Chapter 9
Social Media and the Future of the Instructional Model

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ABSTRACT

This chapter provides the latest information on social media and its application in the instructional model. The chapter contains information on how social media enhances learning, especially at times where remote learning is necessary, such as COVID-19. It also includes problems that have been documented in schools as a result of social media. This chapter also presents information about the use of social media for professional development and how teachers are interacting and collaborating using social media.

WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media have been defined as "a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). Hudson (2020) stated that social media refers to websites and applications that are designed to allow people to share content quickly, efficiently, and in real-time. While many people access social media through smartphone apps, this communication tool started with computers, and social media can refer to any internet communication tool that allows users to broadly share content and engage with the public. The first recognizable social media website, known as Six Degrees, was created in 1997, and the first blogging sites followed in 1999. In the early 2000s, social media website like MySpace began to emerge. Then in 2005, YouTube came out creating an entirely new way for people to communicate and share videos from around the world. Then in 2006, Facebook and Twitter exploded throughout the world and remained two of the most popular social networks (Hen-

dricks, 2019). According to Engel (2020), Facebook had more than 2.3 billion monthly active users in 2019, and this number is only expected to rise.

Expands Student Engagement

People from around the world use social media to engage and share their interest and passion, as well as videos and information that others can share. Educators are always looking for ways to engage students, and social media has been one tool that proved to be effective. According to Dragseth (2019), social media can increase student engagement. Social media can expand students' creativity, work ethics, and engagement (Ashford University, 2020). Since students are using social media more frequently and are already engaged with each other using it, social media expanded student engagement in learning as well (Ashford University, 2020). Teachers are assigning activities and sharing information on social media because they had a positive outcome with student engagement. Technology and social media also allow for creativity because of the various tools that students can use, which they are already familiar with.

Social media sites are usually interactive, and this keeps the student involved and engaged (Willbold, 2019). According to the Pew Research Center, teenagers are growing more comfortable sharing more information on social media each year (Lee, 2020). This will likely result in more students' engagement. Social media allows people to communicate indirectly, which could help students in social anxiety in public (Lee, 2020).

Students' perceptions towards teachers impact their motivation and learning engagement (Mahmud et al., 2016). Studies show that teachers who provide information about themselves on social media were perceived by students as more credible and relatable (Mahmud et al., 2016). Students became more comfortable participating in class, which increased student engagement. Research shows that students are more susceptible towards teachers who are active on social media because they feel like they can easily reach out to them for classroom information and instruction (Mahmoud et al., 2016).

Supports Collaborative Environment

As teachers use social media more for personal use, they are also using it to enable learning and collaboration among students in the classroom (Fuglei, 2020). Research has shown positive effects of the use of social media in education, including new opportunities for connection and collaboration (Li & Greenhow, 2015). Social media supports an open forum and collaborative learning environment. Information can be shared at a rapid-pace which can help students accelerate the development of creative, critical thinking, and communication processes (Ashford University, 2020).

Students from around the world can connect and collaborate through social media websites. According to Ansari and Khan (2020), social media used for collaborative learning had significant impact on the interactivity between students and teachers, as well as students with each other. Social media for collaborative learning also improves students' academic performance and satisfaction (Zhu, 2012). Social media also supports student collaboration where students can share work and critique projects. An educator at Penn State University created an iTunes U class which gathered more than 58,000 students where they could share work and evaluate each other's projects (Davis, 2018).

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