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Perceptions of Acceptable Behavior with Social Networking among Teachers, Parents, and Students in a Northeast Tennessee Middle School: An Exploratory Study

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Perceptions of Acceptable Behavior with Social Networking among Teachers, Parents, and Students in a Northeast Tennessee Middle School: An Exploratory Study

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A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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by

Lisa L. Raper

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ABSTRACT

Perceptions of Acceptable Behavior with Social Networking among Teachers, Parents, and Students in a Northeast Tennessee Middle School: An Exploratory Study

by

Lisa L. Raper

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perception of acceptable use of social media among teachers, students, and parents. In doing so the researcher touched on generational factors, communication, instructional practice with social networking and the perceptions of what was acceptable among these 3 groups within a middle school setting.

This qualitative study examined how students, parents, and teachers perceived the use of social networking. 30 subjects were randomly chosen and interviewed: 10 students, 10 parents and 10 teachers. There were 4 emerging themes: (a) types of social networking preferred and the reason, (b) relationships and acceptable usage, (c) uncertainty of safety of social networking, and (d) the positives in being able to communicate. Research suggests that the generations that were interviewed lean toward different types of communication. The Baby Boomers prefer to communicate via email, telephones, and face-to-face. Generation Xers use email but also include Instant Messaging and mobile phones. Generation Y prefers to text prefers to text or use cell phones as does Generation Z which has yet to be identified and uses these forms as well as all forms of social networking (Entrepreneur Magazine, 2009).

Through interviewing and coding the researcher found that each subgroup identified that communication was essential to survival. What differed was the type of communication and the safety involved in that type. It was also found that the research on this subject is limited but is growing with advances. The research has changed to include more positives on this subject. With this, the implication for further study in this area is definite. Recommendations for further study include but are not limited to: looking at a study like this in a larger area, opening the subject group to different demographics, looking into how this will affect school systems in the future.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to the people who loved me first, my mom and dad. My dad is not here to see this day, but I know that he knows I have done it. He told me to keep the faith and I have, even though it has not always been easy. To my mom, thanks for listening to me when I did not think I could go on and telling me that I could do it. Your strength is something I admire. I love you both with all my heart!

To my husband Dwaine, who does not really understand the stress I put myself under, but still believes in me and wants me to finish this process and get back to normal. Thanks for standing by me. I love you!

To my children, Mason and Abby for trying to understand that I had to work on this when you wanted to go to the pool or do something fun. I am grateful that I have two special gifts from God that are patient and support me in my goals. We will have many fun days ahead. Never stop learning and always follow your dreams! I love you….MOST. (gotcha)

To the rest of my family, thanks for always believing in me and encouraging me on days I needed it. I expect to see all of you at graduation to share in my accomplishment in which you all took part in some fashion. Love to all of you!

I am blessed to have strong supporters in my corner and I love you one and all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It does not seem long ago that "being tagged" went along with childhood games being played outside. Today, this term (being tagged) takes on a whole new meaning. Social Networking has become an everyday part of life for many people. In today's world "being tagged" means that you have been seen in a photo on a *Facebook* page. *Facebook* is only one of the many sources people use to connect with the rest of the world. There are many Social Networking trails people take. Among these are; *My Space*, *You Tube*, *Flickr,* and the newest kids on the block: *Twitter* and *LinkedIn* (PCMag.com, 2011).

Unlocking the hidden rules to these social networking sites is difficult to those who are beginners or not regular users. Even those who are regular visitors find what is deemed acceptable, changes quite often (Burnham, 2010). We have read many occurrences recently about what is acceptable to some is not congruent with opinions of the general public when applied to schools (James, 2009). Whether cell phones should be used in schools to text or *Google* is questionable; now the use of *Facebook* also becomes an issue.   What is deemed acceptable to one school district may not to another. Most schools have firewalls in place to protect students; however, they are not included on cell phones that also have access to the internet. *Google* is identified by *techterms* as the most popular search engine while *Facebook* is a social networking website, and *firewalls* are items that limit the data that can pass through them and protect the network server (PCMag.com, 2011).

It is because of these ideas that I have chosen to delve into this world of social networking. This will allow me to see what education deems to be acceptable within the realm of the middle school setting among teachers, parents, and students as it relates to social networking.

Instruction Practice and Social Networking

Teens enjoy spending time with friends. Social Media provides new outlets for them to come into their own. Lehman, principal of Science Leadership Academy in Philadelphia, suggests that social media is a contemporary part of students' lives. Consequently, we need to incorporate social media into the education process in order to enhance students' connection to school. We get caught up in the negativity of this new world, but as Lehman expresses, 'any tool is a weapon, if used the correct way.'

 Social media can be used to help students and their learning. Some teachers use social media as a way to access experts around the world as well as those in the same town. Students can identify with these sources of learning. It is important to determine why they are so important. Some believe that it allows the students' time to think before responding and thus takes the risk out of being humiliated for using the wrong word or phrase. The student cannot see the face of the other party. Therefore it makes it easy for them to ask another out or be cruel as well. As a result, parents see an increase in bullying as it makes it easier to do so.

The National School Board Association (2007) reported an increase in Social Networking trends. "Almost seven in 10 districts (69%) stated they have a student web-site program" (p.5). More than a third of these same districts reported their schools run blogs for the purpose of instruction. Twenty-two percent stated classrooms create or

maintain websites that allow visitors to add or remove items (National School Boards Association, 2007, p5).

Dewey (1916) stated almost a century ago, if we teach today as those that taught before us, we rob the youth of their tomorrow. Social interaction gives way to learning in today's world. Many teachers and parents feel more comfortable with social networking sites that are created for education than they do with Facebook. These sites created for schools are a more controlled environment having several boundaries put in place by the teacher.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is twofold. First, is to investigate the acceptable use of social media among teachers, parents, and students and second, to determine whether there is perception to the limits of their use. Over the last several years we have seen an increase in the use of social networking. This use is not limited to adults (Facebook, 2011). Teachers are looking for ways to incorporate social networking into the classroom setting.   Students are required to be 13 to set up a *Facebook* account, though many are on it daily and are below that age requirement (Facebook, 2011). Students are quick to tell you that they are on *Facebook* and send text messages to each other on a daily basis. Some are self-proclaimed addicts when it comes to these social media mediums. According to Thesaurus.com (2011) networking means interaction, making contacts, meeting people, and making friends. With all those positives we see the negative and these are the things that are typically highlighted in the media. We hear of suicides such as student Eric Mohat (James, 2009) because of cyber bullying that takes place. In measuring the social networking impact on these

teachers, parents, and students in this one middle school, more studies should be developed as this topic continues to grow.

Generational differences may play a part in the use of social networking as well. There are differences among the Silent Generation, Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. These differences ranged from growing up without a television in their homes; in the silent generation, to having trouble imagining life without television let alone a cell phone as is the case with generation Y. This time frame of 1940 to the present represents a broad range of perspectives. The ways things were thought about were also broad. As stated in the March 2009 issue of Entrepreneur Magazine, there are different ways to communicate as well as problem solve within these generations. The baby boomers participated in emailing and cell phone calls but prefer that face to face contact in order to solve a problem. Generation Y would want to do without the face to face contact and only text and use social media to research the problem. Generation Z has yet to be identified as to these parameters of communication avenues.

Research Questions

To investigate acceptable use of social media among teachers, parents, and students, and to determine whether there is a perception to the limits of that use, the following research questions are posed:

1. How are teachers using social networking for school related activities?

2. How are students using social networking for school related activities?

3. How are parents using social networking for school related activities?

4. What are the perceptions of teachers as to what, if any limits, there should be to social networking for school activities?

5. What are the perceptions of students as to what, if any, limits there should be to social networking for school activities?

6. What are the perceptions of parents as to what, if any, limits there should be to social networking for school activities?

7. Do the perceptions lie along generational groupings?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this qualitative study is to investigate the acceptable use of social media among teachers, parents, and students in the middle school setting and to determine whether there is a perception to the limits of that use. Research suggests that students are much more willing to put information out for people to gather than older generations.

By examining the use of the social networking among students, teachers, and parents, this study may help to provide school personnel, parents, and students the information necessary to ensure safety within schools. By exploring the impact that Social Networking has on these groups of people in this middle school, this study suggests that further study be done on this topic as it continues to mature. Increased understanding of the impact of social media within these generational groups may serve as the impetus for future research into the effects of this medium within the educational setting.

Delimitations and Limitations

This study is delimited in that not all middle schools were used to gather data. The subjects used are teachers, parents, and students from a middle school in a single Northeast Tennessee school district. Administrators and central office personnel will not be included in this study.

The study is limited to middle school teachers, parents and students in a single Northeast Tennessee school district. Enrollment statuses during the course of this study also serve as a limitation as will the access to technology by the subjects due to it being a random pool. Parenting habits in monitoring Social Networking with children cannot be controlled from subject to subject.

The assumption is made that all will be truthful in their responses and that all use social media in some capacity.

Scope of the Study

This study will address the research questions mentioned above by using qualitative methodology. I will conduct interviews of 10 teachers, 10 parents, and 10 middle school students. The purpose of these interviews will be to gather information concerning perceptions of what was considered acceptable ethically in terms of social networking. This study will also take into account different generations within the subject groups, as defined in Chapter 2, and help to determine if generational differences have something to do with the use of Social Networking.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions will be used in this study:

Blackberry- A smartphone from Research in Motion, Ltd. (RIM), Waterloo, Ontario (www.blackberry.net) that is available in various models. These popular devices include phone, e-mail, text messaging, Web browsing, organizer (calendar, addresses, tasks, etc.), as well as paging, Yahoo instant messaging and corporate data access (PCMag.com, 2011).

Communication- a process of interaction through messages or signals among or within humans, animals, machines, or plants (Oxford: A Dictionary of Media and Communication, 2012).

E-mail- (**E**lectronic-**MAIL**) The transmission of text messages from sender to recipient. E-mail messages can also be formatted with graphics like a brochure or Web page, an enhancement that many users like, but that creates more spam and a security risk (PCMag.com, 2011).

Facebook- The most popular social networking site. Founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, the site is free and derives revenue from ads. The name comes from the paper document with names and faces issued to college freshmen to help them get acquainted with each other. Using the search facilities, members can locate other Facebook members and 'friend' them by sending them an invitation, or they can invite

people to join Facebook (PCMag.com, 2011).

iPad-A very popular tablet computer from Apple, introduced in April 2010. The iPad has a similar interface to the iPod touch and iPhone, but with a large 10" screen, enabling it to replace a laptop for many applications. Designed for Web browsing, e-book reading and entertainment. Flash storage capacities range from 16 to 64GB. In March 2011, the thinner, faster second-generation model came out with two cameras for Apple's FaceTime video calling (PCMag.com, 2011).

iPhone- A smartphone from Apple that integrates cellphone, iPod, camera, text messaging, e-mail and Web browsing. Data and applications can be sent to the phone wireless or via Apple's iTunes software, which is used to organize music, videos, photos and applications (PCMag.com, 2011).

iPod-A family of extremely popular digital media players from Apple. Introduced in 2001, current models comprise the hard disk classic, which holds the most songs, and the flash memory-based shuffle, nano and touch, the latter a full-fledged mobile computer like the iPhone (iPod Touch) (PCMag.com, 2011).

Laptop- A portable computer with an LCD screen that weighs from two to 12 pounds. It uses batteries for mobile use and AC power for charging and desktop use (PCMag.com,2011).

LinkedIn- A business-oriented social networking site that enables users to connect with colleagues, look for a job or business relationships and get answers to industry questions. LinkedIn users invite people they know and trust to become 'linked in' to them, and the business connections of invited users are in turn linked (PCMag.com, 2011).

Networking- interaction, making contacts, meeting people, and making friends (Thesaurus.com, 2011).

Smart Phone- A cellular telephone with built-in applications and Internet access. Smartphones provide digital voice service as well as text messaging, e-mail, Web browsing, still and video cameras, MP3 player, video viewing and often video calling. In addition to their built-in functions, smartphones can run myriad applications, turning the once single-minded cellphone into a mobile computer (PCMag.com, 2011).

Social Networking- An umbrella term for reaching out and sharing information with friends, family and colleagues on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn (PCMag.com, 2011).

Social Networking Site- A Web site that provides a virtual community for people to share their daily activities with family and friends, or to share their interest in a particular topic, or to increase their circle of acquaintances. There are dating sites, friendship sites, sites

with a business purpose and hybrids that offer a combination of these (PCMag.com, 2011).

Texting- Typing a short message from one mobile phone user to another (PCMag.com, 2011).

Overview of the Study

This qualitative study is presented in 5 chapters. Chapter 1 provides an Introduction, a Statement of the Problem, Research Questions, the Significance of the Study, Limitations, Scope of Study, Definitions of Terms, and the Overview of the Study. In Chapter 2 included are the Review of Literature that referred to Generations, Communication, Instruction Practice and Social Networking, and Perceptual Research. Chapter 3 consists of the Methods and Procedures used to obtain data including a description the Researchers Design, the Researchers Role, of the Participants, the procedures used, and the methods of data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the data collected and the findings of this exploratory study. Finally, Chapter 5 provides the conclusions, summaries, and recommendations for further study as well as a summary. What is deemed acceptable usage among teachers, students, and parents within the social networking world? Are there any similarities?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is an extrapolation of literature from a variety of fields dealing with communication. The issues pertaining to this are generations, communication, and social networking. The purpose of this study was to investigate the acceptable use of social media among teachers, parents, and students. I discussed this in the order of generations, communication, social networking, instruction practice and social networking, perceptual research, and summary.

Generations

Mike + the Mechanics wrote about it in their song *In the Living Years,* in January 1989. The first line of the song states that 'Every generation, blames the one before.' The song paints the portrait of distress that a father and son have in communicating with each other until the father passes away.

Generation Groupings

Generations are placed into groups by birth date. These five generations are shown in the following typology (Strauss & Howe, 1991).

1. Silent (1925 -1942): Adaptive

2. Baby Boomer (1943-1960) : Idealist

3. Generation X or 13th generation (1961- 1981): Reactive

4. Generation Y or Millennials (1982-2000): Civic

5. Generation Z (2001-?): Yet to have an identifier

Silent Generation

The silent generation is also called the "lost generation" or the "last generation" according to Time Magazine. This generation was the last generation to grow up without television. All fantasies were tied to the radio (Time, 1970). This was the generation when things were merely spread by word of mouth (Strauss & Howe, 1991). They were the last generation to accept without question—or to pretend to accept—the traditional American values of work, order, and patriotism (Time, 1970). As youngsters during World War II, this generation collected paper, stomped on tin cans, and weeded victory gardens to help the heroic Russians and defeat the hated Nazis and Japanese (Time, 1970). Gravett and Throckmorton (2007) stated this generation as the one that could entertain themselves without television, remember when television was all black and white and use a computer although they are afraid of breaking it (p.33). Authors such as Claire Raines (*Generations at Work)* described this generation as conservative, fiscally prudent, and loyal to their employers. The silent generation, according to Strauss and Howe (2001), was "the generational stuffing of a sandwich between the get-it-done G.I. and the self –absorbed Boomers".

Baby-Boomers

The self-absorbed baby-boomers are the next generation in sequence. This generation was born from 1943-1960 (Strauss & Howe, 1991, p. 299). This generation is the Idealist type. They are old enough to have seen every episode of *Leave it to Beaver* and watched man's first trip to the moon (Gravett &Throckmorton, 2007). Boomers have excelled in occupations calling for creative independence. They began heeding the simple words of the Beatles: *Let it Be* (Strauss & Howe, p. 310).

Recognized by a drastic increase in birth rates following World War II, Baby Boomers now comprise what is seen as one of the largest generations in United States history. This generation was born during a time when there were different views on politics, war, and social justice. They saw great social changes such as the women's rights and civil rights movements. They also dealt with the highly unpopular Vietnam War and some men fled the country in conscientious objection.

Generation X

The generation following the boomers is that of the 13th Generation or Generation X. This generation was born between 1961-1981. Generation Xers were brought up on television, Atari game systems, and personal computers. These are the men and women of our society that "couldn't wait until 1999 to play the song '1999' by Prince, owned and played records and typed term papers on a word processor" (Gravett & Throckmorton, p. 40). World events for this generation are seen on television including the Challenger explosion in 1986. "Generation Xers have built a powerful survival instinct, wrapped around an ethos of personal determination. In their world, what a person is, what he looks like, and whether or not he succeeds depend less on what a person is inside than on how he behaves" (Strauss & Howe, p. 322). With that being said, Strauss and Howe stated that Generation Xers have outscored Boomers in negotiating skills, consumer awareness, adult-interaction skills, and defenses to prevent extreme dependency on parents or authorities. This generation has a machine that can basically help them do anything. They have listened to music on records, 8-track tapes, cassettes, CDs, DVDs, MP3s, and more. The prevalence of computers has taken off in their lifetime. They have watched the birth and growth of the Internet, answering

machines, and voicemail, PDAs, and laptops (Gravett &Throckmorton). Technology

helped to make lives easier.

Generation Y

Generation Y, born 1980-2000, grew up with technology such as the Internet

whereas members of generation X encountered it only in adulthood. Generation Y are

also known as 'echo-boomers' because they are typically born to baby boomers. This

generation has always had cable television with a remote control. To them a record

player is an antique. They were using computers by the time they were learning to read

(Gravett & Throckmorton, p. 45). For this generation everything is at their fingertips.

Video games can be played 'on-line' enabling competition with others around the world.

Subsequently, Generation Yers are globally mined and considered part of what

Friedman calls *a Flat World* (2005). In this world we can talk to someone in India about

a product sold here in the United States as if we are talking to our next-door neighbor.

In fact, these people, half way across the world from each other are technologically

neighbors. We can contact them quicker than we can run next-door.

Generation Z

This younger generation has yet to be given an official moniker. Technology is

something they have always had. Life has never existed without it. This generation is

also a new concept, therefore the amount of literature is limited. There is a paucity of

literature in this area, and my research will help fill this gap.

Communication

Although we know through all the differences in these generations that people have evolved through time in many different ways, one way seems to be very different: communication. Examination of these generations yields numerous differences, and communication is most pronounced. Communication is commonly defined as "a process of interaction through messages or signals among or within humans, animals, machines, or plants " (Oxford: A Dictionary of Media and Communication, 2012).

Although the underlying premise of exchanging information remains intact, communication techniques and tools are in constant flux. Effective communication is considered to be an important skill in many fields where humans must interact in a variety of conditions. We communicate to satisfy our identity, physical, practical, and social needs (Turnball, 2010). Examination of intergenerational changes reveals that word of mouth communication patterns used by the Silent Generation are now defunct (Strauss & Howe, 1991). As seen in Figure 1, the Baby Boomers prefer to communicate via email, phones, and face-to-face. Generation Xers also use email but include Instant Messaging (IM) and mobile phones. Generation Y prefers to text or use cell phones or IM (Entrepreneur Magazine, 2009).

	Gen Y	Gen X	Baby Boomers
How they like to communicate	Texting, cell phones and IM	E-mail, IM and cell phones	E-mail, cell phones and face to face
Approach to problem solving	Form a team to brainstorm a solution. Use the web and social networking for research.	Think up a list of solutions on your own, then call a meeting to discuss.	Think about what's worked in the past and how it can be replicated, then call a meeting to discuss.
What they're worried about	What they're worried about	Work/life balance, stability, whether they're appreciated	Stability and retirement.
Respect for them means	Having their ideas valued by co-workers	Having their professionalism and growing knowledge valued	Having decades of work experience and input still valued

Figure 1. The March 2009 issue of Entrepreneur Magazine

Every generation has its own story. The world looks different now than it did before. New things are invented on a daily basis. The evolution of transportation, technology, and communication has shaped the story of each generation. In the 19th century, Karl Benz (automobile), Charles Babbage (computer), and Alexander Graham Bell (telephone) became recognized for their inventions. Each of these men left behind inventions and ideas that continue to simplify our lives. Little did they know that they would pave the way for a super highway that would travel us well into the future.

Alexander Graham Bell stated, "Great discoveries and improvements invariably involve the cooperation of many minds. I may be given credit for having blazed the trail,

but when I look at the subsequent developments I feel the credit is due to others rather than to myself". Although our journey toward this super highway began with the invention of the telephone, two world wars and the Great Depression, served as barriers to advancement for several decades. News was no longer spread by word of mouth and the birth of newspapers, radio and then television came about. This new creation of media, made it hard for people to believe things were getting better (Verhaagen, 2005).

   Many believed it was getting worse. Cultural shifts occurred and thinkers began to challenge modern understandings. "The Enlightenment and Silent Generation had its last "hurrah" with the Great Society, the civil rights marches, JFK, Martin Luther King" (Verhaagen, 2005). Thereafter, post modernity was ushered in after the assignations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King and the impeachment of Richard Nixon. These events resulted in conviction, community and cynicism (Verhaagen, 2005).

History of Social Media

   By the standards of our rapidly changing culture, hypertext is not new. The conventional history dates the idea back to Vannevar Bush, a government science advisor during World War II, who proposed the memex, a kind of interactive encyclopedia on microfilm. (Bolter, 1998)

   Xanadu, a project launched in the 1960s by Ted Nelson, the individual who coined the term *hypertext*. (Leonard, 2002, p. 204) intermixed portions of text from various sources to create hypertext words. Leonard (2002), stated Xanadu is important in the realm of educational technology, for it is the ancestor of hypermedia, the Internet, the digital library, and the virtual learning environment.

Nelson introduced and defined in his book, *Literary Machines*, that Xanadu has great similarities to what we now know as the World Wide Web (Literary Machines, 1982). He defined Project Xanadu as "a system designed to be the principal publishing utility of the future" (p.225).

Nelson was not the only one looking ahead. Also in the 1960s, Ivan Sutherland proposed a computer display with which users could interact. This display, he said, would one day be so realistic that "a bullet displayed in such a [computer simulated] room would be fatal" (Schroeder, 1996, p. 4).

It is this 'bullet' that Sutherland spoke of that society has taken a bite of. We live in a world where according to Prensky, "our old assumptions and strongly held ideas have been turned around. It is clearly a different place in which our kids are growing up" (2010, p 1). We live in a world that can be 'Googled' or searched for on Amazon. These search engines were the precursors of what we have today. According to Denning (2011), Google wasn't launched by Larry Page and Sergei Brin as a brilliant vision, but rather as a project to improve library searches, followed by a series of small discoveries that unlocked a revolutionary business model. Amazon's strategy by Jeff Bezos involves developing ideas in new markets similar to "planting seeds" or "going down blind alleys" (Denning, 2011). Amazon's executives learn and uncover opportunities as they go, with many dead ends but also sometimes a huge, broad avenue.

Social Networking

Thanks to Alexander Graham Bell and other inventors, the world in which we live puts things literally at our fingertips. Visual assessment of nearly every community venue indicated that people, of all ages, use devices to stay in touch with the outside world. According to a National survey conducted by CTIA, four out of five teens (17 million) carry a wireless mobile device. This is a 36% increase since 2005 (CTIA). According to Pew Internet, teens are sending an average of 60 text messages per day. That number is up from 50 text messages identified in a 2009 survey. Older girls are the most prolific communicators, sending an average of 100 text messages per day. Compare that number with boys, who sent about 50 messages per day. Social media has predominately joined the lives of teens to the extent that they feel that if they are involved in Social Media they are on-line. Teens are actively involved in each other's lives through this on-line behavior in both positive and negative ways.

According to a *Collection of Social Network Stats for 2009*, the majority of users of social networking sites are between the ages of 12 and 34. This allows for a huge population of teachers, parents and students who utilize this form of communication. Though we call this communication, we find that non-verbal training is missing among this population. Friedman (2005) discusses that we have become a flat world due to technology. Social Networking helps in making this topography that used to be difficult to traverse unless you had a way to travel, an easier way to travel on the cyberspace superhighway.

Nearly 500,000,000 people worldwide live a life on *Facebook*. Is there a limit to what is shared? With things such as sexting, which is sharing of nude or otherwise

sexually provocative photos of individuals or classmates via messages over digital

devices, in the headlines, we hear the negatives that go along with social networking.

Recently, we heard of the Anthony Weiner scandal in Washington DC. In this

scandal, a congressman from New York posted photos of himself partially or fully naked

to other women and on Facebook and Twitter (Hernandez, 2011). Despite negative

press aspects of social media, there are many positives that go along with it as well. In

"Online Communications and Adolescent Relationships", Subrahmanyam and

Greenfield (2008) asserted how many adolescents use this form of communication to

relieve social anxiety, as they don't have to be face to face with the person they are

speaking with. Additionally, adolescents use these social tools to reinforce relationships

and to interview potential new friends to add to their profile of friends. Consequently,

O'Hanlon (2007) suggested it might be beneficial for educators to meet students where

they are comfortable: in the social networking area. Klein (2011), stated that "social

networking has gotten a bad rap" (p. 38), concurred. He claimed that there are many

opportunities that we, as educators should take advantage of and that we need to be

trained in how to do this. He felt that the use of social networking could be very useful

in the world of education.

Friedman (2005) spoke of the flat classroom project. The participants in this

project stated that the 'students are hungering for meaningful connections with one

another.' He explained that educators are concerned with this educational type of

community and continued to stay in the same type of classroom that has been around

for hundreds of years.

We are seeing a huge cultural shift with so many of us feeling comfortable living so much of our life on Facebook. According to Fletcher (2010) Facebook has changed our social DNA, making us more accustomed to openness. This willingness to share or overshare is vital to Facebook's success. As Fletcher (2010) stated, "the company isn't forcing its users to drink the Kool-Aid. It's just serving up nice cold glasses, and we are gulping it down." This showed the popularity of this aspect of social networking.

Along with this popularity come safety concerns. "The safety of the 'Yellow Ribbon' comes from a sense that one can wrap one's self within a miniature world of connections and hidden spaces-to be seen or to hide"(Ebo,1998, p.227). When people are social, either with the word of mouth, telephone, slambooks in the 80's or Facebook today, people can be cruel to each other. This can be especially true among students. We need to protect our students from cyber-bullying, on line predators and adult content. We can do this by utilizing firewalls on school computers, but with smart phones the line is left open. We have to trust that students know the etiquette required for proper use of these devices, on their own, without someone monitoring them. We are, however, talking about adolescents who often give in to peer pressure just to fit in. Students do not see this as posting personal information in a public arena. There are a variety of ways that Social Media can be incorporated into the classroom in an appropriate way. These can be found on blogs such as Online Universities Home Online University Blog. School counselors strive to educate students that it is not alright to cyberbully.

Still we read about students such as Taylor Behl, (Barrett, 2006) who kept a blog on MySpace. Her words were posted on her blog and her killer had read them too. He

knew her feelings and where she was. She was for an easy target. In 2008, a grown

woman went to court for cyber-bullying a young neighbor simply because the families

were feuding. Her ploy was to pretend that she was not the 49 year old woman she

was but a 13 year old boy. She wanted this young girl, Megan Meier, to fall in love with

'him' (Breuer, 2008). The young girl hung herself because of the humilation she felt that

was placed on her by this 'young boy' that was actually a grown woman. These were

only two of the many people we read about that became victims of social networking.

Pew Internet and American Life Project (2012) stated "While teens across all

demographic groups generally have positive experiences watching how their peers treat

each other on social network sites, younger teenage girls (ages 12-13) stand out as

considerably more likely to say their experience is that people are mostly unkind. One in

three (33%) younger teen girls who uses social media says that people her age are

mostly unkind to one another on social network sites, compared with 9% of social

media-using boys 12-13 and 18% of boys 14-17. One in five older girls (20%) who uses

social media says that in her experience people her age are mostly unkind to one

another on these sites."

Parents should be the managers in their child's life. They should be monitoring

what is going on both on-line and off. Pew Internet and American Life Project (2011)

disclosed, "more than half (54%) of parents say they use parental controls or other

means of filtering or monitoring their child's computer-based online activities, while 39%

of online teens report that their parents use this type of software or feature in a browser

or operating system to manage their teen's computer-based internet experience" (p. 7).

There are some lessons to come from Social Networking too such as the case of Lauren Spierer. She is a missing student from Indiana University. Though she has not been found, there is a great deal of awareness due to Facebook and Twitter (Penner, 2011).

Messages are being spread whether they are good or bad. Social Networking makes these exchanges happen quickly. People in general are not the only ones that see Social Media as a way to spread a message. Business is also getting involved. Miller (2010) states, Businesses, organizations using social media to spread their message, "Social media enables my clients to engage directly in conversations with their customers….those that understood the importance of social media are ahead of the game" (p. 1).

Social Networking meets its success and failure with what people perceive as acceptable. Obviously, this varies from individual to individual. What is deemed acceptable by one may be considered obscene by another. Despite the good intentions behind Facebook, it has backfired and mushroomed into a source of cyberbullying and harassment (Barrett, 2006). Macfarlane (2007) stated in her article, *Misbehavior in Cyberspace*, that "the widespread use of virtual classrooms, Internet exploration, and chat rooms has stretched the concept of the schoolhouse while the popularity of social networking sites, and text messaging have affected the way students communicate with and about each other, their teachers, administrators and their schools." This is not, however, only an issue with students. In the last few years we have heard of teachers and other professionals being relieved of their duties due to their lack of professionalism when posting things on their sites. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System fired a

teacher in 2008 for items that she had posted in her Facebook status that were derogatory toward her student's ethnicity. Helms (2008) in the *Charlotte Observer* discussed various situations, in which teachers did not use good judgment in using social networking sites. Michael Simpson, of the NEA legal office, stated in this same article, "There's an old lawyer's saying that goes something like this: Never put in writing anything that you wouldn't want to read in open court or by your mother…Maybe it is time for an updated adage: Never put in electronic form anything that you wouldn't want to be viewed by a million people, including your colleagues, students, and supervisors-and your mother." Several recent articles suggested there are important ethical considerations that must occur before faculty or staff members 'friend' students with whom they have a working relationship (Clague, 2008; Gutgold, 2008; Lipka, 2007). States including Florida, Colorado, Tennessee and Massachusetts, teachers have faced disciplinary actions for MySpace postings, and some teachers unions have begun warning members about racy personal Web sites (Shapira, 2008).

Some schools systems have recognized the importance of Facebook in the lives of its students and parents. Rocco (2013) discusses several reasons for this importance.

- Providing opportunities to improve communication within the school community

teachers, parents, and students.

- There is a direct, immediate connection that occurs in 'real-time'. Important   information can be sent and received quickly.
- Schools can promote themselves, teachers and students in a positive way.
- It is a time-saver. Social Media allows us to share and connect with our community inside and outside of the school walls and other boundaries.

Some schools, such as the Minnetonka system in Minnesota, allow for staff to participate in such sites as Facebook but set guidelines and provide reminders for remaining professional in relationships with students and families (Aeikens, 2010).

Instruction, Practice, and Social Networking

Social media can be a powerful tool to coordinate and connect with parents. At the school level, this is important work for everyone, from the classroom teacher to the principal. Parent coordinators, paid by school systems, are responsible for communicating with and involving parents in the school community. It is their job to create a welcoming environment for parents as well as to identify and address parent and related school/community issues.

Teachers are the key to the successful use of technology in the schools. Without the time to learn how to use the technology and adapt it to instructional goals, without the technological and peer support and without adequate resources, teachers are condemned to struggle. "They are caught between the social expectations for technology to be an integral part of education and the inadequate resources to meet these expectations. This dilemma is even more pressing in the inner cities, where the socioeconomic gap continues to widen" (Pollack, 1998, p.147).

Social media is changing the way we communicate. It is also changing the way we get information and the way we learn. While many of us are familiar with traditional notes home in the backpack, flyers and newsletters, social media takes our ability to create, maintain and grow connections with parents to a whole new level. With 96% of 9 to17 year olds reporting use of social networking more than 9 hours more than

television (Grunwald Associates LLC), there is a need for this media in the classrooms. Students who come from less affluent backgrounds are less likely to have the same internet skills as those who live with a more favorable lifestyle. According to Davis (2011), a one-track way of teaching cannot work with the youth getting more and more different. Demski (2009), pointed out we are not reading and writing across and down the page anymore. We are reading and writing in three dimensions: across, down, and out, the 'out' being hyperlinks. It is a whole different kind of literacy; it is a whole different kind of writing; it is a whole different kind of reading. It is a type of literacy that cannot be done anywhere else but on the web.

According to the 2011 Speak Up Project:

1. Students, teachers, administrators and parents are increasingly recognizing the value of social learning in both their personal and professional lives.
2. Students, in particular, have heightened aspirations for more effectively leveraging social learning tools to enhance their engagement in the learning process, access more interesting and relevant educational content, tap into additional opportunities for collaboration with peers, advisors and mentors and overall, increase their academic productivity.
3. Despite this strong value proposition, school site administrators and parents continue to have lingering concerns about social networking, Internet access and the role of social learning tools.
4. Within the administration ranks, Speak Up data has revealed a new cohort of school site administrators that is particularly interested in leveraging social learning more extensively within instruction. Those administrators are paving a new path for the innovative use of these tools within their schools and districts.

One of those innovative teachers is Robert Miller. Miller's classes of fifth grade students, use Edmodo, a social networking site for schools. He claims, 'it makes learning more interactive'. He uses it as a way to extend the classroom after hours without being at school. Miller defines this to be a controlled environment where the teacher can see everything and set boundaries. One of the more difficult boundaries to set in schools is the appropriate use of technology devices, such as cell phones, smart phones, Ipads, and mp3 players. These devices can cause disruption in the classroom when used inappropriately or in ways that are not deemed acceptable in the school setting.   For schools to keep pace with the trends being established in the world at large, Yap believes it's imperative they recognize the central role that social networking tools have grown to occupy in how employers do business, and make room for them in students' education (Demski, 2009).

Another site that has been adopted for learning is Saywire, an online social networking and learning site designed specifically for in-house use by students and schools.   Saywire wants to create a safe environment where constructive Web 2.0 skills can be developed while students are young, so they grow up to be smart, civil online citizens. Since its launch, October 2008, the site has registered more than 160,000 students and teachers across the country (Demski, 2009). There is a level of comfort being friends on these sites versus Facebook because there is an academic feel (Davis, 2011). Schools have followers on twitter and Facebook sites. Parents can get updates on early dismissals, school lockdowns, or other vital information via texts. Social media is not going anywhere. It is here to stay. Teachers, students, and schools are learning to embrace this new way of learning and teaching. People are pinning, tweeting,

Skyping, and Facebooking all about it. Educators' use of popular networks like Facebook and Twitter has increased overall, but those sites are often blocked in schools and filled with ethical concerns because so many students use them. "As a result, educators--with their particular schedules and Internet habits--are moving toward social networks designed specifically for them, according to data from a survey conducted by MMS Education, a marketing company based in Newtown, Pa" (Tomassini, 2013, p.13). Social networking is just one piece of technology integration, Yap says, but it's a piece that the district felt it needed to introduce to its students "before they go into the Wild, Wild, West of Facebook, or MySpace, or any other sites that are out there right now (Demski, 2009, p.24)

<center>*Perceptual Research*</center>

Perception is at the interface of the mental and the physical (Heyer & Mausfeld, 2002, p. xiii). We base our choices and decisions on a sense of perception (Denton, 1999). It allows us to experience the world around us. When dealing with any person or group from various backgrounds their perception potentially holds the key to their tenacity. Each person holds a different opinion on what they deem appropriate. It is "how the mind works" (Heyer & Mausfeld, 2002, p. xiii). Perceptions are belief states of perceivers. It involves the 5 senses; taste, smell, sight, touch, and hearing. Because our interest is in the objects of perception, Reid wrote, we often pay no attention to the sensations accompanying perception, and may fail to notice they are present at all (Heyer & Mausfeld, 2002, p. 14-15).

Reid (1785) spelled out in his *Essays on Intellectual Powers of Man,* what he takes to be involved in perception as follows:

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If, therefore, we attend to the act of our mind which we call the perception of an external object of sense, we shall find three things. First, some conception or notion of the object perceived. Secondly, a strong and irresistible conviction and belief of its present existence. And thirdly, that this conviction and belief are immediate, and not the effect of reasoning. (EIPM, II, V. 111-112)

Perception is an entirely independent cognitive process from sensation, although as it happens, when we sense we also perceive (Heyer and Mausfeld, 2002, p. 14). In the April, 2008 Washington Post article*, When Young Teachers Go Wild on the Web",* many of the teachers interviewed had no idea that other people beside their 'friends' could see what they had posted. Some of them had inappropriate postings on their accounts. In one school system, the superintendent asks if they have an account. If the response is yes, he pulls it up at that moment. Shipira (2008), described it as "revealing a sense of humor that can be overtly sarcastic or unintentionally unprofessional -- or both."(p.1)

Figure 2, below, shows how school personnel, parents, and students use social media in their lives. Obviously, social media is alive and well within all stakeholders in education. The perception is new when it comes to technology and social networking and the literature pool is shallow.
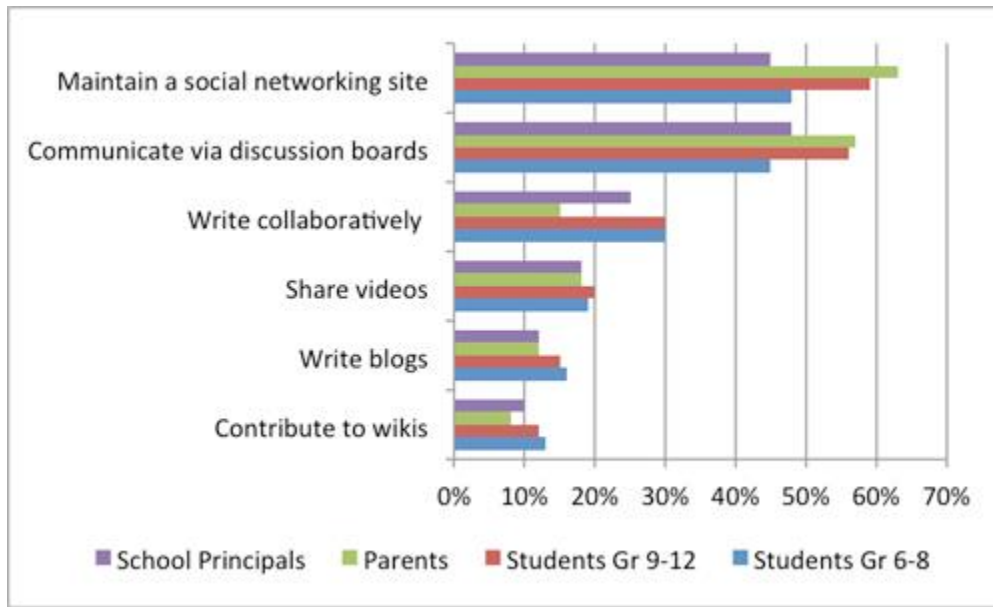
Figure 2. How are you using social media tools for your personal interests?

Summary

With this advancement in communication, the rules have changed. The world continues to change. We need to change along with it. We must find ways to inform people on a social networking couth. According to social researcher George Barna, today's teens have what he calls [tribes.] These are groups with fairly changeable membership, where new people can integrate into the group more readily. There is less hierarchy and more diversity than in the past. Because of this, tribes tend to do things together, and when a tribe disbands, the members often stop doing the activity. The activities can be good things, such as going to a youth group or playing paintball, or negative things such as using drugs or drag racing. Children and teens gauge their sense of right and wrong, good and bad, from their community of peers. Despite the pervasive influence of the media, they form their views of the world from their unique community (Verhaagen, 2005). They must remember everything put on social media

lives on forever. It can be deleted, but somewhere there is a backup of it that can be

found. Social Media policies at schools and districts vary widely. Students and adults

alike sometimes struggle with what is appropriate in the social networking world.

Parents don't always know what is going in the 'life' of their child in the social

networking scene. It is imperative that we better understand this new way of

communication in order to police it properly for all of those involved.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this exploratory study is to investigate the acceptable use of social media among teachers, parents, and students and to determine whether there is a perception to the limits of the use in this world of social networking, specifically, *Facebook* and email.

This chapter provides the description of the research design and methodology used to explore the study into the acceptance of social networking among teachers, students and parents. Qualitative research tries to describe in as much detail as possible how events have evolved to the current state. Qualitative research has primarily been a method to give meaning to the experiences in which individuals have participated (Gay, 1996; Polkinghorne, 1991). Furthermore, I will look at the perceptions of the subjects to determine what they consider to be the limit of what is acceptable.

Qualitative interpretation refers to "the data collection of respondents' experiences, attitudes, and knowledge of a certain phenomenon via researcher enquiry through interviews, observations, diaries, journals and other forms of non-numeric data analysis" (Creswell, 2003, p. 17). Qualitative analysis was used to determine the participants' perceptions of the acceptable use of social networking. The three most common techniques used are interview, observation, and document analysis (Merriam, 1998). For this qualitative study the researcher will conduct one-on-one interviews with participants.

Qualitative research allows the researcher to "listen to the views of participants" and obtain 'a detailed understanding of the phenomenon' (Creswell, 2008, p.51).

The scope of this study involved teachers, students, and parents from a single middle school in Northeast Tennessee. These three generations of people were selected to inform the study because the students are of age where social networking is an important medium for sharing information with others. Consequently, the parents and teachers of the students were deemed an important component of this study because of their daily interaction with the students.

I used interviews with individuals to gather data for my study (See Appendix A). Teachers will come from a variety of years of service to see if there was a generational aspect that played into this as well. I chose individual interviews to ensure that confidentiality was upheld by allowing the interviewee to be alone with me; I believed that students would be more apt to talk to me if they felt comfortable.

I conducted interviews wherever it was possible. Most interviews took place at school in the individual school building; however, I realized that I needed to meet some teachers, parents, and teachers on neutral ground as well.

These interviews took place from February 2015-April 2015. In understanding, "qualitative samples for a single study involving individual interviews only often lie under 50" (Ritchie, 206, p. 84), larger than that become difficult to manage, I interviewed 10 teachers, 10 parents, and 10 students for a total of thirty participants. I analyzed the interviews from these teachers, parents, and students from a single middle school in upper Northeast Tennessee. I solicited participation through a mass email sent to teachers and pick students and parents representative of a sample based on gender

and family socio-economic level from the school population. In knowing that my school children population is under the age of 16, I also gained consent from parents.

The purpose of this chapter was to identify the population, define the gathering instruments, explain the interview process, and to discuss the procedures for the analysis of the data that will be obtained.

Data Collection

Role of the Researcher

One of the characteristics in qualitative research is "the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (Merriam, 1998, p. 7). I was the only data collector in this study. I conducted the interviews, transcribed, coded accordingly, and analyzed. I was careful in using discretion as to respect the opinions and perceptions of the participants. Being a teacher at the school in which I conducted research, I was familiar with the teachers and most of the students. "The primary instrument in qualitative research is human beings… the philosophical assumptions underlying this type of research is that reality is not an objective entity; rather, there are multiple interpretations of reality" (Merriam, 1998, p.22). Therefore, the final product of this study was my interpretation of the participants'views filtered through my own constructs. As a researcher, you must be a good listener and communicator.   A researcher must be "adaptable and work with whatever situation they find" (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p. 63) "A good communicator empathizes with participants, establishes rapport, asks good questions, and listens intently" (Merriam, 1998, p.23). I employed the skills developed while teaching students to assist me in being a good communicator.

Participants

The participants consisted of 10 teachers, 10 students, and 10 parents from a single middle school in a single school district.

The purpose of the interviews was to gather perceptions of what is deemed the limit with Social Networking. The method of data collection was personal interviews.

I chose the interviewees based on afore mentioned criteria. I gained informed consent (See appendix B) for these subjects. Upon gaining consent, I interviewed the subjects on a one-on-one basis.

The interviews were organized to allow each subject to verbalize their thoughts on what is acceptable concerning Social Networking mediums such as *Facebook*, and e-mail. (See Appendix A)

I recorded and transcribed the interview and gave it back to the subject to check and make changes where necessary. This allowed for the words to be interpreted correctly by me.

Ethical Protocol

Before beginning the study the following procedures were conducted. Authorization from the East Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board (ETSU-IRB) was obtained. Permission to conduct the study was sought and obtained from the director of schools, the administrator of the middle school, and the participants and the student participants' parents. Assurance was given to all, that names would remain anonymous. Codes were used to conceal identities. After being selected, participants read and signed consent forms. Subjects were told that their participation was voluntary and that they may withdraw if they so choose. Interviews were

conducted one-on-one with me. When the study was completed, and before it was be

published, subjects were offered a copy. All transcripts and recordings will be kept

securely in a locked filing cabinet in my home for a 5 year period and then will be

destroyed.

Data Analysis

The data collected was hand coded from transcripts. This was done in a timely

manner to keep the process from becoming overwhelming throughout the collection.

"The process of data analysis involves making sense out of the text and image data"

(Creswell, 2003, p.190). In using this process, themes started to evolve that will answer

the research questions posed. I hand coded and analyzed the data collected

throughout the data collection phase of the study. Merriam (1998) stated, "Data that

have been analyzed while being collected are both parsimonious and illuminating" (p.

162). In that, I will continue to analyze the data collected immediately following each

interview before moving on to the next interview. I hand coded the transcripts of the

interview of each participant.   After I collected the first interview, I looked at reoccurring

themes within the following interviews. This comparison informed the next data

collected, and so on. "The process of data analysis involves making sense out of the

text and image data"(Creswell, 2003, p. 190). By employing this format I began to see

tentative themes and categories that answered my research questions.

Biases

Biases on the topic that could impact the study included a view that students that

are under 13 years of age should not be on *Facebook*. Notions that teachers should not

be 'friends', on social media, with students may also affect the study. Opinions vary

what is deemed acceptable on *Facebook.* "There are multiple interpretations of reality" (Merriam, 1998, p. 22). With the social media aspect, what is real and what is not, takes on a whole other definition with some. Due to this, sensitivity to viewpoints about this topic will be needed within this research construct. Therefore, the final product of this study sought to interpret the subjects' views as I will filter through them.

Any study that is conducted in an ethical manner relies on the validity and the reliability of the findings. In order to ensure this, I must have a careful design.

The interviews were conducted. Participants conducted member checks of their interviews and make corrections if needed. The use of a tape recorder will be used as well as having participants check their data for accuracy. (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) Anonymity and confidentiality are important to any study. Anonymity "may be compromised if participation is arranged by a third party" (Ritchie, 2003, p. 67). Confidentiality is avoiding putting the comments to a specific name. All tapes and transcripts will be labeled in such a way that does not comprise either. All interviews will be coded as well. According to Patton, (2002 p. 463), "developing some manageable classification or coding scheme is the first step of analysis. Without this there is confusion and chaos." In this realm, I analyzed the core content of the interviews while determining what will be significant to the study and keeping anonymity.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), obtaining reliability in results can be accomplished by conducting interviews in a consistent manner. These interviews were conducted in person and the tone and language was kept as similar as possible in all interviews. The recordings/transcripts were listened to various times to listen for

correct wording by the subject. Any information that is unclear was verified with the subject participating in the study.

<center>*Delimitations and Limitations*</center>

Although social networking is a way of life for many in today's society, the types of social networking that are appropriate for different age groups differs. The perception of what should be allowed versus what should not be allowed becomes a variable.

Delimitations are those factors that can be controlled by me. There are a few delimitations in this study. The data was collected in one single middle school in one district. This school was contained in one Northeast Tennessee School District.

Limitations are those factors that cannot be controlled by me. A limitation found in this study was the fact that not all students have access to a computer due to socio-economic status and therefore do not access social networking avenues.

  Bias can be considered one of these limitations. Biases can affect the results of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) Biases on the topic that could impact the study include a view that students that are under thirteen should not be on *Facebook*. Notions that teachers should not be 'friends', on social media, with students may also affect the study. Opinions vary what is deemed acceptable on *Facebook*.

<center>*Ethical Consideration*</center>

The research was conducted in the district in which I am employed. The confidentiality of the information I was receiving is my responsibility. Alias names were given to participants to insure their anonymity. The identities of these subjects were in my control. This allowed me to gain their confidence and insured that their responses

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were not skewed. They should feel comfortable to express their opinions openly and help the study to uphold its validity and reliability in the findings.

Summary

The analysis of qualitative data can range from organizing a narrative description of the phenomenon, to constructing categories or themes that cut across the data, to building theory (Merriam, 1998, p. 196). In delving into the world of social networking to see what people felt were the limits for teachers, students, and parents, I used interviews, hand coding and common themes to answer the questions linked to this concept. I employed ethical protocols using the guidelines and standards of the ETSU-IRB. The interviews were conducted by me to 10 students, 10 teachers, and 10 parents in a single school in a single district.

These interviews were audiotaped then transcribed. The analysis of the data will take place through coding the information. This will also allow for similarities and differences to be determined.

This study will be significant in that it will give an in depth look into what it deemed ethical among teachers, students, and parents when it comes to social networking in a middle school setting. It may also serve as an important tool to others who wish to delve into this topic as it becomes more prevalent in society.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this exploratory study is to investigate the perception of acceptable use of social media among teachers, parents, and students and to determine whether there is a perception to the limits of the use in this world of social networking, specifically, *Facebook* and email that could emerge based on generational differences.

Findings of this qualitative study were gathered through the process of individual interviews with ten students, ten parents, and ten teachers from a middle school in east Tennessee. Data about the Social Networking and the perceptions of acceptable usage was gathered and analyzed. Research questions used to guide this study included:

1. (Teachers, Students, Parents) How should schools use social networking?

2. (Teachers, Students, Parents) What types of social networking would you prefer to be used in schools?

3. (Teachers, Students, Parents) When is social networking between teachers and students acceptable?

4. (Teachers, Students, Parents) When is social networking between parents and teachers acceptable?

5. (Teachers, Students, Parents) What types of social networking do students, parents, teachers prefer?

6. (Teachers, Students, Parents) Why do you prefer the above social

networking over the other?

7. (Teachers, Students, Parents) What are the parts of social networking that you are concerned about?

8. (Teachers, Parents) How involved are you with your student when it comes to social networking? (Students) How involved is your parent when it comes to social networking?

9. (Teachers, Students, Parents) How often do you find yourself involved with social networking with teachers, students, or parents per week? In what way?

10. (Teachers, Students, Parents) What types of social networking do you find acceptable among teachers, students and parents?

Data of this qualitative study were gathered through the process of random samplings, and analyzed. The data were coded and analyzed to see what themes emerged from the open ended questions. Participants were given a pseudonym and their real names were not included to protect their identity. Participant pseudonyms are listed in tables after each subsection of students, parents, and teachers.

Ethical issues were considered as was the inclusion of human subjects. These considerations were met and approved by the East Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board. These interviews were conducted at the school studied in the spring of 2015. The participants were given a written description of the study and asked to sign an informed consent form and the assent form when needed. The participants were reminded that participation in the research was voluntary. Each of the

thirty participants understood the use the interview process and each of the twenty adult

participants provided informed consent. Those participants that were under the age of

eighteen, provided parental permission consent and child assent and confidentiality was

assured and the real names of the research participants were never divulged in any of

the data. Each interview lasted about 30 to 60 minutes. A digital recording of each

interview was made and transcribed. Each participant received a copy of his or her

transcript to verify validity. The researcher examined the perceptions of what was

perceived as appropriate in the use of social media among, students, parents and

teachers.

Results

The personal interviews told the story of how students, parents and teachers use

social media in very different ways and have different views of what one would perceive

to be acceptable. Through careful examination and hand coding of the data, themes

emerged related to what students, parents and teachers perceived to be acceptable use

of social networking among the three groups. These themes were consistent with what

was stated in Chapter 2, Generation Xers also use email but include Instant Messaging

(IM) and mobile phones. In their world, what a person is, what he looks like, and

whether or not he succeeds depend less on what a person is inside than on how he

behaves" (Strauss & Howe, p. 322). Generation Y prefers to text or use cell phones or

IM (Entrepreneur Magazine, 2009). They were using computers by the time they were

learning to read (Gravett & Throckmorton, p. 45) I found that there was some

generational correlation to the answers that were given to the questions asked.

Students

Students are considered the "Generation Z" population in this study. They have

electronics in hand at all times. The 10 students interviewed had similar views in what

was acceptable to them. It is a sign of the times to say that they all felt things were

acceptable, if they were able to have access to. These 10 students ranged from age 10

to 12. Five of these students were female and five were male. One student was

Hispanic, one was African American, and the rest were Caucasian. They came from all

socio-economic status evidenced by the neighborhoods of the city they live in.

Table 1. *Participants in the Study: Students*

Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age
Kasey	F	10
Gunnar	M	12
Oscar	M	11
Doug	M	10
Kyle	M	11
Lucy	F	12
Emily	F	11
Maggie	F	12
Stella	F	10
Benjamin	M	11

Parents

The parents of this study fit in two different categories because of the family

make-up being different for many. Some guardians are younger than others as some

are family members who have taken on the role of parent. Due to this, some of the

parents fit into, according to Strauss and Howe (1991), the Generation X (1961-1981)

population and some into the Generation Y (1982-2000) population. Their means of

communication differs from one to another and even more differently than the child they

are raising. The ten parents that were chosen were a mixture of male and female.

Eight of the parents are female and two are male. One parent is Hispanic, one is

American Indian, and the other eight are Caucasian and vary in age from 33 to 50

years. The parents, randomly chosen, are all lower to middle, middle class parents.

Two are divorced and one is raising a grandchild.

Table 2. *Participants in the Study: Parents*

Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age
Mr. Clark	M	50
Mrs. Yard	F	43
Mrs. Gift	F	48
Mrs. Gimbles	F	44
Mrs. Pool	F	45
Mrs. Bubba	F	33
Mrs. Dance	F	40
Mrs.Smith	F	48
Mrs. Cobb	F	37
Mr. Daniels	M	36

Teachers

The teachers in this study fit into various categories. The teachers range in age

from 24 to 65, which according to Strauss and Howe (1991), groups these teachers into

three groups of generation: Baby Boomer (1943-1960), Generation X or 13th generation

(1961-1981), and Generation Y or Millennials (1982-2000). The 10 teachers

interviewed were not just classroom teachers. Two are special area teachers, one is a

counselor, and the remaining seven are classroom teachers of a variety of contents. Of

these teachers, one is African American, one is Hispanic, and the rest are Caucasian.

Two of the teachers are male and the remaining eight are female. Teacher's years of

experience range from their second year of teaching to their twenty-ninth year of

teaching.

Table 3. *Participants in the Study: Teachers*

Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age
Lulu	F	30
Corrine	F	24
Jackson	M	32
Kate	F	46
Erin	F	27
Alicia	F	27
Dadilous	M	31
Kiki	F	30
Coco	F	65
Amelia	F	44

Themes

Analysis of interview transcripts from 10 students, 10 parents, and 10 teachers, indicated various themes about social networking usage. These themes were: (a)types of social networking preferred and reason (b) relationships and acceptable usage, (c) uncertainty of safety of social networking, and (d) the positives in being able to communicate. These themes seemed to be reoccurring based on the age group of those being interviewed. Some of these themes seem to be generational items based on what is important to people at different stages in life.

Types of Social Networking Preferred and Reason

The first theme that occurred was what type of social networking was preferred in schools and elsewhere. Students seemed to be looking at things that would center on them and their needs at this time in their lives. The types of sites they felt were needed were Instagram and sites that would help in providing help with homework. Kasey, a student, discussed that websites are good to use if they are updated. While Lucy, also a student, said:

Schools should use Instagram to post pictures of students and homework boards. With Instagram, you can make your site pretty and your page can look how you want it to.

Kyle, a male student, thought that Twitter would be best for everyone to use so that everyone can just talk or tweet a picture and show your work to learn in a fun way. This same student stated: "when you are talking about school with the whole class or a private tweet you can just send one on one if a kid is uncomfortable with saying they don't understand in the front of the whole class. While other students felt that emailing, texting and Facebook would be appropriate and preferred. Gunnar, thought that schools should be able to use social networking only when needed, such as help with assignments or contacting someone. It seemed that male students didn't see the bullying aspect of social networking as much as female students did. This may be why the answers between female and male students were so different in comparing the pros and cons of the preferred types of social networking.

Parents and teachers were divided somewhat in what they preferred with social networking, but agreed that that it needed to be used for communication. Parents also saw the need for homework help. Parents felt that Facebook should be utilized to communicate about school related issues if it was only visible by those involved, but they agreed that they enjoyed the PTA Face Book sites to be made aware of what was happening. Mrs. Gimbles, a parent, discusses how things should be appropriate in saying:

> It should be used as a means to communicate between school officials, in a professional manner. The usage should be strictly adhering to the well-being of the student, notifications of changes to the school schedule and to promote school functions for student and parent involvement.

Other parents felt that texting, emailing, blogging, was appropriate and a preferred method of informing students and parents of events or homework help that might be needed. Parents believed that cell phones were with students and parents regularly that could allow messages to come in quickly when in the form of a text.

Mrs. Gift, a parent, stated with safety in mind for students. "I think texting, email, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and other social media sites are acceptable in any way that professionally benefits the teacher, student, and parent. Creativity in the use of social media can be an excellent tool for parents to stay informed, get feedback when needed, supplement their child's learning skills, etc." She finished the answer to this question with: "Social media is as responsible as the user."

Mrs. Pool discussed preferences along with the urgency in which messages might be needed.

> I prefer text messaging for things I need to know immediately because I do not always have access to email or Facebook during the day. I prefer Facebook for the general announcements because it is very easy to set up a group page and only include those people that need to be included. I think private classroom group pages would also be a good place to post any pictures of field trips or fun activities the students are doing at school.

Mrs. Gimbles mimicked this sentiment in stating that she works during school hours and that email is the easiest way to reach her. Though she also said that texting is faster and allows more freedom of usability, and also states that messages can be misunderstood in these manners as well.

Teachers had similar preferences when it came to students and parents and giving and receiving information as it was possible due to other duties in their profession. As Corrine discussed in her interview:

Teachers prefer something that is quick to update and easily accessible. Things like email and a blog where things can be updated as needed, but not necessarily every day. I also believe Twitter could be used and liked by teachers, parents, and students, but I personally haven't used it.

Jackson, a teacher, saw the need for schools to use more social networking services because of the wider availability of technology in today's society. He stated:

For the most part, schools tend to only use their rarely-updated website as communicating with parents. However, now the trend is for teachers to also have a "class/team" website that can be better suited to the needs of the teacher, student, and parents. Class websites, when updated regularly, can be used to inform parents of important school events, test, lessons, etc. Lesson resources, worksheets, linked websites, games, and activities can be put on websites to help students and parents with homework, projects, studying for test, etc.

However, I do believe schools can do much more in this area!

Most parents, teachers, and students are on various social media sites/services that could be used to better engage all stakeholders. In a time where our society expects instantaneous feedback and communication, I feel that schools are lagging behind.

Alicia, another teacher, preferred teacher friendly sites and states:

I prefer PlanetK8 as it's safe, reliable, and involves parents. PlanetK-8 is user friendly and only accessible to invited viewers. The owner has control over all discussions, comments, and users.

Coco, a non-traditional classroom teacher and one that is part of the Baby Boomer generation spoke true to her generational tie in saying: "It is simply easier for me and I already use it (Facebook) so I don't have to spend time figuring out another site. I am not a regular classroom teacher, and therefore, am not as tech savvy as many of my colleagues. I am older than most."

Relationships and Acceptable Usage

Students stated that communicating through the use of social networking was only acceptable between parents and teachers, but not during school hours and only if it had to do with the students' needs or grades. Oscar thought that it(social networking) is good to use this to inform him of things. Students did not feel comfortable having teachers contact them directly and teachers felt the same way about students. Gunnar, a student, affirmed his beliefs saying: "If you need help with an assignment or project, contacting teachers via social media is acceptable. But, just to say hi or talk without any purpose is not acceptable." Kasey and Doug, both students, discussed that it is best to attach your email and send it to your teacher to use and that social networking between teachers and students is acceptable when the student is at home and needs help

As Alicia (teacher) stated, "It is not acceptable in all situations. There might be three parents who are linked to me on social networks, but never when I am currently working with their student. The only exception would be co-workers kids." Teachers didn't feel comfortable having contact with students in this manner. Jackson, a teacher,conveyed in his interview:

> I believe that engaging students in social networking is tricky, but can be used successfully when done strategically. I do not believe it is ever acceptable to allow students to engage teachers on social sites such as Facebook, especially while they are currently enrolled in a teacher's class(es). However, that being said, I do believe that teachers can engage their students on sites such as Facebook. I have worked with colleagues who have created Facebook profiles that are specifically for their students. The amount of personal information on those specific profiles is limited, and all interactions with these students are done publicly. In other words, these school-specific profiles are kept open to the public. The teacher's personal profile/Facebook page is kept private only to friends.

I do believe that teachers are finding ways to engage students through social media in ways that are strictly academic. Teachers use twitter to announce assignments, projects, exciting news media that is relevant to his/her class, etc. In those ways, I believe it is acceptable to use social networking.

Once students are no longer enrolled in my classes, I will lighten on my "no students on Facebook" policy. However, I have a very strict rule on that front. I always make parents aware that his/her child is wanting to engage on social media. Also, I don't private message with anyone under the age of 18.

I have seen teachers who post things on social media that they would never say/do in the classroom. In today's society, that is very dangerous for the teacher. As teachers we are seen as public figures in a manner of speaking. We have to be extremely careful with what we put out in social media. Especially with students who are eager to "look you up" and see what is "going on." I always have that in the back of my head whenever I post something on social media.

Mrs. Gimbles said she thought "it is acceptable if it clearly pertains to the student's well-being." Friendships between teacher and parent should always be secondary to the relationship between student and teacher. Mrs. Bubba, a parent, reiterated this sentiment in saying, "I only believe in social networking between teachers and students when parents are involved." This is another reoccurring theme with parents and teachers alike. Amelia, a teacher, stated the following when it came to the acceptability question;

Social networking between teachers and students is acceptable when used for educational purposes. Discussions should be content based and not involve personal topics. Social networking between parents and teachers is acceptable when the discussion is based on the student's growth and performance. Nothing should be discussed in relation to personal topics/feelings.

Teachers, as a whole did not feel like it was acceptable to "friend" a student. For some this came along with unless the parent was a teacher colleague. Some

offered names of those types of social networking sites they felt appropriate such as Edmondo, Planet K-8 and Remind, which allow parents to be involved as well as not allowing responses to be given.   Coco, a teacher, revealed, "I think it(social networking) should be used for academics and social 'lessons' but not as a pure social interaction between students and teachers, who should and do have private lives. Many teachers set up separate sites from their personal ones, a great idea, in my opinion. If I interact with a student socially, it is after they have left our school and are older."

Although students, teachers and parents, did not think that Facebook should be used to communicate with each other, they agreed that it, along with Instagram, and texting were the three types of social networking most used. This seemed to be because of the user friendliness of it and the fact that you could make it look the way you wanted it to. You could make them aesthetically pleasing to look at. Students felt like this was an important aspect. Lucy, a student, said "You can make your page pretty Instagram". This could be seen as something that could be construed as a generational pattern for Generation Z, in that they are always looking at how thing look outwardly to others.

Teachers thought that schools were being creative with the use Social Networking across the country, but that the schools here have not been brought in to this realm of teaching. Some teachers mentioned apps that are used to help students in the classroom, but limited usage to apps that are not encouraging communication among teachers, students, and parents. Kiki, a teacher, said that she uses apps and

social networking only for educational purposes. "Things like Google Earth to show different geographic features, or apps that show the night sky when dealing with constellations are helpful," discussed Erin, a teacher, in her interview. All 10 teachers did say that they have gotten in the past or continue to get 'friend requests' by students. These requests, by most, are declined due to the perception that this is not appropriate. Kate, a teacher, said this concerning this subject:

> I don't use social networking with the students I have presently. I only use Facebook for social networking, and I decline friend requests from students. I have become "friends" on Facebook with some former students once leave our school and enter high school, but only if they friend request me. I still am careful about which students I accept as friends. I think teachers need to be careful about social networking with students mainly because of security reasons. I also think that things put on Facebook sometimes get misinterpreted.

Uncertainty of Safety of Social Networking

It was clear that all groups saw some sort of threat when it came to social networking site. When Alicia, a teacher, was questioned about 'friending' she was clear about the fact that things can get you in trouble on these types of sites. She stated:

> I allow students to follow me on Instagram. However, everything I post on these is something that I would allow anyone to see. The great thing about Instagram is that I can't see what my students are posting on their accounts. It does not put me in situations where I am obligated to take action. I have two former students who are FB friends, but I work with their parents. Once again, I do not post anything that would get me in trouble.

Mrs. Smith, a parent, said it this way, "Facebook-it is old people friendly". This could be why students tend to lean toward Instagram. Parents are aware of this want for children and in some cases use it to police friendships as is the case with Mrs. Pool as stated:

As a parent, I prefer Facebook. But that is the only social networking site I use. I stalk my son's Instagram account. He prefers Instagram but that is the only one he has. The only reason we let him get an account was to stalk the other kids too (I'm not joking)! We wanted to see what his friends and classmates were posting.

This statement from Mrs. Pool also ties in the theme from above with teachers; that there can be trouble involved when it comes to Social Networking. This parent is using it to help dig into other student's personal lives to make sure that it is someone she wants her child or doesn't want her child to hang with. In today's world, this is common. Social Networking makes it easier for people to spy on each other. Coco, a teacher had a great deal to say about this subject. She felt strongly about the dangers and stated:

> No matter how much we speak with students about the dangers lurking, most seem oblivious and unafraid of posting too much info or pictures. I recently saw an NBC news report on some college kids being vulnerable and gullible to some dangerous predators with an experiment the news media conducted. For younger kids, two problems stand out to me. One is that many parents don't feel they have the right to look at their children's social media (which I find ridiculous), and then some parents don't even know or care about what their kids are doing online. Some may not know how to use sites themselves. The second problem is that argument that some are so connected to their phones, tablets, etc. that they are missing out on social interaction of the old –fashioned type such as conversation. I am one of those who observes this when we are out at restaurants, that whole tables of kids of all ages are all on their phones posting pics, etc. and no one is even talking to anyone else .Teachers can role model and teach how to use sites correctly and in a positive way. Kids today have access to so much information, yet they do not always have the maturity and discernment to use it. I do feel that instruction should also come in other forms, not just technology.

Dadilous, also a teacher was concerned about privacy and discussed this in his response. "Privacy/identify theft, online school threats, social scams, Employee misbehavior, sexual predators, surveillance, online victimization, unintentional

fame(good/bad) are all things that I am concerned with regarding social networking with its use in schools and life in general."

Kiki, a teacher, worries about people commenting on posts made by the school "A lot of times, those comments get out of hand, she stated, "also, if an administrator is not in charge of posting for the school someone could use the site inappropriately." Mrs. Smith, a parent had a similar fear and voiced that she felt that it is dangerous because of "fake" pages tag can be created and young people not knowing that the person isn't who they say they are. She concluded that there is accountability for who creates a page.

Benjamin, a student, who said that his parents are always checking his phone and have access to his passwords, claims, "anyone can see into your personal life and the wrong person could get hold of you private information." Again the theme of trouble is interwoven.

Teachers also saw that this new world of social networking had added to the school yard bully. We now have a term of cyberbullying that often carries over into school. A cyberbully is one that with the use of cell phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass, threaten, or intimidate someone. Safety was a concern in all three groups.

Jackson, a veteran teacher, though tech savvy, commented:

> First, privacy is a concern. Using social networking sites has become very commonplace in our society. Because of it, there is a danger for teachers. It is my belief that teachers have always been held to a high set of ethical standards. There is a danger for teachers who post almost anything on these social networking sites.

> I cannot count the number of students and parents who have mentioned "looking me up" on Facebook. Due to my role within the Association, I keep most of my

Facebook privacy low so that others can see what is posted. I am constantly very careful about what I post or saw on these social sites. Anything put out there will be forever out there, and I don't want something coming back to bite me in the butt later.

I have witnessed a number of teachers posting status updates, pictures, etc that have made me cringe. I think teachers need to be extremely careful there.

Lulu, a teacher, is concerned about how quickly pictures or posts can go viral and used against someone in a harmful way. Kate, also a teacher, shared some similar fear when she stated:

I am concerned about cyber bullying, because it often continues at school. Honestly I am afraid that if not careful, some parents and/or students could try to use something they see on a teacher's social networking as harmful or inappropriate. I don't have anything on my Facebook that I want to hide, but I think as a professional, you need to have some boundaries. Your students don't need to know everything about you.

Parents looked at things from a personal and a parental perspective. Mrs. Cobb stated her concern as:

The parts of social networking that concern me are how open and accessible some of them are. Anyone can get on some of them and see anything that has been posted. Also, some social networking, such as street chat and ask.com, are anonymous. Anyone can post anything without having to be held accountable. Very harmful things can be posted about students by other students without anyone ever knowing who posted it. Another social networking that concerns me is the snapchat. Students send pictures to each other, and after a few seconds the picture disappears. There is no way to monitor what pictures are sent or received.

Another concern is that messages can be sent through any type of social media in the heat of the moment. If someone is upset or angry, they can send a message without time to cool down or think it through. This can hurt when this might not be the intent and once the word is out you can't take it back.

This concern was evident in many responses. Mrs. Bubba had an interesting twist to her response. She was very insightful in her thoughts about what students might think in her response.

> I think comments can be taken out of context. If you accept parents or students as "friends" on FB or any other social networking, they can see what goes on in your personal life. If a teacher posted a picture or comment that was inappropriate or wasn't "professional", what kind of example is that setting for our students? I've heard too many comments about high school teachers who may just be trying to be friendly with students, but students thought it was more…again what is being perceived by others may not be what the teacher intended. Do students start to see them more as a friend and less of a role model?

As students, Kasey and Gunnar were concerned about bullying by other people through all of the social networking sites especially Twitter and Snapchat because of the anonymity. They also were fearful of losing personal skills of communicating face to face.

The Positives in Being Able to Communicate

Through it all, social networking, despite the way it was perceived by each group, developed into a theme that was positive. Each group saw a need for communication. Though what was considered by each generational group to be 'best' based on what each generation was brought up with the use of social networking to get the job accomplished was seen as a positive.

Students, who are most familiar with technology and social networking, felt that communication should weave through students, parents, and teachers. Maggie discussed "kids should use social networking by talking after class and maybe for homework with the teacher and class to discuss what was learned in class that day, how to solve a problem, or memory clues to share with the class." Other students

shared the idea that it should be used to notify people of upcoming events and

cancelations as well as getting homework assignments.

Parents had similar views of how this type of communication, though not the

most comfortable to them, should be used. Mr. Clark's opinion of social networking is:

> Schools should use social networking to keep parents informed about their student's progress and activities. We have had some teachers use it with weekly newsletters to keep us informed about the class activities while other teachers never network with the parents and leave us feeling left out of their learning. The school administrators could also use it to keep parents up to date with sports, clubs and other activities taking place.

Mrs. Yard, parent, added to his ideas and was a little more specific as to when

certain types of social networking should be used. She felt that it would be great to

receive texts from teachers concerning assignments as well as having them posted on

hall websites. She felt as though schools should use texting when events are occurring

on campus (ie.Book fair, PTA meetings etc.).   Mrs. Smith, another parent, declared, "as

long as the conversation is appropriate and the posts are appropriate I don't have an

issue with it.

Jackson, a teacher, stated:

> Social networking should be used to connect parents and students with teachers, other parents, students, etc. They should be used to keep parents/students informed of events that are taking place. They should be used to inform parents of emergencies or situations that might arise on a day-to-day basis that are out of the ordinary.

> I do believe that schools should look into using social networking to help "open the doors" of our schools. I believe that by opening those proverbial doors we can help to restore trust in our teachers, administrators, and schools.

Coco, a teacher, discussed how communication with students who have moved on to college. "It has been a wonderful way for me to connect with some who moved away or to help them find me after they are in college."

Communication will always be something that is needed. As a society, we need to be able to communicate with each other in both good times and bad. Social Networking, as it has been discussed, is just a tool to use in order to communicate. For most it is used as just this, a means to communicate. For others, it is used in ways that are less desirable such as bullying, destructing others reputations, or for sexual prey. Unfortunately, there is evil in the world. There always has been. If we look at social networking for the vast majority, it is being used in positive ways.

Summary

Several themes emerged from the analysis of the perceptions students, parents and teachers have concerning Social Media and its usage. Social Networking is important to the given groups in different ways and for different reasons. Social Networking is something that all groups see as acceptable if it is used safely. For the generation that has not yet been named, the youngest, it is all about the vision and what it looks like. The parent and teachers which fall into several generational subgroups, it is all about the ease of usage.

Relationships also came through based on generations; the younger generation had no issue in using social networking to contact each other, but didn't think it was necessary for parents and teachers to be in contact with each other. Students felt that the main need for social networking was to get help and for announcements pertaining

to early dismissals, reflective of a generational theme that it is all about them. Parents and teachers felt that social networking should be used to communicate about students' needs and behaviors, both good and bad.

The safety issue for social networking was also generational in its themes. Students, who are used to having technology in hand at all times, didn't think that it was a big deal to communicate in this way, but did see issues with cyber-bullying. Parents and teachers, alike, have concerns about what is out there for students to access and how quickly things can move through the Internet.

Students, parents and teachers thought that communication should take place, as needed, in both good and bad moments. Communication, though seen differently by all generations in this study, was found to be a good thing. The way the communication was carried out through social networking was the difference for these groups. What was perceived as acceptable to one group wasn't necessarily the same for the others. These generational groups were comfortable in talking about things in addition to receiving messages about items via social networking. The avenue of social networking was what was deemed different to each.

Though social networking can open up doors that should not be open for some, all groups discussed how social networking could be used more effectively in schools, based on what they thought their needs for it were. This allowed for it to be seen in a positive way if used correctly. This information can be used in future studies on this topic as well. School systems can use this information to write new policy concerning social networking for students, parents, and teachers. It can be used to help write some

guidelines for curriculum concerning this new part of the technology classes or guidance

classes. It could also be used to help parents to understand the necessity for being

involved in their child's virtual world in cyberspace. This study helped to explore a

brand new world to many of us. It allowed for the generational views to also be

examined. As generations die off and new arrive, the perceptions will continue to

change on what might be perceived as acceptable. Communication, is something

however, that will continue to have a need. The method in which this occurs will change

as technology continues to evolve throughout the years.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Introduction

In my investigation of the perceptions of acceptable use of social media among teachers, parents, and students while determining whether there is perception to the limits of their use, I found that there were variations to what is perceived as acceptable based on responses of teachers, parents, and students. As stated in an earlier chapter, "communication is commonly defined as "a process of interaction through messages or signals among or within humans, animals, machines, or plants " (Oxford: A Dictionary of Media and Communication, 2012). We communicate to satisfy our identity, physical, practical, and social needs (Turnball, 2010). The participants, of this study, confirmed that these variations in communications could also lend themselves to a generational relationship.

With 4 out of 5 teens carrying mobile devices, according to a National survey conducted by CTIA, 9 out of the ten teens interviewed at this school carried mobile devices or have these at home to use there. There was not a difference between male or female students, the grade level or socio-economic status of the student. The one student that did not have an iPhone or equivalent said his parents felt that he was too young to have one for responsibility reasons. This is understandable with all that is available to these young children with just a push of a button. He didn't seem to mind that this was the case as he stated that he had a computer at home and at school if he

needed to do research and most of his friends didn't have an electronic devise either for the same reasons.

Discussion

The purpose of this exploratory study is to investigate the perceptions of acceptable use of social media among teachers, parents, and students and to determine whether there is a perception to the limits of the use in this world of social networking, specifically, *Facebook* and email.

Research question 1: How should schools use social networking?

Society has moved toward a technological jump. Schools are moving this way as well, trying to become paperless. Social Networking is helping to make this move. It is changing the way we communicate. As referenced in chapter two, (Strauss & Howe, 1991) examination of intergenerational changes reveal that word of mouth communication patterns used by the Silent Generation are now defunct. The common theme here was that Social Networking should be used in ways that are safe and allow for students and parents to receive information about the school. This information encompasses help on homework to communication from the teacher to the parent and the student concerning upcoming events or important announcements. It is as Prensky states, "It is clearly a different place in which our kids are growing up" (2010, p. 1). This question brought this premise Prensky speaks of to the forefront.

Research Question 2: What types of social networking would you prefer to be used in schools?

This question allowed for generational themes to emerge. The younger generations, the students, had much different views about what should be used here. It was a preference based on usage. Students were about themselves and making things look nice. This is consistent with this generation that has not yet been named. It is all about image. According to Gavett and Throckmorton (2007), the current 10-17 year olds will spend a third of their lives on the internet. For the other generations that were interviewed, parents and teachers, the view was much different. These groups were about the ease in the use of the Social Media. Gavett and Throckmorton (2007) also stated that these generations learned to be independent and to fend for themselves to survive. They didn't look for the help that the students asked for. They were more in touch with the communication aspect of Social Networking.

Research Question 3: When is social networking between teachers and students acceptable?

The common thread in this question was that social networking is only perceived as acceptable when it is related to the classroom or homework. Parents and teachers believed it should never be anything personal. Students also believed that should never be personal, even though several teachers stated that they have gotten friend requests from students that they currently have in their class. It appeared that students were more about contact about homework or things that occurred that day in class. Parents and teachers thought that it could contain homework help, but that also should include upcoming events, school dismissals and other announcements that might not make it home with students. For teachers and parents it was also a form of communication between home and school. This is consistent with the Pew Internet study, referenced in

chapter two, social media has predominately joined the lives of teens to the extent that they feel that they are involved in social media they are on-line. This activity has them involved in behavior in both positive and negative ways.

Research Question 4: When is social networking between parents and teachers acceptable?

Students were a little more liberal in their thinking with this question. They understood that parents and teachers might be friends outside of the school. Three students said it was acceptable for parents and teachers to be 'friends' on social networking. Parents felt that if the communication was about the child, it was acceptable above the 'friendship' that might also occur. One parent said she didn't think that parents should feel like that can contact a teacher 24/7. She felt like the contact should be allowed to happen but that it should be limited. Several parents felt like that communication should be encouraged between parents and teachers. One parent said that often times when students move on from elementary school to the next level, parents don't feel like they are welcome in the school, by the students or the climate, and social networking would be helpful in a situation like this to help parents feel like they know what is happening. Teachers believed that it was acceptable to communicate with parents when discussing the student belonging to that parent. Teachers understood that sometimes they might be friends with a parent outside of school. They didn't think it was acceptable to discuss the child with the parent other than an avenue such as email. This was considered a private way to discuss that child or things that took place at school. Teachers also stated they felt that it was acceptable to decline a friend request by a parent on a social networking site. One teacher even

claimed that this was tricky. She didn't think it was acceptable in all situations but could

be thought of as acceptable if it was the child of a co-worker at her school. The

information found from this question was contradicted by O'Hanlon (2007) with his

suggestion that it might be beneficial for educators to meet students where they are

comfortable: in the social networking area. Freidman discusses in *Flat World* that this is

not something that educators and members of the community are comfortable with

because it changes the classroom that has been around for hundreds of years and

subsequently what the teachers and parents are most used to, due to their ages.

Research Question 5: What types of social networking do students, parents, teachers

prefer?

This question was interesting because each group thought something different

about the other groups when it came to what they thought the other would prefer.

Students claimed that they preferred texting and emailing. For three students they used

things like Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. Parents and teachers thought that

students had preferences that geared toward Instagram and didn't name emailing or

texting as their main preference. Teachers also felt that students used Instagram the

most. Parents tended to follow their generational ties when it came to preferences.

Older parents tended to lean toward phone calls or emailing. The younger parents had

a tendency to use social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. The group

that fit into the middle of these generations had preferences that lead them toward

emails, texts and newsletters that were sent home weekly via the internet. Teachers, as

a whole, preferred things that were easy to keep updated and to access from their

standpoint as well as the other stakeholders. For teachers, this involved things like

Weebly, Planet K-8, group texts, and blogs. For three teachers they still thought that Facebook and Twitter were things that they could use to keep parents up to date. Teachers thought that parents would be more apt to use things like Twitter, Facebook, or texting. Research shown by MMS education states that educators are moving toward social networks specifically designed for them. These places that students, parents and teachers are entering within the virtual world, are as Demski, 2009, mentions the "Wild, Wild, West of Facebook or other sites that are out there right now"

Research Question 6: Why do you prefer the above social networking over the other?

Of the 10 students interviewed, six of them preferred Instagram over the other modes for several reasons. The most popular reason was for the looks of it. They also believed that it was used the most by others and that it was thought to be private. For parents, most believed that email was the best mode for them to use. One parent said that email was the easiest way to reach her, it doesn't allow for a message to be delivered with a voice tone attached. This can allow for a message to be taken the wrong way. Several other parents stated that they were getting the interaction needed through emails and texts that they didn't really see the need for schools to use other modes of Social Networking. One parent also sided with the teachers and said that teachers are busy enough as it is without having to keep a social networking site going for school use as well. Teachers saw that there were two ways to look at this; personal and public. For public use, teachers thought that blogging, emailing and texting would be best to be used. For personal use, teachers felt most comfortable with Facebook due to a larger audience and being able to determine who you could allow to see a message or picture. One teacher said she enjoyed seeing what was going on in the

lives of others that she may know but not see on a regular basis. Question 6 deals with the perception component I spoke of in chapter 2. Each person has a different opinion on what they deem appropriate. As Heyer and Mausfeld spell out it is "how the mind works". This perception varies from person to person and from generation to generation. As shown in chapter two of this study on page 41, this perception is evident in figure 2 when looking at the usages for social media tools in personal interests.

Research Question 7: What are the parts of social networking that you are concerned about?

Students, parents and teachers alike have concerns about social networking. For students, the concern was mainly revolving around modes like snapchat because they felt that they could be bullied without knowing the identity of the person. One student said that he didn't know what to really be concerned about as he didn't have access to any due to his age. One other student said that anyone could access information about them and could get into private information. Two of the students, were concerned about what they could access, not purposely, and that they can be distracted. One student had concern that this tends to be something students want to spend their time on and are not speaking with others face to face. Parents were concerned for their children. All parents spoke of the ability to bully others on these sites because the face to face aspect has been taken out. One parent specifically said she was concerned about everything concerning social networking because nothing is private. Another parent said that social media can promote bullying because it cannot be easily tracked, even by parents willing to monitor. A shared sentiment was that social media is open and accessible. According to Fletcher (2010) Facebook has changed our social DNA,

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making us more accustomed to openness. This opens up the safety concerns that were

evident throughout the responses to this particular question. This brings up the "safety

of the 'Yellow Ribbon', spoke of in chapter two, which encompasses the hidden spaces

that one thinks he/she can hide".   Parents don't appreciate that some sites are

anonymous and allow bullies to do mean things to others with no repercussions.

Students are posting things like, 'I love you so much,' on these sites and don't

understand the true meanings of things because they are just words that are typed.

This particular parents said that social media is creating a false wall for kids to hide

behind. Teacher concerns are two-fold; for their students and for themselves.

Teachers are concerned about how quickly something can go viral whether it is good or

bad. Students have access to phones that belong to them. In cases, students post

things that have happened in class that are not positive reflections of teachers or

schools. This can be taken and used out of context to get someone fired or in trouble.

Teachers, as a whole, are concerned that things can be posted by both students and

teachers that could cause others to be seen in a negative way. One teacher, said that

he has seen things that have been posted on social media sites that make him cringe,

as others don't understand the realization that the 'world' can see this and it paints a

picture of you to many that you may not even know. Teachers are also concerned that

students can create a page for you that you have no control over. This can allow a third

party to post things about you as if it is you, when in reality you may not even know it is

occurring until it is too late. This could cause a teacher to lose the job and license in the

professional that they have worked very hard to achieve. Teachers are fearful that

some parents are not monitoring what their child is doing online. This can lead to

meeting up with sexual predators or pimping themselves out. Though this seems far-fetched to us based on what our childhoods looked like, for some students this is a way of feeling accepted and they welcome this sort of attention. Counselors, in this school, do lessons on cyber-bullying to try to educated students of the negatives and positives of social networking. Most students do not recognize that in order to have an account on several sources of social media you must be 13. They don't even understand that they are lying to obtain a profile. Counselors use this to enlighten them that if they are lying to get one, how many others are lying about who they are or how old they are.

Research Question 8: (For parents and students) How involved are you with your student when it comes to social networking? (For students) How involved is your parent when it comes to social networking?

Of the 10 parents interviewed, they all reported that they were very involved with what their child does on social networking sites. Some parents held the passwords to their child's account, while others had their child's correspondence sent to their phone. Some parents claimed to follow the child on the site so that all can be seen by the parent. One parent claimed to stalk her child on the social media sites so that she not only could keep an eye on him, but also on his friends that she may not know as well. Parents that were interviewed seemed to understand the importance of monitoring their children's presence on these sites. They talked with their children concerning sexual predators and cyber-bullies. One parent reported that he child was bullied in this fashion which really caused her to be more vigilant with who was friending her child. Teachers are hesitant to use social networking with students. They tended to inform students of the dangers of social networking and how quickly things can go around that

might be true or untrue about them. Teachers were more apt to discuss things that

were acceptable for them to use with the classroom such as Wordpress, Weebly, Planet

K-8. Teachers didn't feel like they needed to open this world up as it is already readily

used among students, whether it be good, bad, or indifferent. The question for students

was a little different. For students, the question asked how much their parents were

involved with them and social networking or time on the computer. All students said

that their parents were involved in what they did on the computer. One child claimed

that he was too young to have social networking sites, but that his mom and dad were

very involved with who he texted or emailed. One child said that her parent would not

allow for children to be on sites unless they were able to monitor them or were in their

circle of 'friends'. Most children interviewed said that their parents were looking at who

they were on with constantly. Parents check things to make sure students are not doing

anything inappropriate. According to the Pew Internet and Life Project (2011), "more

than half (54%) of parents say they use parental controls or other means of filtering or

monitoring their child's computer based online activites."

Research Question 9: How often do you find yourself involved with social networking

with teachers, students, or parents per week? In what way?

Students that were interviewed said that if they are not at school they are on social

networking often. They are texting friends, posting pictures or updating profiles. They

did not mention contacting teachers with this and only two claimed they looked at what

his/her parent had posted or that they were in contact with other family members.

Parents had a different view about this. Parents were really on social networking with

family and teachers. Some parents used social media on a daily basis, while some

claim to only be on every couple of months or so. Three parents discussed looking at

school websites to check on children and progress. Some parents stated that they

received emails of texts from teachers on a daily or weekly basis. Teachers were more

likely to use social media among each other. Teachers claimed that they often would

'follow' other teachers to see what they might be doing inside their classroom.

Teachers did not feel like they should be in contact with students via social media. This

feeling from the teachers questioned is consistent with the research found by Shapira

(2008), that discusses that states are handing out disciplinary actions to teachers for in

appropriate comments on Web sites. Communication with students was through

school-based websites, or through parents with texting and emailing. Most teachers

were on social media on a daily basis to check with family and other friends not

students.

Research Question 10: What types of social networking do you find acceptable among

teachers, students and parents?

Students all had similar answers with this question. They all felt that texting and

emailing was best. A few of the students said that they also felt that it was acceptable

to check the school site that was updated by the teacher in order to find our information

concerning homework, or school activities. Parents felt, for most, that communication

should take place between parents and teachers. Parents liked that Facebook was

used to keep parents involved in what was happening at school. Parents believed that

they should be involved in the child's lives and that this should lend itself to the parent

being in contact with the teacher. One parent stated that Social Media is as responsible

as the user. This was something that was others spoke of though not saying it

verbatim. Parents felt that they were the ones who should have the responsibility to contact the teacher. Parents need to be involved with schools and social media is a way to stay connected. Parents, as a whole, did not think that is was acceptable for teachers and parents to be connected through sites like Face Book or Instagram. Teachers had several points of view on this question. One teacher stated this frustration in her answer, "I had a hard time with this question. My definition of acceptable might be totally different than someone else. I see social networking beneficial for school systems if it can create a positive culture and climate within a learning community. With a diverse population, it can be very hard to deem what is acceptable and what it not if there aren't any parameters, guidelines, and restrictions to the acceptable use of social networking amount teachers, students, and parents." Some teachers felt that it was acceptable for them to use sites like Instagram or Facebook because of the ease of use. Others felt that systems needed to put guidelines in place for this sort of communication. One teacher stated that if teachers are on a team, then they should respond as a team. Another discussed that Instagram is the most acceptable, but that districts should not start encouraging this type of communication unless they are going to hold teachers to standards. As Macfarlane (2007) discussed in her article, "the widespread use of internet exploration and chat rooms has stretched the concept of the schoolhouse..." (p.1). Unfortunately this stretching of this concept of the schoolhouse does not also stretch the meaning of common sense. Common sense is not always common is a recurrent theme that was spoken in all responses in one way or another.

Conclusions

The purpose of this exploratory study is to investigate the perception of acceptable use of social media among teachers, parents, and students and to determine whether there is a perception to the limits of the use in this world of social networking, specifically, *Facebook* and email that could emerge based on generational differences. Through the course of the study, I interviewed 30 individuals from various walks of life and generations. These generations varied from the Baby Boomer to Generation ? (Strauss & Howe,1991). This involved four of the five generations spoken about in Chapter 2. The thirty participants came from three different subgroups: teachers, parents and students. All subgroups contained ten subjects. There were common themes that were woven throughout the study. These themes were as follows:

- Types of social networking preferred and reason

- Relationships and acceptable usage

- Uncertainty of safety of social networking

- The positives in being able to communicate.

The findings of this study showed that these common themes also were interwoven through generational views. Consistent with research on generations, the younger generational groups were less likely to see harm with using social media because of their use of technology at an early age compared with the Baby Boomers who were used to only having a television growing up. The differences in technological advances in these generations made the biggest difference in the view point of social media and perceptions of what was appropriate with in this realm.

Recommendations for Further Research

As technology use continues to grow with generations, both new and old, this study lends itself to future research to see the changes that have evolved in the schools. The perceptions will likely change as the use of technology continues to grow within these generations and as new come in and old die off. The older generations will be the ones that see the most changes in what is perceived as acceptable. These older generations have the largest list of things that have changed within their lifespans. They have gone from getting news from newspapers, radios and televisions to having it at the touch of a finger. They have had rotary phones, bag phones, and now cells phones that are held in pockets. The newer generations are most accustomed to these types of sites that are in question as well as their usage. It will be interesting to see how schools use these sites in the future and if all schools start having policies put in place for educators, parents, and students. People will continue to have a need to communicate with each other. This has not changes through the years. The sources in which they use for communication have. As a society, it appears that we have gone from face time to Facebook. The perceptions of this form of communication are what have changed. In future research, this will become more evident as the growth in the technology field continues. Recommendations for further study include looking at a similar study but in other situations such as urban setting, elementary or high school settings. A look at cyber-bullying and the negative effects of this concept should also be studied further.

Chapter Summary

All people, regardless of the ethnicity or generation must communicate. As Turnball (2010) states, "we communicate to satisfy our identity, physical, practical, and social needs." We continue to see the need for communication; however the way that we communicate has changed. We have gone from Baby Boomers preferring communication face-to-face, phones, or via email, to Generations Y and Z preferring cell phones, texts, or social media (Entrepreneur Magazine, 2009). Communication is an essential skill for all to better understand each other. It plays a critical role in survival. The perception of what was acceptable with different forms of communication was the main difference in this study. Those that were interviewed as parents and teachers were threatened more with the idea of social networking than the students that were interviewed. Students were afraid of being bullied by peers and often didn't notice the outside threat of predators. It was refreshing to discover that the parents interviewed were looking out for their child or children when it came to the Internet and social media. In some cases the students also were aware of their parents knowing passwords and checking into friends by "stalking" as one parent put it.

In addition to the interviews and conversations with my participants I have found that the research component in this area is limited. It is growing however, as more and more advances are made that are both positive and negative in this field of study. The research has even changed to include more positives than horror stories of sexting and sexual predators. With this growth, I see that the implication for future research will be definite. Technology and this field changes on what seems like a daily basis. Thomas Freidman recognized this change when he stated on the video *Thomas Friedman On*

'Connected to Hyperconnected': "When I wrote 'The World Is Flat,' I said the world is flat. Yeah, we're all connected. Facebook didn't exist; Twitter was a sound; the cloud was in the sky; 4G was a parking place; LinkedIn was a prison; applications were what you sent to college; and Skype, for most people, was a typo." These changes, though inevitable, are creating voids in the ways our generations are able to communicate with each other and could be causing more of a generation gap as a result.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview Guide

To explore what is deemed acceptable among teachers, students and parents, the

following questions will be posed as possible interview protocol: Teachers (T),

Students(S), and Parents (P)

1. (T,S,P) How should schools use social networking?

2. (T,S,P) What types of social networking would you prefer to be used in schools?

3. (T,S,P) When is social networking between teachers and students acceptable?

4. (T,S,P) When is social networking between parents and teachers acceptable?

5. (T,S,P) What types of social networking do students, parents, teachers prefer?

6. (T,S,P) Why do you prefer the above social networking over the other?

7. (T,S,P) What are the parts of social networking that you are concerned about?

8. (T,P) How involved are you with your student when it comes to social networking?

   (S) How involved is your parent when it comes to social networking?

9. (T,S,P) How often do you find yourself involved with social networking with

   teachers, students, or parents per week? In what way?

10. (T,S,P) What types of social networking do you find acceptable among

    teachers, students and parents?

Appendix B

Student Letter

Dear _____:

I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Leadership and Policy at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, TN. I am working on my dissertation topic on implications of social networking on teachers, students, and parents. I want to see how social networking is used within the school setting among these three groups. The purpose of the study is to gain an understanding of how using social networking impacts teacher practice in the classroom and communication with the home. You are being asked to do this because you are a student at Indian Trail Intermediate School, the school being studied.

Participation is strictly voluntary and you do not have to remain in the study. Participation in the study will require you to answer some questions and you will not be named and nobody will know. It will also not have any effect on your grades. The interview, with your permission, will be recorded and transcribed. You will not be identified by name on tape. All participants will be assigned a code for the study. A professional typist and/or I will transcribe the tapes. An outside auditor will read the transcriptions of the tape; however, he/she will not be able to identify you by name. The tapes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at my home. Each participant will be offered a copy of the tape as well as a copy of the transcription. You will also be asked to member check your answers to make sure they are what you said. After data are analyzed, you will be as to again for your input on the tentative emerging themes for plausibility. Once the tapes are listened to , they will remain in my possession and will be destroyed 10 years after publication of the dissertation.

Your name and the name of your school, and any other information gathered in this study, will remain confidential and will be used for educational purposes only.

I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of my request. I look forward to your speaking with you in this study. Please contact me if you have any questions about participation.
Sincerely,

Lisa L. Raper
5th Grade Science and Social Studies Teacher
Indian Trail Intermediate School
raperl@jcschools.org
(423) 610-6000

Appendix C

Letter to Student (Spanish)
Carta al estudiante

Estimado _____:

Soy una candidata a doctorado en el Departamento de Liderazgo y Política de la East Tennessee State University en Johnson City, TN. Estoy haciendo mi tesis sobre las consecuencias de las redes sociales en los docentes, estudiantes y padres. El enfoque de mi tesis es ver cómo las redes sociales son utilizadas en el ambiente escolar entre estos tres grupos. El propósito de este estudio es el de llegar a comprender cómo el uso de las redes sociales impactan la práctica de la docencia en el aula y la comunicación con la casa. Su participación es solicitada, ya que usted es un estudiante en Indian Trail Intermediate School, la escuela donde se conduce el estudio.

La participación es estrictamente voluntaria y usted puede en cualquier momento durante el proceso de investigación retirarse del estudio. La participación en el estudio requerirá una entrevista y la divulgación de sus respuestas a través de un alias (con un nombre diferente). La entrevista, con su permiso, será grabada digitalmente y transcritas. Para mantener la confidencialidad, usted no será identificado con su nombre en la grabación. A todos los participantes se les asignará un seudónimo durante el estudio. Un mecanógrafo profesional y/o yo transcribiremos las cintas. Un auditor externo leerá las transcripciones de la cinta; sin embargo, él/ella no será capaz de identificarlo por su nombre. Las cintas serán mantenidas bajo llave, en un archivo en mi casa. A cada participante se le ofrecerá una copia de la cinta, así como también una copia de la transcripción. A usted también se le pedirá revisar la transcripción para mayor precisión. Después de que los datos sean analizados, a usted se le pedirá nuevamente su opinión en los posibles temas que hayan surgido, para su validación. Una vez que las cintas sean transcritas, permanecerán bajo mi custodia y serán destruidas 10 años después de la publicación de la tesis doctoral.

Su nombre, el nombre de su escuela, y cualquier otra información obtenida en este estudio, se mantendrán en forma confidencial y se utilizará únicamente para fines educativos.

Agradezco su atenta consideración a mi solicitud. Espero su participación en este estudio. Por favor, póngase en contacto conmigo a través del correo electrónico o por teléfono, si tiene preguntas específicas acerca de su participación.

Atentamente,

Lisa L. Raper
Maestra de Ciencias y Estudios Sociales de 5to Grado
Indian Trail Intermediate School
raperl@jcschools.org

Appendix D

Assent form

Perceptions of Acceptable Behavior with Social Networking among Teachers, Parents, and Students in a Northeast Tennessee Middle School: An Exploratory Study

I agree to be in a study about social networking. This study was explained to me by Mrs. Raper (the person in charge) and she said that I could be in it. The only people who will know about what I say and do in the study will be the people in charge of the study.

In this study I will be asked questions about how I use social networking. This includes things like email, Facebook, and other types of social media.

Writing my name on this page means that the page was read by me and to me, and that I agree to be in the study. I know what will happen to me. If I decide to quit the study, all I have to do is tell the person in charge.

_____   _____

Child's Printed Name and Signature   Date

_____   _____

Researcher Printed Name and Signature   Date

_____   _____

Witness's Printed Name and Signature   Date

Parent Letter (Spanish)
Carta a los padres

Estimado _____:

Soy una candidata a doctorado en el Departamento de Liderazgo y Política de la East Tennessee State University en Johnson City, TN. Estoy haciendo mi tesis sobre las consecuencias de las redes sociales en los docentes, estudiantes y padres. El enfoque de mi tesis es ver cómo las redes sociales son utilizadas en el ambiente escolar entre estos tres grupos. El propósito de este estudio es el de llegar a comprender cómo el uso de las redes sociales impactan la práctica de la docencia en el aula y la comunicación con la casa. Su participación es solicitada, ya que usted es padre de un estudiante en Indian Trail Intermediate School, la escuela donde se conduce el estudio.

La participación es estrictamente voluntaria y usted puede en cualquier momento durante el proceso de investigación retirarse del estudio. La participación en el estudio requerirá una entrevista y la divulgación de sus respuestas a través de un alias (con un nombre diferente). La entrevista, con su permiso, será grabada digitalmente y transcritas. Para mantener la confidencialidad, usted no será identificado con su nombre en la grabación. A todos los participantes se les asignará un seudónimo durante el estudio. Un mecanógrafo profesional y/o yo transcribiremos las cintas. Un auditor externo leerá las transcripciones de la cinta; sin embargo, él/ella no será capaz de identificarlo por su nombre. Las cintas serán mantenidas bajo llave, en un archivo en mi casa. A cada participante se le ofrecerá una copia de la cinta, así como también una copia de la transcripción. A usted también se le pedirá revisar la transcripción para mayor precisión. Después de que los datos sean analizados, a usted se le pedirá nuevamente su opinión en los posibles temas que hayan surgido, para su validación. Una vez que las cintas sean transcritas, permanecerán bajo mi custodia y serán destruidas 10 años después de la publicación de la tesis doctoral.

Su nombre, el nombre de su escuela, y cualquier otra información obtenida en este estudio, se mantendrán en forma confidencial y se utilizará únicamente para fines educativos.

Agradezco su atenta consideración a mi solicitud. Espero su participación en este estudio. Por favor, póngase en contacto conmigo a través del correo electrónico o por teléfono, si tiene preguntas específicas acerca de su participación.

Atentamente,

Lisa L. Raper
Maestra de Ciencias y Estudios Sociales de 5to Grado
Indian Trail Intermediate School
raperl@jcschools.org
(423) 610-6000

Appendix F

Parent Letter (English)

Dear _____:
I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Leadership and Policy at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, TN. I am pursuing my dissertation topic on implications of social networking on teachers, students, and parents. My specific interest is to see how social networking is used within the school setting among these three groups. The purpose of the study is to gain an understanding of how using social networking impacts teacher practice in the classroom and communication with the home. Your participation is requested because you are a parent of a student at Indian Trail Intermediate School, the school being studied.

Participation is strictly voluntary and you may choose at anytime during the research process to withdraw from the study. Participation in the study will require an interview and disclosure of your response with an alias. The interview, with your permission, will be digitally recorded and transcribed. To maintain confidentiality, you will not be identified by name on tape. All participants will be assigned a pseudonym for the study. A professional typist and/or I will transcribe the tapes. An outside auditor will read the transcriptions of the tape; however, he/she will not be able to identify you by name. The tapes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at my home. Each participant will be offered a copy of the tape as well as a copy of the transcription. You will also be asked to member check your transcription for accuracy. After data are analyzed, you will be as to again for your input on the tentative emerging themes for plausibility. Once the tapes are transcribed, they will remain in my possession and will be destroyed 10 years after publication of the dissertation.

Your name and the name of your school, and any other information gathered in this study, will remain confidential and will be used for educational purposes only.

I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of my request. I look forward to your participation in this study. Please contact me through email or by phone if you have specific questions about participation.
Sincerely,

Lisa L. Raper
5th Grade Science and Social Studies Teacher
Indian Trail Intermediate School
raperl@jcschools.org
(423) 610-6000

Appendix G

Teacher Letter

Dear _____:

I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Leadership and Policy at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, TN. I am pursuing my dissertation topic on implications of social networking on teachers, students, and parents. My specific interest is to see how social networking is used within the school setting among these three groups. The purpose of the study is to gain an understanding of how using social networking impacts teacher practice in the classroom and communication with the home. Your participation is requested because you are a teacher at Indian Trail Intermediate School, the school being studied.

Participation is strictly voluntary and you may choose at anytime during the research process to withdraw from the study. Participation in the study will require an interview and disclosure of your response with an alias. The interview, with your permission, will be digitally recorded and transcribed. To maintain confidentiality, you will not be identified by name on tape. All participants will be assigned a pseudonym for the study. A professional typist and/or I will transcribe the tapes. An outside auditor will read the transcriptions of the tape; however, he/she will not be able to identify you by name. The tapes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at my home. Each participant will be offered a copy of the tape as well as a copy of the transcription. You will also be asked to member check your transcription for accuracy. After data are analyzed, you will be as to again for your input on the tentative emerging themes for plausibility. Once the tapes are transcribed, they will remain in my possession and will be destroyed 10 years after publication of the dissertation.

Your name and the name of your school, and any other information gathered in this study, will remain confidential and will be used for educational purposes only.

I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of my request. I look forward to your participation in this study. Please contact me through email or by phone if you have specific questions about participation.
Sincerely,

Lisa L. Raper
5th Grade Science and Social Studies Teacher
Indian Trail Intermediate School
raperl@jcschools.org
(423) 610-6000

VITA

LISA LYNN RAPER

Personal Data:	Date of Birth: August 24, 1968
	Place of Birth: Levittown, Pennsylvania
	Marital Status: Married
Education:	B.S. Elementary Education, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee, 1992
	Masters: Curriculum and Instruction, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, 1997
	Ed. S. Specialist in Education, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee, 2003
	Ed.D. Educational Leadership, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN, 2015
Professional Experience:	Teacher, Monroe County Schools, Madisonville, Tennessee, 1993-1998
	Teacher, Johnson City Schools, Johnson City, Tennessee 1998-present
Honors and Awards:	National Board Certified; Middle Childhood Generalist; 1999
	Johnson City Schools Teacher of the Year, 2001