparable entity of almost every individual, with an estimated 2 billion+ active users globally (Chawla & Chodak, 2021). Social media is a domain of computer-based programs that allows users to connect, create, and share information and exchange views and ideas via specific virtual communities and groups (Aydin, 2020).

Social media refers to services, applications, and websites that enable individuals to create and share content and opinions online (Dewing, 2010). There are numerous social media sites, but some of the most well-known include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, and TikTok. The use of some of these sites has risen and continues to rise. Facebook, for example, has experienced a 7% increase in daily active users year-over-year, with almost 1.9 billion daily active users and 2.9 monthly active users in June 2021 (Facebook, 2021). Snapchat has reported 293 million daily active users, representing a 23% year-over-year increase (Snapchat, 2021).

Over the COVID-19 pandemic, active users increased by 16% (Instagram) and 19% (Facebook), and time spent on social media increased by 20% (Statista, 2022).

The common reasons why emerging adults use social media are for social communication, to alleviate boredom, and for information seeking (Stockdale & Coyne, 2020). However, some scholars express concern that social media use may be detrimental, while others argue that it helps fulfill social needs (Kross et al., 2021).

On the positive side, social media has great potential to facilitate social connection, given the ease with which someone can be in touch with hundreds, if not thousands, of friends at a time. Social media lowers the effort required for both the establishment of weak ties and the deepening of close friendships (Chen & Li, 2017).

Who Uses Social Media

In the age of digital connectivity, social media has become a powerful force in shaping consumer values, financial behaviors, and investment decisions. Platforms such as Twitter, Reddit, TikTok, and YouTube serve not only as hubs for financial discourse but also as dynamic ecosystems where narratives, trends, and ideologies are rapidly disseminated and reinforced (Kim & Fan, 2025).

Trends of Social Media

One of the significant trends is the real-time personalization on social networks, where recommender systems recommend the most sought-after products to customers during real-time web exploration. The personalization in real time is achieved using technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and predictive analytics that help in gaining deeper insights into behavioral intentions.

Use of Social Media in Universities and Colleges

Social media use has become especially prevalent among college students. According to a Pew Research Center survey (Auxier & Anderson, 2021), the highest percentage of adults reporting they ever use social media (84%) are aged 18 to 29. This percentage is followed by adults aged 30 to 49 (81%), aged 50 to 64 (73%), and 65 and older (45%) (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Among 18- to 24-year-olds, 76% report they use Instagram, 75% report they use Snapchat, and 55% report they use TikTok (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). While college students use a variety of social media sites, differences in the use of social media have also been observed among college students of academic level classification (freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors). A study by Romero-Hall et al. (2020) investigated levels of active participation in participants preferred social media sites or applications. Active participation was defined as the self-reported frequency of sharing views or opinions, requesting information or social engagement, or interacting with others via social media. Statistically significant differences were found between freshmen and sophomores in this study, in that sophomores reported greater levels of active participation with their most used social media site or application. In another study, seniors reported significantly more positive views of social media compared with sophomores (Lewis & Nichols, 2016).

Other research has highlighted differences in attitudes toward social media among academic majors. One study found that students majoring in public relations and advertising reported significantly more positive views toward social media compared to students majoring in other disciplines (Lewis, 2010). Karakoyun and Lindberg (2021) found that the pre-service teachers perceived social media mainly as a tool for communication and access to information. Another study on the use of social media as a means of acquiring information found that, compared with students in the social sciences, students with backgrounds in engineering more frequently used wikis (Kim et al., 2014). Wikis, such as Wikipedia, are online sources of information compiled and modified by multiple individuals (Parker & Chao, 2007). The same study found that students with humanities backgrounds were more likely to use media-sharing sites, such as YouTube, than those with science backgrounds (Kim et al., 2014).

Diffusion of Innovation and Social Media

Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 1962) describes the development of new ideas, innovations, or practices within a community. This theory states that the diffusion process has distinct phases and functions. This model emphasizes how some people, frequently referred to as "opinion leaders," are crucial in persuading others to embrace an innovation, particularly in tight-knit groups where interpersonal influence is effective (Rogers, 1962). Based on an article in Health and New Media Research (2024), social media can be viewed as an innovation that helps spread health-related information to rural communities. The theory explains how health information spreads in rural areas. Social media catalyzes the spread of health-related innovations by rapidly disseminating information about health practices, preventive measures, and government health programs. It also makes it easier for local opinion leaders, like respected community members, healthcare professionals, and community influencers, to have an impact on health behaviors. When individuals in rural communities see others successfully using new health practices through social media, they are more likely to adopt similar behaviors, accelerating the diffusion process.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, social media platforms emerged as both vital information sources and conduits for the rapid spread of propaganda and misinformation. However, existing studies often rely on single-label classification, lack contextual sensitivity, or use models that struggle to capture nuanced propaganda cues across multiple categories effectively. These limitations hinder the development of robust, generalizable detection systems in dynamic online environments. In this study, we propose a novel deep learning (DL) framework that fine-tunes the RoBERTa model for a multi-label, multi-class (ML-MC) classification task. We select RoBERTa due to its strong contextual representation capabilities and demonstrated superiority in complex NLP tasks. Our approach is rigorously benchmarked against traditional and neural methods, including TF-IDF with n-grams, Conditional Random Fields (CRFs), and Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks. While LSTM models show strong performance in capturing sequential patterns, our RoBERTa-based model achieves the highest overall accuracy at 88%, outperforming state-of-the-art baselines. Framed within the diffusion of innovations theory, the proposed model offers clear relative advantages—including accuracy, scalability, and contextual adaptability—that support its early adoption by Information Systems researchers and practitioners. This study not only contributes a high-performing detection model but also delivers methodological and theoretical insights for combating propaganda in digital discourse, enhancing resilience in online information ecosystems.

Impact of Social Media Use

Social media has revolutionized our lives over the past two to three decades. With the advent of smartphones, we see ourselves, family members, colleagues, and the public while away on social

media platforms. In this context, it would be prudent to explore the impact of social media and one's thoughts on the future.

According to Nismen and Esha (2025), an online survey was conducted to examine the use of social media, its influence, and opinions on the adverse impact on individual use and future generations. The UK adult working population was studied, and 100 individuals responded. Ninety-four percent of respondents believe that mental health can be adversely affected by social media; additionally, 94% worry about the negative impact on future generations. Further, 50% have felt adversely affected by social media, and 64% feel that it has influenced them. However, more than 50% of respondents used social media daily for up to 4 hours despite their concerns. Nismen and Esha (2025) found that the regular use of social media was widespread despite one's worries about adverse impacts on mental health. The population studied was of working adults, and though they used social media regularly 94% felt worried about the impact of social media on the future generation. Overall, the use and influence of social media on the working adult population sample was high despite their conviction that this may adversely impact mental health and future generations.

Methods

This mixed-methods concurrent capstone project examined the uses of social media in postsecondary education. The target population was instructors and administrators at postsecondary campuses. Convenience sampling was used to select a sample from a specific campus in Tennessee. The participants for this study were instructors and administrators chosen based on their willingness to participate in the survey. The university has approximately 45 faculty members, 10 administrators, and 400 students.

Data collection included structured interviews and a self-administered survey. An electronic survey developed for the research study was sent to all members of the target population, accompanied by an introductory message inviting them to complete the survey. The survey was used to select 10 instructors and administrators to participate in the study. For the interviews, the study included an even mix of respondents who did and did not use social media in the classroom.

The survey consisted of 14 questions, two of which were open-ended (see Appendix A). The survey consisted of demographic questions and questions that determined if the interviewees were comfortable with social media in the workplace or personally. The interview was semistructured and included 12 open-ended questions concerning participants' use of social media.

Research Question:

This study was structured around the following research question:

To what extent, and for what purpose, do faculty and administrators use social media at a southern postsecondary campus?

Results and Discussion

Demographic Findings

Of the 23 individuals who responded to the survey, 16 (69%) were adjunct instructors, four (17.4%) were full-time faculty, and six (26.1%) were administrators. Nine (39.1%) had 1-5 years of teaching experience, 10 (43.5%) had 6-19 years of teaching experience, and four (17.4%) had more than 20 years of teaching experience. Thirty-nine percent of individuals were between the ages of 31 and 45, 52.2% were in the 46-59 age group, and 8.5% were 60 and above.

Each question was reviewed based on the individuals who responded to that specific question. Participants were selected based on the survey instrument, which was sorted by demographic information (i.e., age, years of service, position) to develop a better understanding of the group of participants. A needs analysis comparison through the lens of Diffusion of Innovation theory, and an exploratory factor analysis were conducted to explore the relationship between the use of social media among faculty and administrators. These procedures helped to reduce the data to a smaller set of variables that were easier to compare.

Survey Findings

Results from the survey instrument were collected and analyzed using an exploratory factor analysis. To determine whether the survey data had sufficient multicollinearity to run a factor analysis, Bartlett's test of sphericity was conducted. Bartlett's test of sphericity of the data yielded $\chi^2 = 187.864$ ($p < .001$), indicating that the correlations in the data set were suitable for factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.447, which was below the recommended limit of 0.5 (Kaiser, 1974). The sample size was the main problem, but due to the small size of the college, the researcher was unable to obtain the suggested 100 participants for the test; therefore, the researcher proceeded with an exploratory factor analysis, which helped to reduce the data to a smaller set of variables that was easier to complete. As the sample size was small, there may be an interaction between variables.

Defining Factors

An exploratory factor analysis was performed on the data obtained from the survey instrument. Five factors were extracted, accounting for 78.535% of the variability (see Appendix B).

The first factor, Professional Development, accounted for 30.78% of the variance. It contained five items from a specific training category. The participants responded to training professional usage (average of 1.45 out of a possible 5 points) with responses 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree; professional use (average of 2.52 out of a possible 3 points) with responses 1 = never, 2 = infrequently, and 3 = frequently; and barriers (average of 2.94 out of a possible 4 points) with responses 1 = content relevant, 2 = ethical issues, 3 = technology, and 4 = other. The highest-rated factor for professional development was

barriers (averaging 2.94 out of a possible 4 points). The last factor was connection (averaging 1.59 out of a possible 5 points), with responses ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The highest-rated factor for professional development was barriers (averaging 2.94 out of a possible 4 points).

The second factor, Current Use, accounted for 17.41% of the variance. The second factor indicated both professional and personal use of social media sites. For professional use, the participants (average of 2.52 out of a possible 3 points) responded with 1 = never, 2 = infrequently, and 3 = frequently. For personal use (average of 2.34 out of a possible 3 points), participants responded with 1 = never, 2 = infrequently, and 3 = frequently.

The third factor, Reason for Use, accounted for 13.62% of the variance. It highlighted how social media can be beneficial in the classroom, both on campus and online, as well as the impact of social media use and the personal use of social media. The participants indicated that social media can be beneficial in the classroom (average of 1.18 out of a possible 4 points), with responses ranging from 1 (yes) to 2 (no), 3 (not sure how to utilize this tool), and 4 (not familiar enough to address this question). The participants indicated their social media use (averaging 2.34 out of a possible 3 points), with 1 = never, 2 = infrequently, and 3 = frequently. The participants also indicated reasons they did not use social media (average of 2.00 out of 5 points), with responses ranging from 1 (privacy) to 5 (other).

The fourth factor, About Yourself, accounted for 9.42% of the variance and indicated the interviewees' age and years of service. The participants' responses for age (averaging 2.69 out of a possible 4 points) were as follows: 1 = less than 30, 2 = 31-45, 3 = 46-59, and 4 = 60 and above. The participants' responses for service (averaging 1.78 out of 3 points) were as follows: 1 = 1-5 years, 2 = 6-19 years, and 3 = 20+ years.

The fifth factor, Barriers, accounted for 7.29% of the variance, describing how educators had concerns and were not professionally utilizing social media. The participants' responses regarding concerns (averaging 2.94 out of a possible 5) were as follows: 1 = private concerns, 2 = ethical concerns, 3 = technical concerns, 4 = limited usefulness, and 5 = other concerns. The participants responded to concerns with reasons for not professionally using social media (average of 2.75 out of a possible 4 points), with 1 indicating privacy, 2 indicating ethical issues, 3 indicating technology, 4 indicating limited usefulness, and 5 indicating others. For each variable, the mean was recorded, calculated, and compared. The variables were examined using SPSS.

Interview Findings

After analyzing the transcripts of the 12 interviews, four main themes emerged regarding effective social media use in the southern university: professional development and training, resources and suggestions for use, clarity of the definition of social media, and benefits of using social media in the classroom. Comments were counted to determine frequency between categories (see Table 1).

Table 1
Themes and Frequencies

Themes	<i>n</i>
Professional development and training	23
Resources and suggestions for use	9
Clarity of definition of social media	19
Benefits of using social media in the classroom	23

Numerous themes emerged from the initial coding efforts, but the main themes were condensed into the four listed. Each primary theme is summarized below.

Theme 1: The importance of developing and implementing training for social media.

With 23 mentions by interviewees, the professional development and training theme was the most frequently discussed theme, by a significant margin. Some of the mentions in this category reflected the question of how respondents could be more effective in using social media. However, many focused instead on the need for professional development to ensure compliance with the social media policy. Others felt that the students know why social media is being used, and educators should become more involved with the latest technology.

Theme 2: Resources

Nine of the 14 interviewees indicated a lack of resources, including not being familiar with the Applications. Many of the respondents felt that the lack of being computer savvy and navigating the internal website for available resources was a challenge they faced in effectively using social media.

Theme 3: Clarity of definition of social media.

Unlike the other themes consistently reported among the respondents, this theme was more divided between those who believed they had a clear understanding of the social media environment and those who felt they had a good grasp of the term. Others felt that their understanding of social media was precisely what they used to motivate the students.

Theme 4: Benefits of social media usage.

All interviewees used social media for personal, academic, research, or professional purposes. The most popular services were Facebook and LinkedIn. Most of them used Facebook for personal communication and LinkedIn for professional connections. Some other services mentioned in the interviews included course management systems (e.g., Blackboard), blog services (e.g., Blogger.com), wiki services (e.g., PBS Works), and Weebly (e.g., a blogging application or website); YouTube was the most frequently used for teaching and networking with the students. Fourteen (66.7%) instructors used the learning platform in their daily classroom, eight (38%) educators used Facebook, five (23.8%) used Twitter, 14 (66.7%) used YouTube in

their classroom, and 10 (47.65%) used other types of social media such as LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, and Edmodo (see Table 6). Although the respondents mostly suggested that social media could have a positive impact on the higher education environment, some preferred that social media be limited to specific operational functions, such as YouTube and LinkedIn, for networking purposes.

Recommendations and Conclusions

Implications for Administrators

The key themes that emerged from the data analysis were (a) professional development and training, (b) resources and suggestions for use, (c) clarity of the definition of social media, and (d) benefits of using social media in the classroom. Each theme is described in detail, along with an explanation of its implications. These themes showed that the educators were aware of specific social media tools, but their level of knowledge was low to moderate, and most educators. Moreover, administrative personnel had a sufficient level of knowledge about social media.

Professional development. Administrators could support educators by coaching them on utilizing available internal resources, as they often rely on the internal website for student support. Education and training were other methods mentioned by participants to prevent the apprehension of not using social media in the classroom.

To increase professional development and provide trialability, leaders at the university should incorporate ongoing training for using social media, as they often do with Microsoft Office products or other technological innovations implemented to enhance learning, teaching, and advising, as well as to streamline processes

During this training, faculty members could learn how to create a Facebook account with a secret privacy setting or utilize YouTube's features to share videos and post them directly into the course shells. Additionally, faculty attendees could participate in group discussions and activities, such as posting course-related questions, to help practice using these tools successfully in the classroom. Administrative personnel can enhance the use of social media by integrating technology into existing practices and by collaborating with faculty to utilize these tools effectively. Analysis of the interview data revealed that administrators lacked training on using social media tools. It may be beneficial to incorporate current and best practices for utilizing social media in future professional development workshops.

Providing training programs and workshops is an important strategy that should be implemented. Even if the innovation is compatible with the current social media policy, it may not be successfully adopted due to a lack of the required knowledge, skills, and information for implementing it. Well-planned training schedules should be proposed for adopting the current usage of social media at this stage. Additionally, one-on-one consultations and counseling are effective means to address concerns about using social media correctly.

Resources. A need exists for educational awareness, and correctly showing the available resources would be beneficial. The university offers a range of faculty aids and resources, including webinar recordings, academic publications, and multimedia learning modules. Most of the respondents were optimistic that better technology would be developed in the future to determine the value and usage of the intranet.

Educators can utilize social media when provided with a proper explanation of how to utilize current resources effectively. Stories are currently displayed, and news is published through the official social media property on the campus portal. However, in the absence of additional resources, the professional workshop might serve as a means of utilizing social media as an interactive community. Administrative personnel can provide demonstrations and show faculty members ways to navigate the campus's internal portal for available helpful resources.

One concern addressed by administrative personnel was the development of a method to reduce the time required to locate usable resources. Several participants commented on the lack of resources, difficulties in using these resources, or the time required to locate available resources. This implies that if educators are adequately trained on how to navigate the internal portal, resources could be a helpful tool. A call for institutional support for administrative personnel is needed. Interviewees expressed a need for faculty support in terms of adopting new technologies. They would like to have access to these technologies and learn more about new ways to use them, such as best practices.

A professional development workshop could be included to demonstrate and identify the various types of social media applications and show administrators how to utilize social media tools effectively. For individuals who are unable to attend, recorded webinars could be developed that include step-by-step instructions on how to use various social media tools properly. These videos can then be posted on the internal university portal for future reference. The researcher has identified similarities between the current usage of social media and issues identified in the literature review, survey, and interviews.

Benefits of social media usage. All 23 participants (100%) were interviewed, and they expressed that social media was beneficial for personal, academic, or professional purposes. This theme suggested that the participants interviewed had some familiarity with social media. However, with proper training and professional development, participants could effectively utilize social media in their daily classroom practices to enhance student interaction, which would be beneficial.

The aspect examined was the level of administrative awareness of the benefits of using social media. The administrative personnel expressed that they utilized social media in various aspects of their daily administrative duties and understood that staying engaged with students could be beneficial. This theme suggests that administrative personnel are utilizing social media as a means to improve communication among students. The use of social media also offers numerous powerful opportunities for information sharing and collaboration among learners and in learning.

Implications for Instructors

A meaningful implication for instructors because of this study lies within advocating the following themes, which is a priority based on the exploratory factor analysis: (a) professional development and training, (b) resources and suggestions for use, (c) clarity of definition of social media, and (d) benefits of using social media in the classroom. Based on the data collected, the use of social media in higher education is likely to continue increasing, which means that faculty must be prepared to learn how to use social media effectively as a daily practice. Expanded exposure to social media can benefit student learning by creating more connections over time.

Professional development. Most respondents expressed a need for professional workshops that would help them use social media successfully. Educators who take the time to utilize various forms of social media can enhance student engagement and save time in the classroom. They should then be able to share their knowledge and resources, including some of their tried practices, with those educators who may be unfamiliar with or uncomfortable using social media. Sharing resources may increase educators' persuasion, decision-making, and implementation, allowing them to utilize social media more effectively. Although the use of social media among faculty has increased, research indicates that there is still significant room for growth in using social media for professional purposes. In addition to the expected increase in social media use by participants in this study, the use of social media by higher education faculty is likely to increase soon. This research revealed that the increase in use might not be entirely voluntary. Some faculty members reported feeling pressured to use social media, despite their reservations about the technology's usefulness and concerns over potential issues. Suppose faculty are shown how to implement social media tools properly in their classrooms and participate in professional development workshops. In that case, they may feel more comfortable using such tools in the future.

A survey question indicated that it is essential for adjunct instructors, educators, and administrative personnel to be educated about social media technologies so they can effectively utilize these technologies to perform their duties and enhance service to their students. The responses to this question indicated that 68.2% of respondents strongly agreed that if personnel are trained, they will be able to provide higher-quality service to their students.

Resources. Participants mentioned the word resources frequently. If instructors see a demonstration on how to use various internal sources provided by the university, they may feel more comfortable incorporating social media into their daily practices. Many respondents felt that the lack of resources was due to the difficulty they experienced navigating the internal portal. A portal on the university server identifies faculty resources; provides several job aids such as Blackboard, Collaborate, and Kaltura; and includes systematic instructions. Most participants in the interviews expressed a desire to utilize these tools to enhance the quality of their work. They expressed sympathy for their subordinates and new faculty members who were not correctly shown how to use the available resources. Most respondents were optimistic that future technology would improve the ability to determine the value of the social media environment. Engagement with social media should be viewed as a priority for all institutions and individuals involved in education.

Benefits of social media usage. Faculty members are embracing the current usage of new and innovative technologies, including social media. They incorporate these tools into their

instruction, which can build confidence. At the same time, students are encouraged to participate in their learning, which creates a more engaged environment. Using social media to enhance engagement and interaction in the classroom can be beneficial. Faculty can benefit from sharing experiences with colleagues and developing best practices that have proven effective over time. Although some people may be aware of social media sites, they may not utilize these sites appropriately. The increased use of social media has, in turn, led to pressure on faculty to utilize social media both inside and outside the classroom, based on the real and potential benefits that institutions can obtain from using social media. This theme suggests that faculty members are utilizing social media as a means of communication among students and enhancing the learning environment.

Future Research

Based on the data collected, it appears that social media is currently being utilized in higher education and is likely to increase in popularity in the future. Future research will be necessary to determine the extent to which and for what purposes educators and administrative personnel in higher education use social media. This study examined social media use at one university, revealing barriers to its use. The main barrier that consistently ranked high was professional development and training. A question remains regarding how effective educators will become after they are appropriately trained on how to implement social media into their classrooms. It was also discovered that the usage of social media can enhance student engagement, as well as provide more interaction among educators and students. Specific technological resources still need to be identified.

Training and connection are two key factors that are hindered by the improper use of technology, ethical issues, and content analysis, while barriers and professional usage were high because educators were using social media in a professional capacity. The current usage was another factor extracted from the survey findings, indicating that educators use social media both personally and professionally. Although educators mainly use social media on a professional level, this may be due to school policies that require some social media tools to be incorporated into the classroom. The reasons for educators' lack of benefit from social media use were that they were unsure how to utilize the tool and were not sufficiently familiar with social media to address the question. Further research should be conducted to see the relationship between personal and professional usage.

Conclusion

As the popularity of using social media has increased among college and university students, it is essential to recognize the perceived value of utilizing social media for educational purposes. A significant part of understanding the rate of adoption for technological innovations is evaluating the professed advantages and disadvantages of the innovation. The overall conclusion drawn from this study is that (65.2%) of all the faculty and administrators at the southern campus professionally use social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube for educational purposes. The same respondents appeared to understand the potential benefits of using social media. In contrast, other faculty were more willing to consider using these media for future educational purposes if properly trained.

The results of this research, combined with current professional practices, provided insight into why some educators at this university utilized social media in their classes, while others did not. With a better understanding of the perceived barriers, the researcher can provide more support and guidance for faculty and administrators. Training and professional development offer multiple opportunities to learn how to utilize this technology for teaching and learning; however, no single model will meet the diverse needs of the faculty. This research may help campuses develop a more comprehensive program of professional development workshops and provide peers with demonstrations of ongoing work on how to use social media effectively to enhance student engagement and create a more up-to-date learning atmosphere.

Educators working in the field of higher education should understand the impact that most educational institutions and educators have on individuals. Education is a tool that can influence others and help determine individuals' life paths. Educators can have a significant impact on students' lives. Additionally, incorporating technology into higher education will play a critical role in transforming the lives of other students. The findings indicated that faculty and administrators are using social media to communicate with their students; however, the outcome of this study could help personnel make informed decisions regarding the use of social media.

Involving social media in education has provided a new dimension to the educational industry. The presence of social media in education has significantly changed the teaching landscape. Using social media enables students to communicate outside of class hours. Students can maintain a direct link to teachers outside of the classroom. This means that students will be able to ask for assistance on homework assignments or projects from the comfort of their homes. Social media also enhances peer collaboration in higher education institutions by providing discussion topics for classes and facilitating problem-solving through collaborative work. The importance of social media has increased not only for students but also for teachers. Social media is a new direction in technology, providing another way for educators to help students effectively utilize social media to expand their knowledge. Hopefully, this research will continue to help other educators ensure that the relationship between education and social media is productive and positive, and that social media can serve as an additional tool in educators' overall mission. This expressed willingness is an indication to colleges and universities that promoting the use of social media in the classroom may be a viable option if faculty receive training to learn how to use social media effectively and efficiently.

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Appendix A: Social Media Survey

Describe Yourself:

1. Which best described you: (Check one)
 - a. Adjunct Instructor (1)
 - b. Full time Faculty (2)
 - c. Administrator (3)
2. Years of service in the field is: (Check one)
 - a. 1-5 years (2)
 - b. 6-19 years (3)
 - c. 20+ years (4)
3. Your current age is: (Check one)
 - a. Less than 30 (1)
 - b. 31-45 (2)
 - c. 46-59 (3)
 - d. 60 and above (4)

Use of Social Media

4. I personally use social media sites (Check one)
 - a. Never
 - b. Infrequently
 - c. Frequently
5. I professionally use social media site (Check one)
 - a. Never

- b. Infrequently
- c. Frequently

6. My primary reason for not personally using social media sites is: (Check all that apply)

- a. Privacy concerns (1)
- b. Ethical concerns (2)
- c. Technical limitations (3)
- d. Limited usefulness (4)
- e. Other; please specify: (5) _____

7. My primary reason for not professionally using social media sites is: (Check all that apply)

- a. Private concerns (1)
- b. Ethical concerns (2)
- c. Technical limitations (3)
- d. Limited usefulness (4)
- e. Other; please specify (5) _____

8. I personally utilize the following social media sites: (Check all that apply)

- a. Facebook (1)
- b. Twitter (2)
- c. YouTube (3)
- d. Other, please specify: (4) _____

9. I professionally utilize the following social media sites: (Check all that apply)

- a. Facebook (1)
- b. Twitter (2)
- c. YouTube (3)
- d. Other, please specify: (4) _____

10. I understand how social media can be beneficial in my classroom, both physically on campus and online (Check one)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not really sure how to utilize this tool
- d. Not familiar enough to address this question

11. It is essential that adjunct instructors/educators/administrative personnel are educated about social media technologies so they can make the most use of the technologies to perform their duties and improve service to their students.

- a. Strongly agree (1)
- b. Agree (2)
- c. Neutral (3)
- d. Disagree (4)
- e. Strongly disagree (5)

12. Social media can be used to stay connected to students.

- a. Strongly agree (1)
- b. Agree (2)
- c. Neutral(3)
- d. Disagree (4)
- e. Strongly disagree (5)

13. What concerns, if any, do you have about the use of social media within your organization?

14. What do you think the biggest barriers implementing social media in your classroom are?

APPENDIX B: FACTORS

Factors and items	Mean	Category	N
<u>Professional development</u>			
Training (n=22)	1.45	1=Strongly agree	n=15
		2=Agree	n=5
		3=Neutral	n=1
		4=Disagree	n=1
		5=Strongly disagree	n=0
Professional use (n=23)	2.52	1=Never	n=3
		2=Infrequently	n=5
		3=Frequently	n=15
Barriers (ethical & technology) (n=17)	2.94	1=Content Relevance	n=3
		2=Ethical issues	n=1
		3=Technology	n=7
		4=Other	n=6
Connection (n=22)	1.59	1=Strongly agree	n=14
		2=Agree	n=5
		3=Neutral	n=1
		4=Disagree	n=2
		5=Strongly disagree	n=0
<u>Current use</u>			
Professionally use social media sites (n=23)	2.52	1=Never	n=3

		2=Infrequently	n=5
		3=Frequently	n=15
Personally use social media sites (n=24)	2.34	1=Never	n=4
		2=Infrequently	n=7
		3=Frequently	n=12
<u>Reasons for use</u>			
Beneficial (n=22)	1.18	1=Yes	n=20
		2=No	n=0
		3=Not real sure how to utilize this tool	n=2
		4=Not familiar enough to address this question	n=0
Social media use (n=24)	2.34	1=Never	n=4
		2=Infrequently	n=7
		3=Frequently	n=12
Not personally using social media (n=14)	2	1=Privacy	n=9
		2=Ethical issues	n=3
			n=0
		3=Technical Limitations	n=0
			n=2
		4=Limited usefulness	n=0
		5=Other	
<u>About yourself</u>			
Age (n=22)	2.69	1=Less than 30	
		2=31--45	n=9
			n=11
		3=46-59	n=2
			n=9
		4=60 and above	
Service (n=23)	1.78	1=1-5 years	

		2=6-19 years	n=10
			n=4
		3=20+ years	n=4
Barriers			
Not professionally using social media (n=16)	2.75	1=Privacy	
		2=Ethical	n=6
			n=1
		3=Technical limitations	n=4
			n=1
		4-Limited Usefulness	n=3
		5-Other	
Concerns (n=17)	2.94	1=Privacy	
		2=Ethical	n=1
		3=Technical limitations	n=7
		4-Limited Usefulness	n=6
		5-Other	n=0