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Children's Use of Social Media and their Elementary Principals' Perceptions and Leadership Practices Pertaining to This Usage: A Case Study in One School District in British Columbia

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Children's Use of Social Media and their Elementary Principals' Perceptions and Leadership Practices

Pertaining to This Usage: A Case Study in One School District in British Columbia

by

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Abstract

Children are using social media in and out of school. School principals are struggling to deal with problems (e.g., cyberbullying, sexting, privacy issues, depression) associated with young people using social media. Research related to teen use of social media and misuse of social media is available; however, in comparison, fewer studies have examined how younger children are using social media. The purpose of this qualitative case study was twofold: to understand (a) social media use among 9-to-11-year-old children and, (b) the influences on elementary school principals' leadership practices pertaining to children's social media usage. There were three methods used to collect data in this study: student surveys, student focus groups, and principal interviews. The data were coded and organized according to the research questions. Analysis and interpretation of findings were organized by way of examining the key research questions: (a) What social media platforms are children most using? (b) How and why are children using social media? (c) What are elementary principals' perceptions of children's social media usage? and (d) What leadership practices are elementary principals using to promote positive student social media usage? This research revealed that the children in this study tended to use YouTube, TikTok, and gaming platforms to actively engage with social media. This research also revealed that problems associated with young people and social media are spilling into elementary schools and the elementary principals in this study are using both proactive and reactive leadership practices to promote positive social media usage with their students. The study concludes by offering suggestions that may be useful in the work of promoting positive social media usage with children.

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I'd like to acknowledge my second office, Starbucks. I may not be exact, but I think I own at least 50% of the shares by now. Thanks to all the wonderful baristas who served my tall Pikes with smiles.

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Dedication

This massive undertaking is wholly dedicated to my wife and kids.

You give me joy incomparable.

SOCIAL MEDIA, CHILDREN, AND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Long gone are the days where children had to run over to their neighbourhood friends' house to ask if they wanted to play or where children had to pick up the family phone and call a friend to invite them over. Also, long gone are multiplayer video games that required two or more friends to be in the same room to play or school projects that required friends to meet at the library or each other's living rooms to collaborate on a poster. Due to the explosion of social media, kids today are communicating, gaming, learning, and connecting in ways that would have dumbfounded previous generations. In examining this topic, I hoped to gain a deeper understanding of children's social media usage. In my roles, both as an elementary school counsellor and vice principal, I am constantly baffled by children's usage, and their misusage, of social media. Therefore, the second part of this study aimed to look at elementary principals' perceptions and leadership practices that pertained to children's social media usage.

In this chapter, I introduce an overview of the context and background framing the inquiry. This overview primarily looks at social media definitionally, social media and young people, and the problems associated with young people using social media. All of this background provides a context for the statement of the problem, which is: although social media can be leveraged as an incredible learning tool, young people's social media usage is negatively affecting schools and principals are feeling ill-equipped to deal with the multitude of social media related problems. This introductory chapter also includes definitions of key terminology used throughout this dissertation, the purpose of this research, the central question and the four sub-questions, and information about my professional background.

Social Media

Due to the speed at which technology is expanding and evolving, defining "social media" can be challenging. To address these definitional challenges, Obar and Wildman (2015) synthesized definitions presented in the literature and identified the following commonalities among current social media. First, social media consists of Web 2.0 Internet-based applications (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010) – Internet in the late 1990s was largely for consuming content that others had written, but Web 2.0 applications allowed the Internet to be an interactive experience for all users. Secondly, Obar and Wildman (2015) point out that user-generated content is the lifeblood of social media. They explain it is the information entered into a Facebook profile, a video posted on YouTube, or a "Like" left on a Pinterest image that makes social media a user-generated experience. Third, the backbone of the social media service is the user profile (boyd & Ellison, 2008). The user profile allows for location-based messages, which deliver the functionality that users expect (Mahler, 2015). Lastly, the literature (boyd & Ellison, 2008; Obar & Wildman, 2015) suggests that social media services facilitate the development of social networks online by connecting a profile with those of other individuals and groups. For example, Facebook and Snapchat call these lists of people "friends," on Twitter and Instagram they are called "follows," and on LinkedIn they are "connections." In this study, whenever I refer to social media, I will be referring to sites and applications that contain Obar and Wildman's (2015) social media commonalities. : the user profile, the ability to network with other users, and user-generated content.

Social Media and Young People

The first part of the research aimed to look at how children, specifically those under 12 years of age, were engaging with social media. In scouring social media research, it is difficult to differentiate how children are using social media in comparison to their older teenage counterparts. There is ample research that looks at how teens today generally use social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; O'Keefe &

Clarke-Pearson, 2011; Pew Research Center, 2011, 2018; Rideout, 2015), and even more research that discusses how they are misusing it (Blease, 2015; Freitas, 2017; Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, 2013; O'Keefe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011; Siegle, 2010; Vandebosche & Cleemput, 2009). But what is less clear is if the youngest users of social media, those under 12, are using it in the same way as their teenage counterparts.

Despite the US Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) requiring that young people be at least 13-years-old to use the bulk of social media websites (Federal Trade Commission, 1999), existing literature (Broadcasting Standards Authority & NZ On Air, 2015; Livingstone, 2011; Steeves, 2014) shows that many children are not adhering to these laws. According to Livingstone (2018), "increasingly across the world, today's children are – or wish to be – 'always on" (p. 1104). It has been reported that at least a third of Canadian children in grades four to six have active Facebook accounts (Steeves, 2014). Another study from New Zealand (Broadcasting Standards Authority & NZ On Air, 2015) claims that two-thirds of the children (described as those between 6-years-to-14-years-old) in the study accessed the Internet each day and that their most common activities were playing online games and watching YouTube videos. Similarly, The EU Kids Online project (Livingstone, 2011) highlighted that 38% of 9- to 12-year-olds claimed to having a social media profile. With regard to age restrictions and social media sites, Livingstone says "it is clear that age limits don't work. Since many 'underage' users registered with a false age, even if the provider did tailor privacy and safety settings to suit young children, they could not identify them." (Livingstone, 2011). With the exception of Steeve's (2014) study, it is difficult to find research that explicitly looks at how Canadian children are using social media.

As discussed above, children are regular users of social media (Broadcasting Standards Authority & NZ On Air, 2015; Livingstone, 2011; Steeves, 2014). Lester, Cross, and Shaw (2012) argue that as the world becomes more technologically advanced, the age at which children first access digital

tools and applications is decreasing. A Common Sense Media report (Felt & Robb, 2016) on technology addiction and young people claim that:

> There is some limited work on adolescents but very little on young children or preteens (or "tweens"). Given the many physical, cognitive, social, and emotional changes that occur from early childhood through adolescence and beyond, it is appropriate to treat findings with caution, as research on adults may not always generalize to younger populations and phenomena of interest may be more or less pronounced in those groups. (p. 10)

Further, a New Zealand study (Pacheco & Melhuish, 2019) claims that available evidence has concentrated on the online experiences of teenagers, leaving gaps in knowledge about younger children's interaction with their online environment. Additionally, Researchers, such as Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder, and Lattanner (2014) conclude, in their meta analyses of social media and cyberbullying research, that further research on social media and cyberbullying with children is needed. They say, "much of the existing research on cyberbullying has examined children in middle school or later grades, but less is known about the prevalence of cyberbullying and associated behaviors among younger children" (p. 1127). There is a need for future research that explains how Canadian children, specifically, are using social media.

Social Media and Schools

Given that 85% of teens (Pew Research Center, 2018) and 30% of children (Steeves, 2014) report using social media, these applications are inevitably finding their way into school settings. To help understand how networked technologies and social media are impacting teachers and their teaching practices, in 2015, MediaSmarts partnered with the Canadian Teachers' Federation to survey over four-thousand teachers across Canada (Johnson, Riel, & Froese-Germain, 2016). Their findings showed that 79% of teacher participants agreed that networked technologies were making it easier for their students to learn (p. 3), over 70% reported using social media like YouTube to enhance their lessons (p. 5), and

13% reported using social networking with their students for educational purposes (p. 8). When it comes to the explicit teaching of digital citizenship, Vega and Robb (2019) highlight that approximately 60% of the 1200 American teachers surveyed from the National Center of Educational Statistics sample study say they use some type of digital citizenship curriculum or resource with students in their classrooms. However, and perhaps most interesting, only about half of the teacher respondents felt they received excellent support from their principals when issues of student conflict arose in the online world (p. 9). As I will explain, this is likely because principals, themselves, are not sure about the best ways to deal with social media problems.

Social Media and Principals

According to a survey of over 500 American school leaders, conducted by the Education Week Research Center, school principals were extremely concerned about children's use of social media and only 14 percent described themselves as "very prepared" to help students use social media responsibly (Herold, 2018). In the following section, I will highlight some recent research that shows how principals are struggling to deal with the problems associated with young people using social media and the impacts of this in a school environment. Funded by the Canadian Association of Principals and the Alberta Teacher's Association, a (2014) study of the "Future of the Principalship in Canada" aimed to capture the perspectives of 500 Canadian principals from two territories and nine provinces. The study identified the six biggest concerns of school principals today, one of which was "the fallout from pernicious and frequent use of social media among students, and, in some cases, parents" (p. 11). The findings go on to say, "Cyberbullying and community gossip are damaging school climates and many administrators are struggling to respond effectively" (p.11). The report argues that disciplining and creating resolutions over students' inappropriate use of social media consume enormous amounts of principals' time and energy. The principals observed in this study "stressed the need for support and guidelines to develop and enforce discipline policies … [and] the capacity to cultivate digital

citizenship" (p. 13). This is not the only study that closes with an argument for further research on school leadership and positive social media practices.

A group of University of Iowa researchers (Young, Tully, & Ramirez, 2017) made the same conclusion as the Canadian Association of Principals: there is not enough present research that evidences best ways of supporting school communities that include teachers, families, and children in the use of social media social media practices for principals. The results of their (2017) study conclude that "most administrators viewed cyberbullying as a major challenge due to the widespread adoption of technologies" (p. 481) and "as schools increasingly shoulder responsibility for cyberbullying, it is vital for schools to know which combinations of technology and antibullying curricula and policies are effective at primary prevention of cyberbullying" (p. 481). One last example of researchers advocating for further research on social media and principals is Powers and Green's (2016) study. They state, "future research could explore the personal perspectives of principals where a more robust platform of social media have been permitted to understand what benefits they saw and how they managed the challenges" (p. 160). The literature is clear: more research is needed that looks at how principals can help curb negative social media behaviours and encourage positive social media usage among students.

Cassidy, Brown, and Jackson (2012a) and Hinduja and Patchin (2012) state that the problems of social media – such as cyberbullying, sexting, increased rates of depression, and safety concerns around privacy – can kill a school culture, but they also argue that school leaders who are mindful of cyber-meanness and positive online behaviours – or what is being called "cyber-kindness" – can positively influence school culture. Several social media studies (Cassidy et al., 2009; Cassidy, Brown, & Jackson 2012a, 2012b) are advocating for explicit teaching and learning around the area of cyber-kindness. Cassidy et al. (2012a) claim "it is important for all concerned parties to find ways to cultivate positive online behaviors rather than merely trying to curtail the negative ones" (p. 416). Before elementary principals are effectively able to deal with social media in schools, they first need to learn from their

students about how they are using social media and about how they perceive cyber-kindness. More research is needed in this area so that elementary principals are better able to cultivate positive online behaviours, including the dispositions and practices that can help children to become kinder online.

Definitions of Social Media Applications

In this dissertation, several different social media and gaming applications are mentioned. For quick reference, a list of definitions of the applications has been created below. For the majority of the terms listed below, I have referred to Hinduja and Patchin's (2019) glossary. If a source is not included with the definition of the application, it is because I patched together a definition from a variety of sources.

- **Facebook.** The most popular social media site with over 2.4 billion active monthly users (as of June 2019). Users create personal "profiles" to represent themselves, listing interests and posting photos and communicating with others through private or public posts and messages (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- *Fortnite*. A survival game where 100 players fight against each other in player versus player combat to be the last one standing. There are an estimated 125 million players on *Fortnite*. User-generated content include its emotes, costumes, and dances which have been very popular amongst players (Statt, 2018).

- **Instagram.** An app where users can apply filters to photos and videos before posting them for others to like and comment on. Users can also share their content on other social networks like Facebook and Twitter (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- *Minecraft*. A video game released by Mojang and purchased by Microsoft that puts players in a user-generated world where they can create their own structures and contraptions out of textured cubes and interact with each other. It now has more than 112 million active monthly players (Gilbert, 2019).

- ***Roblox*.** An online game where players are able to create their own virtual world, in which they or other online members may enter and socialize within the blocks of varying shapes, sizes, and colors. Roblox has over 100 million monthly users (Brewer, 2019).

- **Snapchat.** Very popular with youth and young adults, users of this app share text messages, pictures, and videos with friends from their contact list, which generally can be viewed for a period of between one to ten seconds (unless set to "infinity") before disappearing (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **TikTok.** Previously known as Musical.ly, this app allows users to create and share their own engaging and creative video clips up to 15 seconds long – for example, lip-syncing to a popular song and dancing around or restating comedic lines from a favorite movie (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **Twitter.** Social networking and "microblogging" service that allows users to post what they are doing using up to 280 characters per tweet. It is often used to share images, videos, memes, and links; tweet images can be "tagged" with up to ten other Twitter users so they can be alerted that they are mentioned or referenced in the post. The service had 321 million monthly active users as of February, 2019 (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **WhatsApp.** A cross platform messaging application that allows users to send texts, pictures, videos, links, user locations, documents, and more. It allows for connections based on one's phone number. It has at least 1.6 billion monthly active users as of spring of 2019 (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **YouTube.** A wildly popular video sharing app and site owned by Google where registered users can upload and share videos with anyone able to access the site. It has over 2 billion average monthly users and over 30 billion average daily users, with 300 hours of video uploaded every minute (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

Definitions of Key Terminology

In the course of this study, the following definitions for key terms were used.

- **Active Social Media Usage.** Active social media usage occurs when "users share life experiences; create text, audio, or video content; and respond frequently to other users" (Escobar-Viera et al., 2018, p. 437).

- **Children**. In this proposal, I am referring to those between the ages of 9 to 11.

- **Cyberbullying.** Intentional and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **Cyber-kindness**. This is a new term that needs further defining. However, for now, Cassidy, Brown, and Jackson (2012) define it as "positive online behaviours" (p. 416).

- **Digital Footprint.** Evidence of a person's use of the Internet, typically focusing on dates and times of specific websites visited. This includes anything that can be linked to a user's existence, presence, or identity (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **Following.** The act of requesting another person to connect with your online social network - for example, on Twitter, Instagram and similar sites (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **Gaming.** Participation in video (often online) games, which involve individuals adopting roles of fictional characters, thereby directing the outcome (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **Network.** Two or more computers connected so that they can communicate with each other (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **Passive Social Media Usage.** Passive social media usage or "lurking," occurs when individuals "tend to observe and maintain low engagement with other users" (Escobar-Viera et al., 2018, p. 437-438).

- **Profile.** When considered in the context of online social networking, this is a user-customized page that represents that person. Here, a person's background, interests, and friends are listed to reflect who that person is or how that person would like to be seen. Pictures, biographical and contact information, and other interesting facts about the user are often included as well (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **School Climate.** The quality, character, social atmosphere, and 'feel' of the school, mostly exhibited by patterns of behaviour and interactions among and between students and school personnel (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **Sexting.** The sending or receiving of sexually-explicit or sexually-suggestive images or video via phone or the Internet (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **Social media**. According to Obar and Wildman (2015), *social media* are made up of the following commonalities: (a) Web 2.0 Internet-based applications, (b) user-generated content, (c) the user profile, and (d) the ability to facilitate the development of social networks. For the students in this study, we primarily focused on the latter three key commonalities.

- **Tablet:** A mobile computing device growing in adoption and popularity. They are smaller than a laptop and bigger than a smartphone, and provide much of the same functionality as both (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

- **Technology:** For the purposes of this study, I will use Felt and Robb's (2016) description of technology. They say technology is everything that includes mobile devices or Internet; they continue to say it can be activities like gaming and social networking.

- **Victim:** The person who is on the receiving end of online social cruelty. Also known as the "target" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

Purpose

Given the need for research that explores the relationships between Canadian children's social media use (Felt & Robb, 2016; Kowalski et al., 2014; Pacheco & Melhuish, 2019) and school principals' leadership decisions in relation to social media activity (Canadian Association of Principals, 2014; Powers & Green, 2016; Shear, 2015; Young, Tully & Ramirez, 2017), the purpose of this qualitative study was twofold. In the first part of this study, I explored how children ages 9-11from one school district generally used social media. In the second part, I aimed to learn more about elementary principals' perceptions about and leadership practices related to student social media usage.

The Central Question

How do children engage with social media and what are elementary school principals' perceptions about and leadership practices related to student social media usage?

How do children engage with social media?

What are elementary school principals' perceptions of children's social media use?

What leadership practices do school principals report using in relation to their perceptions of children's social media use?

Research Sub-Questions

The study asked the following sub-questions to get a full understanding of the central research question:

1. What types of social media are children most using?

2. How and why are children using social media?

3. What is the elementary principal's perception of children's use of social media?

4. What leadership practices are elementary principals using to support positive student social media usage?

Background of the Researcher

First and foremost, I am an educator who is passionate about positive school cultures and encouraging kids to be kind – both face-to-face and in the online world. In my roles as teacher, counsellor, and vice-principal, I have seen social media be used for good and bad in school settings. I used to help out with a group of leadership students that used social media to promote anonymous kindness amongst their high school community. I have also seen firsthand the benefits of technology-enriched classrooms where students bring their devices to class and actively contribute to a class inquiry or co-create a lesson with their teacher in real time. On the flipside, I have observed students using social media to plan out fights and then post these fights onto YouTube. From a teaching and learning perspective, I can resonate with every other teacher who is exhausted from saying "put your phone away." This being said, I do think that social media can be used to enhance school communities and teaching and learning. However, I am curious about how to best curtail the negative behaviours associated with social media and schools. I want to learn from children and elementary principals about their social media experiences. I am curious about what age schools should start considering students' use of social media and I am curious if banning cell phones is the best way to teach children to regulate their cell phone usage. Due to my personal and professional involvement with social media, I am committed to contributing to the understanding of how children are using social media and of elementary principals' perceptions of and leadership practices pertaining to student social media usage.

Organization of the Dissertation

This chapter introduced the purpose of the study, problem statement, and the overarching research question and sub-questions explored in the study. Subsequently, a broad overview of the research involving social media and young people, and social media and principals was briefly explored. In addition, the definitions of key terminology used within the context of the work were defined and this chapter also provided the reader with some of my professional background. The next two chapters of

this proposal will set up the study and the framework of the inquiry. Chapter two is comprised of the

literature review. Chapter three outlines the research methodology chosen for this study, addresses

trustworthiness, and discusses the delimitations of this inquiry. Chapter four shares the findings, while

chapter five is a discussion of the findings. The concluding chapter offers implications,

recommendations, and directions for future research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This critical literature review is comprised of five key sections. It begins with a short overview of young people's use of social media. Because less is known about how Canadian children between the ages of 9-to-11-years-old are using social media, this part of the literature review will also include studies that speak to teens' and preteens' (11-to-12-year-olds) usage of social media and about children from outside of North America. In the second section, I analyze literature about social media user demographics. In the third section, I explore literature focused on how young people are misusing social media. In the fourth section I look at literature examples that provide evidence for how social media can positively impact schools. The last section covers an array of literature that primarily looks at how social media are affecting school principals and provides empirical suggestions of what principals can do to promote positive social media usage in schools.

Social Media and Young People

This section of the literature review will begin by discussing Sonia Livingstone's work with the Global Kids Online project (Livingstone, Mascheroni, & Staksrud, 2017). Next, it will highlight some studies that indicate the rates at which young people are using social media. From there, this section will also look at how much time young people are spending on social media, which devices they are using to access social media, and the platforms and games they frequent.

The Global Kids Online project is an international research project that aims to generate and sustain a rigorous cross-national evidence base around children's use of the Internet by creating a global network of researchers and experts. It was developed as a collaborative initiative between the UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti, the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), and the EU Kids Online network. Sonia Livingstone, a researcher from the London School of Economics, is the principal investigator.

In an article (Livingstone et al., 2017) published in the New Media and Society journal, Livingstone and her co-researchers articulate the research agenda on children's Internet use from 2006 to 2014. They critically reflect on children's Internet use using Wellman's (2004) three ages of Internet studies. They claim that Wellman's first age moved away from panics and myths to concepts and empirical research. They continue to say the second age sought to systematize previously scattered research, especially the disconnected fields of risk and opportunity, Livingstone et al. (2017) claim that we are now in the middle of Wellman's third age of Internet studies and that there have been two major shifts with this third age. Livingstone et al. (2017) say that while the research task remains that of understanding the risks and opportunities afforded by the online environment, the outcomes now concern children holistically – in terms of their embodied, located and social as well as online selves. The second key change is to rebalance the earlier weighting towards online risks, with equal attention now to the opportunities of Internet use. Livingstone et al. (2017) say that where originally the focus was on whether a child reported harm from an online risk or found a way to cope, the third age of Internet studies with children now adopts a holistic approach to the many ways in which Internet use may influence a child's well-being, encompassing both the ways that online opportunities result in benefits and the ways that online risks result in harms (p. 1116).

With frequency of social media use by young people, recent research says that roughly 85% of American teens today are regularly using social media (Pew Research Center, 2018). With regards to children specifically, about one third of Canadian children report to having Facebook accounts (Steeves, 2014), two thirds of children (6-to-14-years-old) in New Zealand report to using Internet activities like gaming and YouTube daily (Broadcasting Standards Authority & NZ On Air, 2015), and a little over one third of children in the EU report to having a social media profile (Livingstone, 2011).

In terms of time spent on social media, Rideout (2015) claims that both American preteens (described as those between the ages of 8 to 12) and teens today are spending about two hours on social

media per day. This amount coincides with the amount of time that Czech children are spending on the Internet. Czech researchers claim that children between the ages of 9-and-10-years-old are spending between 30 minutes to three hours on the Internet per day (Bedrošová, Hlavová, Macháčková, Dědková, & Šmahel, 2018). Although the first study (Rideout, 2015) specifically asked young people about their time on social media and the second study (Bedrošová et al., 2018) asked about time spent on the Internet more generally, both studies provide a rough indication about the amount of time children are spending online.

The ability to access social media has become much easier and more convenient for today's young people. Overall, mobile devices now account for 41% of all screen time among preteens and 46% among teens (Rideout, 2015). Of the teens and preteens that Rideout (2015) surveyed, 67% claimed to own a smartphone capable of accessing social media. Of the teens and preteens that the Pew Research Center surveyed in 2015, 88% of American teens ages 13 to 17 reported to owning or having access to a mobile phone of some kind. With consideration of the specific devices that children are using to access their social media accounts, a study (Broadcasting Standards Authority and NZ On Air, 2015) conducted in New Zealand found that the most common devices that 6-14-year-olds used to access the Internet were a computer or laptop (79%), tablet (59%), and lastly smartphone (39%).

Recent research around the social media platforms that Canadian children are engaging with is lagging and there is a need for further research in this area. The Pew Research Center's (2015) study had a large participant group of 1060 American teens (aged 13 to 17), but like many social media studies, it excluded children altogether. However, the study did show trends amongst teens and the social media platforms they were using. With teens, Facebook was the most popular of all social media platforms – 71% of all teens reported using Facebook (Pew Research Center, 2015). The Pew Research Center's study also goes on to say that much of the difference is located within the youngest age group — the 13-year-olds — of whom less than half (44%) reported using Facebook. Similarly, about 40% of American

teens used Snapchat to share images and videos that were automatically deleted within a predetermined amount of time. Again, 47% of older teens 15 to 17 sent snaps, while only 31% of younger teens reported sending snaps. Based on this data, a question emerges about the social media platforms that are being used by the youngest users of social media – if the platforms are not Facebook or Snapchat, then which social media platforms are Canadian children using?

Online gaming is also a part of many children's online and social media experience (Kafai & Fields, 2013). Kafai and Fields (2013) claim that millions of kids, particularly those between the ages of 9-to-12-years-old, visit these virtual worlds every day (p. 2). In their book (2013), Kafai and Fields say as a result of gaming and virtual worlds, children today can also hang out with thousands, if not millions, of other kids, not just with those in the playgrounds and schoolyards of their neighborhoods. Kafai and Fields (2013) claim that connections are at the core of play in the digital playgrounds of the twenty-first century. Games that are inclusive of a virtual world – such as *Minecraft*, *Roblox*, or *Fortnite* – provide open and co-designed spaces where children can freely socialize with peers in imaginative and fun ways. Kafai and Fields assert that "instead of calling one another on the phone, [children] play together online." (p. 2). They continue to say that virtual worlds and gaming can extend relationships with existing friends or they also offer the opportunity for children to meet new friends. Gaming and socializing in the online world are interconnected (Kafai & Fields, 2013), and thus, it is important for those who take interest in children and their experiences with social media to broaden the conception of the term to be inclusive of gaming and virtual world platforms.

Before this literature review delves into young people's usage of social media with regards to school and learning, it will be helpful for educators to first understand how social media usage differs based on age, gender, geographic location, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. With extensive literature searches on social media usage and children, it is difficult to find literature that speaks explicitly to the

child demographic. Much of the information in the following section does not speak specifically to children, but rather, it speaks to the demographics of social media users in general.

User Demographics

  Age and social media. Social media literature claims that social media usage peaks by early adulthood (Perrin, 2015). It has been reported that at least one third of Canadian children in grades four to six have active Facebook accounts (Steeves, 2014). By the time children become teenagers, that number dramatically increases to 85% for daily usage (Pew Research Center, 2018). Social media usage currently peaks by early adulthood (18-29), where the percentage of social media daily users increases to approximately 90 % (Pew Research Center, 2018; Perrin, 2015). Age is a definite variable on whether or not an individual is active on social media.

  Gender and social media. While most studies (Pacheco & Melhuish, 2018; Perrin, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2007, 2015; Rideout, 2015) agree that females are using social media at slightly higher rates than males, some studies (Pacheco & Melhuish, 2018; Pew Research Center, 2007, 2015; Rideout, 2015; Steeves, 2014) report to some differences in which boys and girls engage with social media and others (Lu, Hao, & Jing, 2016, Pew Research Center, 2015; Stevens et al., 2017) say there are no statistical differences. To be clear, Lenhart's (2015) report from 2015 found some gender differences and similarities.

  Perrin conducted a ten-year study observing the changes of social media from the years of 2005 to 2015 (2015). In terms of gender, the study claimed in 2005 that adult men were using social media more than adult women (8% to 6% comparatively). But starting in 2009, the study showed women started using social media at slightly higher rates than men. Six years after this observation, the researchers noticed the numbers evening out - the study concluded with 68% of women and 62% of men reporting social media usage, a difference that is not considered to be statistically significant.

However, Rideout's (2015) study showed that teen and preteen girls were using social media more than boys. Rideout claims social media are popular with both boys and girls, but argues that the disparity is clear, with 44% of teen girls saying they "enjoy it a lot," compared with only 29% of boys saying the same thing. Teen girls claimed to spend about 40 minutes more a day with social media than boys on average (1:32, compared with :52 among boys). Conclusively, both studies, Perrin (2015) with the adult population and Rideout (2015) with the teens and preteens population, agree that females are using social media at slightly higher rates than males.

Research is also beginning to show that boys and girls are using social media in different ways. Pacheco and Melhuish (2018) asked over 2000 children (between the ages of 9-to-17-years-old) in New Zealand to identify which platforms they used. There was much similarity with the platforms they were using, especially with the popularity of platforms like YouTube and Google. However, of noted difference, was that boys were using gaming platforms like Minecraft and Discord at higher rates than girls (at least 10% more), and girls were using communication platforms like Instagram and Snapchat at higher rates than boys. Similarly, Rideout's (2015) study claimed boys and girls "have very different media preferences and habits" (p. 15). The Pew Research Center's (2007) study showed how teen girls engaged in more communication activities than teen boys, and created or worked more on their own homepages and posted more photos online (content creation). Similarly, the Pew Research Center's (2015) study also evidenced that teen girls produced more blogs than their male counterparts. Further, the study showed that girls share more on social media sites and platforms, particularly visually-oriented ones, like Pinterest or Tumblr, than boys. However, research is also starting to show that boys are being meaner online than girls. Steeves (2014) reports that there is a "mean girl myth" when it comes to online cruel behaviour - 26% of boys report to being mean online, whereas only 20% of girls report to doing the same. Also, 13% of boys admitted to pretending to be someone else online to avoid getting into trouble, in comparison with 7% of girls admitting to doing the same.

Although several studies have indicated gender differences with social media (Pew Research Center, 2007, 2015; Rideout, 2015; Steeves, 2014), these gender differences with young users of social media were not uniformly reported in the literature. For example, in Lu, Hao, and Jing's (2016) study, they sought to outline the differences between teens' social media usage inside and outside of school. In their findings, the researchers claimed that "no major gender effect for social media use in either context except a [positive] effect on content creating in school" (2016, p. 61). Another example of gender similarity with social media use is with online discussion boards like Reddit or Digg. The Pew Reseach Center study (2015) argues, "There are few differences among teens in use of these online boards by age or gender or any other major demographic category" (p. 20). Lastly, in Stevens, Gilliard-Matthews, Dunaev, Woods, and Brawner's (2017) study, they conducted semi-structured interviews with 30 females and 30 males aged 13-to-24 about their social worlds and neighborhoods, both online and offline. They concluded there were no statistically significant differences in social media site usage by gender or age (Stevens et al., 2017). It appears that there is conflicting research with regard to social media and gender differences. Given that there are some inconsistencies with existing research around gender and social media usage, especially with adults and teens, it becomes particularly important for future research that explores children's use of social media that has a focus on gender.

Location, ethnicity, and social media. Educators need to understand that social media happenings will differ depending on geographic location and ethnicity. According to Perrin (2015), who conducted a study on young adults, urban residents are the most likely to be active users of social media and rural communities have historically been the least likely to use social media. In 2005, 5% of rural residents, 7% of suburban residents, and 9% of urban residents reported social media usage. In 2015, these numbers increased to 58% of rural residents, 68% of suburban residents, and 64% of urban residents use social media. Schools in larger cities are likely to be more fluent with the world of social media than their smaller city counterparts.

When looking at social media usage from the lens of ethnicity, the research expresses inconsistencies. Perrin's (2015) study showed that young adults who self-identified as white, African-American, and Hispanic are using social media similarly, but that those who identified as African-American were using social media at slightly less rates than those who identified as white or Hispanic. The study claims that in 2015, 56% of individuals who identified as African-American and 65% of both those who identify as white and Hispanic were active social media users. Whereas Rideout's study that was also conducted in 2015, and also looked at the American population, reported that youth who identify as African-American reported to be spending substantially more time with media than youth who identify as white or Hispanic - which is directly opposite of what Perrin's (2015) study claimed. Rideout (2015) goes on to say that "while black, white, and Hispanic teens are equally likely to use social media on any given day, black teens who use social media average about an hour more doing so than white or Hispanic users" (p. 18). Additionally, Steven et al.'s (2016) study which focused on the role of social media in the lives of youth living in disadvantaged neighborhoods, concludes by saying they did not discern any thematic differences by racial or ethnic affiliation with the youth in their study who predominantly identified as African-American and Hispanic. The more that educators understand about social media, the more informed and equipped they will be to respond to issues that pertain to it, including details around student location and ethnicity.

Socioeconomic status and social media. In order to access social media, two things are needed: (a) a social media-supporting device, and (b) Internet. This section of the literature review will mainly draw from the work of Perrin (2015) and his study with young adults and Rideout (2015) and her study with 8-to-18-year-olds. Perrin (2015) and Rideout (2015) have both outlined how socioeconomic status plays a role in how young people engage with social media. Today, 78% of those living in the highest-income households use social media, compared with 56% of those in the lowest-income households (Perrin, 2015). There is a large "digital equality gap" in ownership of electronic devices (Rideout, 2015).

Rideout (2015) says children in lower-income families are significantly less likely than their wealthier peers to live in homes with electronic devices, such as computers, phones, or tablets. Rideout (2015) continues to say the higher the household income, the higher the likelihood of the teen being a social media user - 54% of lower-income teens (whose families make less than $35,000 a year) have a laptop in the home, compared with 92% of higher-income teens ($100,000 a year or more). When it comes to Internet access, there is also a digital divide. Rideout (2015) claims that 10% of the lower-income families reported to using dial-up Internet, whereas none of the higher-income families made this same report. A final point of interest about social media and socioeconomic status is that although preteens and teens from lower income families have fewer digital technologies in their homes, they are spending more time with media than those from higher-income homes (Rideout, 2015).

In Stephen et al.'s study (2017) of social media and young people in disadvantaged communities, they claim that social capital cannot be created solely through online community integration. Rather, the authors claim that, for disadvantaged communities, social media operates as a digital community where social problems are magnified. Stephen et al. state, "in disadvantaged neighborhoods, the stakes can be higher with violent consequences" (2017, p. 964). As such, providing disadvantaged communities greater access to social media alone is not a sufficient strategy to ensure equal access to the benefits of being networked. Stephen et al. (2017) encourage social media developers, researchers, and practitioners to consider ways to leverage benefits of social media, specifically as a tool for social connection and community building, while minimizing misuse (p. 964).

The section above explained how social media usage differs, depending on age, gender, location, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Given that this study aimed to better understand how children are engaging with social media, it is important to mention again that 30% of Canadian children admit to being active users of social media (Steeves, 2014) and that this number increases as children turn into teenagers (Pew Research Center, 2018). Educators should also know that girls use social media slightly

more than boys (Pacheco & Melhuish, 2018; Perrin, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2007, 2015; Rideout, 2015), and that many studies have confirmed that girls and boys use social media differently (Pacheco & Melhuish, 2018; Pew Research Center, 2007, 2015; Rideout, 2015; Steeves, 2014) . For example, girls are more active with content creating websites (Pacheco & Melhuish, 2018) and boys are gaming more (Kafai, 2013; Pacheco & Melhuish, 2018) and reporting to being meaner online than girls (Steeves, 2014). When it comes to location and ethnicity, the research shows that young adults who live in big cities are more likely to use social media than their small-town counterparts (Perrin, 2015) and that there are inconsistencies with social media usage and ethnicity (Perrin, 2015; Rideout, 2015). Lastly, students who have a higher socioeconomic standing will have greater access to social media, but that students of a lower socioeconomic standing will have less access but will spend more time than their wealthier peers engaging with social media (Perrin, 2015; Rideout, 2015). As evidenced in this section above, children are users of social media (Bedrošová et al., 2018; Broadcasting Standards Authority & NZ On Air, 2015; Livingstone, 2011; Steeves, 2014).

Social Media Misbehaviours

The proliferation of social media provides young users with opportunities to torment, threaten, stalk, humiliate, embarrass, exclude, intimidate, or otherwise target others (Cassidy et al., 2009). There are different ways to organize the woes of social media; however, this dissertation will use O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson's (2011) categorization of the problems that occur when young people use social media as a structure for the literature review. O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) divide the problems of social media into the four following sections: cyberbullying, sexting, "Facebook depression," and concerns around privacy. For the section "Facebook depression," I have incorporated Escobar-Viera et al.'s (2018) work around passive social media usage, and thus, I have re-categorized this section as "Passive Social Media Usage and 'Facebook Depression'."

Cyberbullying. Arguably, the biggest social media misbehaviour today is cyberbullying (Bedrošová et al., 2018; Cassidy et al., 2012a, 2012b; Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2015; Pacheco & Melhuish, 2018; Patchin & Hinduja, 2015, 2018; Young, Tully, & Ramirez, 2017). Cassidy et al. (2012a) explain that cyberbullying has exploded due to parents and teachers not having adequate knowledge of technology and social media. Sameer Hinduja and Justin Patchin, co-directors of the Cyberbullying Research Center, define cyberbullying as "willful and repeated harm inflicted through computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2015, p. 11). According to Patchin and Hinduja's (2014) cyberbullying meta-analysis, the "estimates of the number of youths who experience cyberbullying vary widely (ranging from 10-40% or more) depending on the age of the group studied and how cyberbullying is formally defined" (p. 3). In their massive 2015 investigation, which was a longitudinal study from 2007 to 2015 that looked at fifteen thousand students, about a third of these students claimed to have been victims of cyberbullying. According to several studies (Hinduja & Patchin, 2007, 2008; Marczak & Coyne, 2010; Ybarra, Diener-West, & Leaf, 2007), there are a number of ways in which cyberbullying can impact academic performance and school-related well-being. This can include: reduced concentration, school avoidance, increased school absences, isolation, alienation, lower academic achievement, negative perceptions of school climate, not feeling safe at school, higher risk for school problems, and a greater likelihood for carrying weapons to school. Cyberbullying and its effects are seeping into school settings (Hinduja & Patchin, 2007, 2008; Marczak & Coyne, 2010; Ybarra, Diener-West, & Leaf, 2007).

Sexting. Social media can also be used inappropriately by children with its ability to send sexual messages, and girls are especially likely to report unwanted online contact that have made them scared or uncomfortable (Vanderhoven et al., 2016). Sexting is a play on the words "sextexting," which involves sending, posting, or forwarding nude, semi-nude, sexually suggestive, or vulgar text, picture, or video messages via an electronic device (Siegle, 2010). To give an example of how widespread sexting

has become amongst teens today, in a survey of 606 students, nearly 20% reported sending at least one

sexually explicit image of themselves, with almost 40% acknowledging receipt of such an image

(Strassberg et al., 2013). Surprisingly, only 33% of those who sent sexually explicit photos of

themselves reported being aware of potential legal consequences (Strassberg et al., 2013). This coincides

with what one vice principal in Cassidy et al.'s (2012b) study said when asked about students' online

sexual comments: "Most students do not understand the impact that online comments have on others and

since many incidents occur within friendship groups, the results can be devastating" (p. 525). Sexting –

and sexually explicit comments – is becoming normalized in adolescence and can have long-lasting

negative effects on young people. Students often fail to realize the irreversibility that occurs once a

picture or message is sent on social media.

"Facebook depression" and passive social media usage. There is a difference between active

and passive social media usage. Active social media usage occurs when "users share life experiences;

create text, audio, or video content; and respond frequently to other users" (Escobar-Viera et al., 2018, p.

437). In contrast, passive social media use occurs when individuals "tend to observe and maintain low

engagement with other users" (Escobar-Viera et al., 2018, pp. 437-438). Passive social media usage has

also been called "lurking" (Escobar-Viera et al., 2018).

Recently, there has been a growing body of literature that suggests a correlation between passive

social media usage and depression (Aalbers, McNally, Heeren, De Wit, Fried, 2019; Blease, 2015;

Escobar-Viera et al., 2018). In 2015, Blease studied a phenomenon called "Facebook depression" and

contended that individuals were more likely to suffer from depression when great amounts of time were

spent reading updates from others' social media updates (p. 9). In 2018, Escobar-Viera et al.'s study

concluded that passive social media usage was associated with increased depression, whereas active

social media usage was associated with lower depression (p. 440). Similarly, and most recently, in 2019,

Aalbers et al.'s study found that "participants who spent more time passively using social media also

experienced higher mean levels of depressed mood, loneliness, hopelessness, and feeling inferior" (p. 1458). If passive social media usage is connected to depression, it should be noted that both Escobar-Viera et al.'s (2018) study and Li's (2016) study showed benefits to active social media usage. Whereas passive social media usage can make users feel more depressed, active social media usage can actually make users feel less depressed. Li (2016) even goes so far to conclude that "Overall, the study showcases social media engagement, especially active usage, as antecedent to psychological empowerment" (p. 57). A link between passive social media usage and depression is starting to grow in academic literature, and on the contrary, some research has shown that active social media usage can even lead to psychological empowerment.

When young people spend great amounts of time passively observing the social media accounts of others, it can often make them feel like their life is less significant. In her (2017) book, Donna Freitas, a Research Associate at the University of Notre Dame's Center for the Study of Religion and Society, took an in-depth look at the happiness effect and how social media are driving young people to appear perfect at any cost – or what has been popularly referred to in the media as "brag culture." One participant in Freita's (2017) study comments:

> I feel like, [on social media], it's the best version of people …. It's just sort of a slap in the face. It allows a platform to brag, and if you are experiencing, you know, [lonely] feelings, it makes a little harder, a little more obvious that you're alone or lonely, or whatever the case may be. (p. 7)

Passive social media usage, in conjunction with brag culture, may predict feelings of depression.

Privacy concerns. Many children are using social media to meet and communicate with new people. Livingstone contended in her (2011) study that a quarter of 11-to-16-year-olds communicated on social media with people they did not know from "real-life." Although online friendships have the potential to influence mental wellbeing (Best, Taylor, & Manktelow, 2015), there are many concerns when children divulge information to people they do not know online.

Lange explains in her (2016) book, about children and their YouTube usage, that children are mostly posting, what she calls, "personally expressive media." She describes personally expressive media as "works in which video makers communicate personal, artistic, political, or other messages and content of interest to them… it may be planned or unplanned 'home mode' content that centers on friends and family" (Lange, 2016, p. 20). At face value, there is nothing wrong with creating a video or a post and sharing it with a friend. However, young people today face privacy risks as a result of posting personal information on their social media accounts, primarily because half of them do not change their privacy settings so that only "friends" are able to see their page (Vanderhoven, et al., 2016). Young people are increasingly revealing more personal information online (Madden et al., 2013; O'Keefe & Pearson-Clarke, 2011). Teens today are more comfortable with sharing photos of themselves, revealing the school that they belong to, disclosing the city or town they are from, and giving out their email addresses and phone numbers on their social media accounts (Madden et al, 2013). This is particularly worrisome, given that young people often "befriend" people that they do not know. Some of the more recent numbers show as many as 36% of older teens, and 25% of younger teens, reported befriending people they have not met in person (Madden et al., 2013, p. 39).

Even if young people are being careful with the information they directly share over social media, there are still ways in which individual privacy can be compromised with indirect information sharing. In a 2013 study, Sar and Al-Saggaf discovered that social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google, are able to track users' browsing activities not only within their sites but beyond their boundaries as well, and particularly among web sites that embed widgets. This information leaking compromises the privacy of young social media users. Sar and Al-Sagaaf (2013) state that social networking sites "have a great deal of personal information provided by and about their online users, along with information about their movements outside of the [social networking site] itself." (p. 14). In the conclusion of their study, Sar and Al-Sagaaf (2013) argue that the integrity and appropriateness of

privacy leakages via social media need to be further explored (p. 14). Another way in which children's privacy is compromised is through social media sites' advertisement banners. O'Keefe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) say these advertisements "target people on the basis of their Web-browsing behavior … and the basis of a specific factor such as age, gender, education, marital status, etc." (p. 802). The researchers conclude this section of their article by cautioning parents about the powerful influences that targeted advertisements have on children.

Social media usage will vary depending on the demographics of the young person. Educators should know that young people, including preteens, are using social media, girls are using social media slightly more than boys and in different ways than boys, urban students are using it more than non-urban students, and wealthy students have more access to using it but that non-wealthy students use it more. Unfortunately, young people are not always making good choices when it comes to using social media. O'Keefe and Pearson-Clarke (2011) categorize the four main concerns when young people use social media as cyberbullying, sexting, "Facebook depression," and privacy issues. Children do not always use social media to spread kindness. Sometimes, these social media misbehaviours even spill into the school setting.

Social Media in Schools

There are many reasons to keep social media out of schools. In addition to the social media misbehaviours often performed by young people that are mentioned above, others also argue that social media sites are a significant distraction in the classroom (Kay, Benzimra & Li, 2017; Lederer, 2012; Rosen, Carrier & Cheever; 2013) and that school bandwidths are already strained to capacity (Campbell, 2013). Although the problems of social media are well known, perhaps what is less known is how social media can benefit student learning and school culture. Greenhow and Robelia (2009) argue that social media-friendly schools could "make schools even more relevant, connected, and meaningful to kids" (p. 1153).

Social media for learning. The Organization for Education Co-operation and Development (OECD) released a document titled *Measuring Innovation in Education 2019* earlier this year (OECD, 2019). The publication examines change in 139 educational practices in primary and secondary education covered in international databases as they were found critical to understand educational improvement. The OECD report (2019) claims that innovation in education should improve some educational outcome, such as students' learning outcomes (measured through tests), students' engagement, equity, cost-efficiency, or even teachers' work wellbeing (2019, p. 17). Within this report, the authors conclude that "While innovation in educational practices is not necessarily related to technology, innovation in the availability of computers and in the use of ICT in student's school work have actually been strong drivers of change over the past decade" (p. 17). Using the OECD (2019) report's argument for innovation in education, the next few paragraphs will show some examples of how social media has provided new opportunities for learning and schools.

Teachers are starting to recognize how social media can benefit learning and schools (Nicolaidou, 2013; Tucker, 2015; Vega and Robb, 2019). Cassidy et al. (2012b) interviewed teachers about their thoughts on social media in schools. Several teachers in the study felt it was time for educators to start embracing social media in the classroom. One teacher in the study stated, "I think there is a fear of Facebook and using it in schools.… I think that rather than being afraid of it we should be using it because it's engaging students" (p. 527). Another teacher suggested that instead of looking at Facebook and YouTube as negative forms of communication and banning access in schools, they should be seen as useful pedagogical tools. Practical examples of this included comments like "the English curriculum could incorporate a section on technology as an alternate means of discourse" (p. 527) and another teacher explained how she was using digital journal writing to help curtail cyberbullying. Practices such as these have the potential to improve student engagement and well-being.

The teachers in this study (Cassidy et al., 2012b) are not the exception. The majority of educators today support learning through social media and mobile technologies. To help understand how networked technologies and social media are impacting teachers and their teaching practices, in 2015, MediaSmarts partnered with the Canadian Teachers' Federation to survey over four-thousand teachers across Canada (Johnson, Riel, & Froese-Germain, 2016). Their findings showed that 79% of teachers agree that networked technologies are making it easier for their students to learn (p. 3). Almost 20% of educators today are implementing some form of social media into their instruction (K-12 Teachers, 2014, p. 135). The most common social media platforms used by educators include blogs and Wikis, Podcasts, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter (Seaman, 2013).

One of the OECD's seven Principles of Learning is that learning is social by nature (Dumont, Istance, & Benavides, 2010). The report, similar to Vygotsky's (1978) belief that knowledge is socially constructed, claims that "the dominant concept [of how people learn] is socio-constructivist in which learning is understood to be … actively constructed through social negotiation with others" (p.1). Educators are becoming more interested in the ability to leverage social tools to facilitate student engagement with course material and to encourage the learning process. Social media-embedded pedagogy enables educators to provide learning experiences that scaffold deeper learning and situate learning in problem-solving and inquiry. Studies such as those reported by Krutka and Milton (2013) and McClain (2013) illustrate the potential for social media to support critical thinking in K to 12 education. In the former, students in a social studies class researched philosophers from the Enlightenment and assumed their persona in Tweets and blogs to other students. Their task was to find areas of agreement and disagreement in their posts and tweets regarding the role of government and the individual in society. In a similar vein, students in McClain's (2013) study of an English class assumed the persona of a character in The Crucible and created a character profile in Edmodo. Students interacted with each other in character through their posts. Nicolaidou's (2013) study provided evidence for how e-

portfolios can support the development of students' showcasing their learning and receiving feedback in this learning. Finally, Lalonde and Castro (2015) - both educators who work with at-risk teenagers - found that the use of social media was engaging to their students and created a sense of community where teachers and learners co-constructed knowledge. Today's educators are finding new ways to use social media to make learning more engaging for students. With the help of social media, students can have real-time dialogues with experts, museums, publishers, and journalists. Students today can promote and showcase their learning via social media and e-portfolios; this virtual sharing affords the opportunity to receive feedback from peers or teachers in the school, family members from home, or from experts from around the world around the world.

Australian education researchers Selwyn, Perrotta, Pangrazio, and Nemorin (2019) use a methodological approach described as 'social science fiction' and they imagine how innovative technologies, such as social media, might cause change for learning and schools for the year 2030. First, they suspect that due to the affordances of digital technologies, schools (and essentially learning) will be engaged with on a continuous basis, regardless of time, space or place. Second, they describe how schools will be 'platformatized' institutions where most operational aspects will or could remain beholden to a school management platform, where every aspect of the child and their learning will be digitally stored. Third, they hypothesize that schools will have an almost complete dependency on data generated by digital technologies. Selwyn et al. say there will be a rise in the 2020s in "facial detection, body gestures, galvanic skin response and other biometric techniques to detect people's moods, emotions and intentions, as well as measurements of neurological activity and 'brain data' as a basis for guiding behaviour change" (2019, p. 14). The researchers in this study claim that these advances in digital technologies will create increased senses of exhaustion, excitement, boredom, thrills, discomfort and relief associated with digitally driven schooling. As conveyed by the OECD (2019), innovation in education improves some aspect of education. With the examples provided by Selwyn et al. (2019),

social media have the potential to increase the amount of time a student will learn in a day and make the traditional classroom an irrelevant factor for learning. Also, Selwyn et al.'s classroom of 2030 will use social media platforms to track student neurological activity and 'brain data.' If a teacher is able to use these platforms to understand what is going on for her learners, then she will be able to plan her teaching and learning times accordingly. Selwyn et al.'s (2019) school of 2030 will rely on social media platforms to innovate the way teachers teach and students learn.

Innovation in education should lead to some form of educational improvement (OECD, 2019). Dumont et al. (2010) claim that learning is socially negotiated with others. Social media in education provides for new opportunities to increase the social nature of learning (Johnson, Riel, & Froese-Germain, 2016, Nicolaidou, 2013; Tucker, 2015; Vega and Robb, 2019).

Social media for enhancing school culture. A positive school culture contributes to more consistent attendance, higher student achievement, and other desirable student outcomes (Hinduja & Patchin, 2012). Social media can create academic support networks among peers (Khan, Wohn, & Ellison, 2014; Mao, 2014; Wohn, Ellison, Fewins-Bliss, & Gray, 2013), improve the student-teacher relationship (Nowell, 2014), and, with proper education, be used as a platform to spread kindness among the school community (Cassidy, Jackson, & Brown, 2009, 2012a; Hinduja & Patchin, 2012; Kaya & Bicen, 2016).

Social media can benefit school culture in the way that it can create academic support networks among peers (Khan, Wohn, & Ellison, 2014; Mao, 2014; Wohn et al., 2013). Khan et al. (2014) say "the high rates of [Facebook] membership among high school students, meaning often all or most of one's classmates are available on a single platform, is helpful when students have class-related questions" (p. 141). Students are building their learning communities and supporting each other on Facebook via Facebook messages, status updates, posts to a Facebook study group, and by posting on a friend's "wall"

(Wohn et al., 2013). Social media have allowed for learning communities to extend beyond the walls of the classroom.

Not only does social media have the ability to create greater support networks among peers, it is also being recognized as having the ability to increase the student-teacher relationship (Nowell, 2014). Nowell (2014) explains how positive student-teacher relationships contribute to a positive classroom experience:

> …teachers form a care-filled bond with students, which Noddings (1986) described as an
> "ethical friendship where teachers and students 'work together' in order to achieve moral and
> intellectual growth" (p. 509) … [and] Beutel (2010) and Van Maele and Van Houtte (2011)
> found when students shared positive relationships with teachers they were more engaged and
> successful in the classroom. (2014, p. 111)

Nowell (2014) concludes in her literature review, and re-states the same message in the discussion part of her article, that social media creates spaces for teachers and students to work together to sustain learning and improve their relationships.

Cassidy, et al. (2009, 2012a) and Hinduja and Patchin (2012) argue that a school that is mindful of cyber-meanness and positive online behaviours – or what is being called "cyber-kindness" - can positively influence school culture. Cassidy et al. (2012a) provide a few examples of what cyber-kindness can look like: complimenting a friend's social media picture, wishing a classmate a "happy birthday" on a social media, or generally, treating others with respect in online environments. The correlation between school culture and cyber-meanness or cyber-kindness is clear: Hinduja and Patchin (2012a) found in their study that students who experienced cyberbullying (both those who were victims and those who admitted to cyberbullying others) perceived a more negative climate at their school than those who had not experienced cyberbullying. Cassidy et al. (2009) urge schools to adopt proactive strategies that will improve students' online behaviour (p. 400) and they (Cassidy et al., 2012a) also

claim that "it is important for all concerned parties to find ways to cultivate positive online behaviors rather than merely trying to curtail the negative ones" (p. 416). In addition, Kaya and Bicen (2016) claim that online kindness can also "increase student self-confidence" (p. 377). Schools that are explicit about teaching cyber-kindness can positively affect school culture.

The first section of the literature review showed how social media usage differs based on individual demographics and age. It also listed some of the social media misbehaviours often committed by young people. This second part of the literature review looked at the goals of innovation in education: simply put the goal is to improve some part of teaching and learning (OECD, 2019). Social media as a learning tool has the ability to increase student engagement (Krutka and Milton, 2013; McClain, 2013; Nicolaidou, 2013), make teaching reportedly 'easier' for teachers (Cassidy et al., 2012b; Johnson, Riel, & Froese-Germain, 2016; Vega and Robb, 2019), and create new social opportunities that relate to learning (Lalonde & Castro, 2015). The literature review also used Selwyn et al.'s (2019) work to paint a picture of how social media and digital technologies have the potential to change schools of the future. The next part of the literature review will look at how school principals are responding to social media.

Social Media and School Principals

Challenges for principals. School principals are left with the difficult decision of outweighing the positives against the negatives when it comes to embracing social media in schools (Vander Broek, Puizis, & Brown, 2009). For example, the young people interviewed in Stevens, Gillard-Matthews, Dunaev, Woods, and Brawner's (2017) study routinely shared that disagreements online escalate and spill over into physical fights at school. One participant in this study provided an example, "one time, a girl was arguing with another girl on Facebook, I guess she said something about her picture, and she brought it to her attention at school and they ended up fighting." (p. 957). For reasons such as this, many school principals are reluctant to bring social media into classrooms, and Powers and Green (2016) have

narrowed this reluctance down to three main concerns: the social media misbehaviours that are common with young people, student privacy issues, and access issues.

As schools consider the use of social media, consideration must be given to the potential that some students may bring their social media misbehaviors into the learning environment. Common social media misbehaviours committed by young people are cyberbullying and sexting, which can be committed on or off of school property (Blease, 2015; Freitas, 2017; Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, 2015; Madden et al., 2013; O'Keefe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011; Siegle, 2010; Vandebosche & Cleemput, 2009). Although many of these incidents occur off of school property and not during school hours, the majority of vice principals in Corrigan and Robertson's (2015) study felt it was their duty to respond in order to keep students safe. Some schools are responding to these challenges by educating students on proper digital citizenship - which Frau-Meigs, O'Neill, Soriani, and Tome (2017) define as "the ability to have competent and positive engagement with digital technologies" (p. 15), strengthening student policy regarding offenses, intentional community building (Horowitz & Bollinger, 2014), and educating about and encouraging cyber-kindness (Cassidy et al., 2012, 2013).

School principals embracing social media in academic environments need to protect student privacy (Whitehead, Floyd & Decker, 2013). Although students today are skillful and comfortable with sharing copious amounts of information about themselves on social media, Canadian school principals, bound by Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), are concerned that students' personal information or preferences may be publicly revealed or hacked on social media sites if they are used as part of instruction or in an academic setting (Baule & Lewis, 2012). With some social media sites, teachers can create class accounts where students are enrolled through class identifiers rather than personal information (Pacansky-Brock & Ko, 2013). On other social media sites, such as Google Classroom, teachers can invite students to a closed group that is only available to students within the

class. Principals have a right to ensure student safety and privacy, and when choosing to become a social media-friendly school, principals ought to keep student information private.

As Powers and Green (2016) highlight, access to digital tools and networks is a final concern for principals (Hughes & Burke, 2014). While reports about the pervasiveness of student ownership of smart-phones and devices continue to climb, as mentioned earlier in this paper, a digital divide still exists between wealthy and not-wealthy students (Perrin, 2015; Rideout, 2015; Stephen et al., 2017). Some schools are addressing these concerns through providing access to computer labs and computers in the library before and after school, placing Wi-Fi on school buses and working with public libraries (McCrea, 2015). Ultimately, it is the role of the school principal to narrow the digital divide and secure access to computers and devices, and possibly even social media applications, that will enhance learning. Hughes and Burke (2014) argue that principals can narrow the digital divide by (a) increasing educator's skill level around technology and social media, and (b) providing proper technological resources (p. 105).

While principals may want to embrace social-media friendly schools, they will also need to be prepared to deal with the issues that come with young people who use social media. Powers and Green (2016) claim the three biggest problems that principals face when adopting social media in school is: social media misbehaviours, student privacy issues, and access issues. In choosing how to respond to these problems, school principals need to heed extreme caution.

School district policies. Smale and Hill (2016) advocate for school districts to have clearly defined and enforced policies with regard to students' social media usage. MacKay, Sutherland, and Pochini (2013) state that principals and schools must create these policies, whilst acknowledging the rights and expectations of freedom of speech and expression in addressing issues and problems that social media and cell phones may cause for schools.

Unfortunately, when it comes to social media policies and school leadership, there are more examples of failed policies than there are of policies that have worked. Bradley Shear is a Maryland-based lawyer who counsels educational institutions about technology law and policies. This next section of the literature review will outline some examples of failed social media policies in schools, as explained in Shear's (2015) article.

Lamar High School (Texas) required its baseball players to follow "Lamar Baseball" on Twitter and Instagram, and it required the players to allow Lamar Baseball to follow them. This allowed for the baseball coach to have full access to what the students were posting on their social media. This example of a policy created for an American high school clearly violates the first (freedom of speech) and fourth amendment (freedom against unreasonable searches) rights of students. When creating policies around social media, school districts must remember not to implement overly restrictive policies that create unintended legal liabilities.

When a school has a reasonable suspicion that a student has broken the law or school rules, it has the right to search a student's personal belongings on school grounds. In cases of cyberbullying or online threats, some districts have been going as far as requesting access to students' personal digital devices or social media accounts. To date, there are two cases where school districts have been successfully sued for what was deemed as "unconstitutional searches" of students' social media. The first occurred in 2010 at a Pennsylvania school district where they were sued $33,000, and the second occurred in 2014, where a Minnesota school district was sued $70,000. Because of the vague and subjective words "reasonable suspicion," 20 states have now enacted laws that regulate when a school may request access to students' social media accounts. When a school district violates a student's right to social media privacy, this can result in hefty, unforeseen legal costs to a school or school district.

Some larger school districts in the United States are hiring social media monitoring companies to scan the publicly accessible social media posts that are posted from school property (Marwick, Fontaine,

boyd; 2017). This has led to several student expulsions – 12 of the 14 students who were expelled are students of colour. This now has the district facing public backlash from members of the black community. The community is upset as they feel the new social media monitoring company is unfairly targeting students of colour. Schools do not have the legal duty to monitor students on social media, and with this, there is a possible unintended consequence for schools to consider. If districts continue to hire social media monitoring companies, it may be signaling to the judicial system that school districts are willing to be held legally responsible for personal digital content posted by their students. Shear (2015) reminds school district leaders that with access and knowledge comes legal and financial responsibility. Further to this, one study (Vickery, 2015) concludes that the concern of schools' normalizing surveillance of students' use of social media spans beyond just the legal implications – Vickery claims this surveillance will also "undoubtedly shape the way [young people] construct their identities, communication, and social practices." (p. 399). Hiring social media companies can have unintended, and potentially intended, consequences for students.

In 2008, two students created a disparaging, fake Myspace account for their vice-principal. An appeals court sided with the students and dismissed the defamation claim that the vice-principal had made. Since then, several states have enacted laws that target cyberbullying and harassment, while others have tackled online impersonation laws. Several districts are now unclear about who is governing students on social media – is it the school's responsibility to resolve these issues, or are they matters where law enforcement needs to be involved?

These four examples of school district's failed social media policies emphasize the caution that school leaders need to take when responding to social media in schools. In the first example, the American baseball coach clearly violated the American constitution, specifically the first (freedom of speech) and fourth amendments (freedom against unreasonable searches) by requiring his players give him access to their social media accounts. The second example with the two schools demanding access

to students' social media accounts shows how schools can be successfully sued when they go too far with their social media policies. Another failed social media policy was seen in the third example, where districts that hired social media monitoring companies had the unintended consequence of being held legally responsible for personal digital content posted by their students. The last example highlighted the importance of school policies being backed by state laws. Many of the failed policies could have been avoided if districts' social media policies had been more relevant, less restrictive, and more specific.

Before this section is brought to a close, it should also be mentioned that school districts are not the only governing bodies that are creating policies and rules around social media. Some Canadian cities and provinces are also attempting to stop cyberbullying related issues by creating bylaws and laws which create serious consequences for offenders (Smale, 2016). First, Kiedrowski, Smale, and Gounko (2009) reported that the City of Regina, Saskatchewan, passed a bylaw in 2006 allowing for fines of up to $2000 for those 12 and over who cyberbully in a public location. Second, the Province of Ontario has passed a law which enabled schools to expel student cyberbullies (Kiedrowski et al., 2009) – regardless of whether the harassment took place on school premises or during after-school hours. Practices such as these further Selwyn's (2019) notion that the school of the future will exist outside of traditional time and place restraints. School districts are not alone in attempting to create policies and rules around social media usage.

Open to learning (OLC) social media conversations. Because social media are evolving so quickly, schools and school districts need to collaborate with their students and stakeholders in creating policies that pertain to social media. There is current research that suggests the importance for principals to collaborate with others (Hargreaves, Boyle & Harris, 2014; Moolenaar & Sleegers, 2014). Young people today are driving the technology train and school principals and leaders need to embrace conversations that include young people at the table. Robinson (2011) discusses the idea of school teams transitioning from Closed-to-Learning Conversations (CLCs) to Open-to-Learning Conversations

(OLCs). Unfortunately, there are many examples of where schools have attempted to tackle the social

media influenza by adopting the CLC mindset and mandating district-wide policies against the usage of

technology or cell phones at school. As discussed above (Shear, 2015), these mandated policies have

shown to have little success. Kiedrowski, Smale, and Gounko (2009) argue "a complete ban [of social

media] would not solve the problem of policing students, and, in fact, might result in more detriment

than benefit to the learning environment because of the administrators' perceived heavy-handedness and

lack of responsibility in treating students" (p. 43). Robinson (2011) claims that when school leaders

impose their views rather than invite conversation, they create a variety of negative reactions with their

stakeholders.

Perhaps the most telling case of a district taking a CLC-approach to technology is the example of

the New York City Department of Education (New York City Department of Education, 2007). In 2007,

about the time when cell phones first started becoming more noticeable in high schools, the New York

City Department of Education created a policy in their district-wide policy handbook that prohibited

students from bringing electronic devices to school. They were not open to learning about the

perspectives and insights of students and parents - the district mandated a CLC policy and, although

well-intentioned, they naively hoped that technology would stop interfering with learning. Because of

the new policy, dramatic fallout occurred with the Association of New York City Education Councils,

an advocacy group for parents of City public school students, and New York's executive board of the

United Federation of Teachers. These groups denounced the heavy-handedness of the policy, which

became the target of an unsuccessful 2007 court challenge in the case of Price et al. v. New York City

Board of Education. The basis of the case was that "the school board had overreached its statutory

authority and acted arbitrarily and capriciously and that parents had been denied their constitutional right

to communicate with their children" (Kiedrowski, Smale, & Gounko, 2009, p. 44). The New York City

Department of Education is not the only school district who has engaged with a CLC mindset with regards to students and cell phones.

As schools struggle with regulating student cell phone use, it appears as if banning cell phones is becoming increasingly popular. In July of 2018, the French government passed a law which banned cell phones in schools. In a Canadian context, cellphones will also be banned in schools in the province of Ontario during instructional time, starting in September of 2019. It should be mentioned that not all districts are satisfied with this ban - the Toronto District School Board used to have a cellphone ban, but reversed it after four years to let teachers dictate what works best for their classrooms. In a Canadian Broadcasting Company news article, the author writes "the Toronto District School Board has previously said that enforcing an outright ban was next to impossible, and said that to curb technology use would be to place limits on educational opportunities as well" (Jones, 2019). There is conflicting research about the effectiveness of banning cell phones in schools; one study claims that banning cell phones in schools leads to improved test scores (Beland & Murphy, 2016) and another claims that it is impossible to enforce and thus only creates more problems for schools (Knobel & Lankshear, 2018).

Based on multiple examples (Kiedrowski et al., 2009; Knobel & Lankshear, 2018; New York City Department of Education, 2007; Shear, 2015) it is evident that a top-down and heavy-handed approach to rectifying social medias problems is ineffective. Instead of approaching social media and technology with a CLC mindset, school leaders ought to consider adopting an OLC mindset and have conversations with students and families about appropriate cell phone usage.

Again, and especially because social media are so rapidly changing and evolving, school leaders need to include all stakeholders, but especially their students, in OLCs around technology and social media usage. Robinson (2011) describes OLCs as having three key characteristics: (a) they pursue valid information, (b) they include the assumption and belief that others are well-intentioned, and (c) they increase the internal rather than external commitment to decisions (p. 38-39). To illustrate these OLC

characteristics, a school leader who is facing challenges with social media in her school may want to host a community night, where parents, students, teacher, and other community professionals (i.e., counsellors, IT people, or coaches) are invited to engage in a social media OLC. Because the school leader values valid information, she will first attempt to listen to all involved parties with regards to what has been happening on social media and how it is affecting the climate of the school. Next, as this is happening, the school leader will show that she believes others are well-intentioned by listening deeply and showing great respect for what is being said, "without respect, leaders will not be able to build the relational trust that is needed to get good feedback about their thinking" (Robinson, 2011, p. 39). Third, to increase the internal commitment around safe and kind social media usage, the school leader will be transparent as possible in the shared problem-solving process. According to the OLC characteristics, when stakeholders have opportunity to exercise influence over school leadership, and when school leaders are frank and clear about their views, all parties are more likely to be committed to school decisions.

Technology leadership. Open-to-learning conversations are at the core of technology leadership. Brown and Jacobsen (2016) assert that "principals' technology leadership is a facet of leadership in the digital age that deserves increased attention and study" (p. 812). MacKay et al. (2013) argue that school administrators must ensure that schools are having conversations around appropriate "cyberconduct" and about the proper and safe use of social media. Regardless of their willingness, by default, school principals are technology leaders. Demski's (2012) report explains the seven key attributes needed for school principals to be successful technology leaders. Similarly, Leithwood (2011) discusses four core practices that are done by all successful school leaders. The next two sections discuss how principals can be successful technology and social media leaders.

Demski's 7 key attributes for principals to be successful technology leaders. Demski (2012) reports on a nationwide consensus of the attributes required for technology leaders to be successful.

According to this study, the critical components of technology leadership are (a) creating an atmosphere that inspires innovation, (b) fostering collaboration, (c) being open to new ideas, (d) being a connected learner personally, (e) locating and providing appropriate resources, (f) taking risks, and (g) having a visionary focus. Having an OLC mindset is critical in all seven of these attributes, as having open-to-learning conversations and open collaboration is foundational with the seven attributes listed above. School principals will have more success in creating social media-friendly schools if they create innovative teaching atmospheres, foster collaboration around social media education, maintain open to new ideas about teaching and learning, stay curious, provide their teachers with appropriate social media-needed resources, take risks, and keep to their vision of being a social media-friendly school. School principals who adopt a technology leadership mindset, and possess some technological fluency, will have greater success in creating school atmospheres that embrace social media.

School leaders can no longer avoid social media. It has infiltrated the school system and Powers and Green (2016) have narrowed the three main social media concerns expressed by principals to the social media misbehaviours that are common with young people, student privacy issues, and access issues. There is a great amount of evidence of failed school or school district policy with regards to social media (Kiedrowski, Smale, & Gounko, 2009; New York City Department of Education, 2007; Shear, 2015). Instead of school leaders making top-down decisions with regards to social media in education, Robinson (2011) argues that, with any type of educational innovation decision, open-to-learning conversations need to be at the forefront and Demski (2012) explains how this is done by embracing the attributes of technology leadership.

Leithwood's four core practices. Leithwood (2011) looked at sixteen different studies, and from these studies, he identified four core practices that are done by all successful school leaders. These practices are classified as setting directions, developing people, redesigning the organization, and

improving the instructional program. Although Leithwood's focus was specifically on practices that

support and improve classroom instruction (p. 58), I would contend that these practices could also make

a positive difference in creating spaces that teach and encourage students to make kinder online choices.

Setting directions. Leithwood (2011) describes setting directions as having three main

components: building a shared vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, creating high performing

expectations, and communicating the direction to the involved stakeholders (p. 59). To add to this,

Robinson (2011) says, "goal setting helps [leaders] to sleep at night because it forces explicit

consideration of what has high priority, what has lower priority, and what must be let go altogether" (p.

48). Like Leithwood, Robinson asserts that the vision must be collective rather than imposed, as "goal

setting works when people are committed to goals that they believe they have the capacity to achieve"

(p. 51). Culminated together, these practices capture what Fullan (2003) calls creating a "moral

purpose," which essentially is a stimulant for a team to do what needs to be done. The first step in

addressing a school-wide social media problem is for the principal to bring all stakeholders together and

acknowledge that it is a problem and to collectively create a direction for how they would like to tackle

the issue.

Developing people. The second practice that successful school leaders incorporate, according to

Leithwood (2011), is developing people. Developing people can include the following

practices: providing individualized support and consideration, offering intellectual

stimulation, and modeling appropriate values and practices (p. 60). These practices aim to communicate

the leader's respect for her colleagues; in a school context, it shows that the principal has a vested

interest in what her teachers are doing well and also in supporting the underdeveloped areas of the

individual. Leithwood (2011) claims that the primary aim of developing people is to build capacity,

"People are motivated by what they are good at." (Robinson, 2011, p. 60). It is essential for a principal

to know the strengths and weaknesses of her staff so that she can create stronger, more effective,

teachers. Robinson adopts Bryk and Schneider's (2002) idea of "relational trust." Bryk and Schneider

found that schools with strong levels of trust at the outset of reforms had a 1-in-2 chance of making

significant improvements in math and reading, while those with weak relationships had a 1-in-7 chance

of making gains. They contend that schools with a high degree of relational trust are far more likely to

make the kinds of changes that help raise student achievement than those where relations are poor. For a

school experiencing social media difficulties, after a collective learning direction has been created, a

school leader may want to focus her energies on developing staff's understanding of social media and

how it affects students, both positively and negatively.

Refining and aligning the school organization. Another core practice that is a part of the

successful school leader's repertoire is refining and aligning the school organization. This is done

through: building collaborative cultures, restructuring the organization to support collaboration, building

productive relationships with families and communities, and connecting the school to the wider

community (Leithwood, 2012, p. 60). Leithwood (2012) says, "there is little to be gained by increasing

people's motivation and capacity if working conditions will not allow their effective application" (p.

60). People experience motivation when they believe the circumstances in which they find themselves

are conducive to accomplishing the goals they hold to be personally important. If staff feel the goal is

attainable and the conditions are appropriate, then staff motivation will likely be high. To do this,

Robinson encourages a holistic rather than disciplinary approach to dealing with student (mis)behaviour

(p. 128). Robinson suggests the first step to increasing student engagement is to get students to school

and in class. She agrees that although students' attendance reflects their health and what is happening at

home, it is also responsive to what is happening at school (p. 129). Robinson says "Leaders in peaceful

schools turned their vision into reality by working with staff to develop policies and procedures that

were consistently carried out" (p. 130). Refining and aligning a school's organization and culture are crucial components to building schools that promote positive social media usage with students.

Improving the instructional program. Leithwood's fourth core practice, improving the instructional program, includes the specific practices of: staffing the program, providing instructional support, monitoring school activity, buffering staff from distractions to their work, and aligning resources. These practices have the most direct effect on student learning and they directly shape the nature and quality of instruction in classrooms (Leithwood, 2012, p. 61). Unlike the other three core practices, improving the instructional program falls under Leithwood's (2012) category of "instructional action," which occurs when a principal is actively engaged in "providing direct instructional support to teachers" (p. 77). This could also be called an "instructional leadership" approach to leading a school. Educators need to be having conversations with students about their social media usage – these conversations need to be embedded throughout instructional programs and lessons in schools.

Summary

Livingstone et al.'s (2017) claim that current research around children and the Internet should be holistic, in terms of understanding their embodied, located and social as well as online selves. There is ample research that speaks to teen and preteen social media usage. For example, it is known that 85% of teens today are regular users of social media (Pew Research Center, 2018), that they spend two hours on social media per day (Rideout, 2015), that 67% own a smartphone capable of accessing social media (Rideout, 2015), and that as of 2018, YouTube, Snapchat, and Instagram were the most popular platforms by teens (Pew Research Center, 2018). It is also known that age plays a factor with social media usage (Perrin, 2015).

What is less known is how children, specifically Canadian children, are engaging with social media. As of 2011, a little over a third of children in the EU reported to having a social media profile

(Livingstone, 2011). As of 2014, a third of grade four to six children report to having active Facebook accounts (Steeves, 2014). As of 2015, two thirds of children in New Zealand reported using Internet activities like gaming and YouTube daily (Broadcasting Standards Authority & NZ On Air, 2015). Further and updated research on children's use of social media, specifically within a Canadian context, is needed.

In regards to social media and gender, girls are using social media at slightly higher rates than boys (Pacheco & Melhuish, 2018; Pew Research Center, 2007, 2015; Rideout, 2015), but boys are being meaner online than girls (Steeves, 2014). The research has also been clear in stating that urban young adult residents are more likely to use social media than their rural resident counterparts (Perrin, 2015), but inconsistent when it discusses social media usage and ethnicity (Perrin, 2015; Rideout, 2015). Preteens and teens from lower-income families have fewer digital technologies in their homes; however, they are spending more time with social media than those from higher-income homes (Rideout, 2015; Stephens et al., 2016). Lastly, there is ample research that discusses how young people are misusing social media (Blease, 2015; Freitas, 2017; Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, 2015; Madden et al., 2013; O'Keefe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011; Siegle, 2010; Vandebosche & Cleemput, 2009). O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) have categorized these problems into four distinct categories: cyberbullying, sexting, "Facebook depression," and concerns around privacy.

Next, the literature review looked at social media in schools. Social media can create problems for schools with the social media misbehaviours listed above (Blease, 2015; Freitas, 2017; Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, 2015; Madden et al., 2013; O'Keefe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011; Siegle, 2010; Vandebosche & Cleemput, 2009), it can be a significant distraction in the classroom (Lederer, 2012), and school bandwidths are already strained to capacity (Campbell, 2013). However, the literature also discussed how social media can benefit student learning and school culture. The OECD states that innovation in education should lead to some form of educational improvement (OECD, 2019). MediaSmarts (2016)

found that 79% of teachers agree that networked technologies are making it easier for their students to

learn (p. 3), and 20% of educators today are implementing some form of social media into their

instruction (K-12 Teachers, 2014, p. 135). Social media can benefit student learning in its ability to

support critical thinking in K to 12 education (Krutka & Milton, 2013; McClain, 2013) and to provide

new social opportunities for students (Dumont et al., 2010). Selwyn et al. (2019) propose that the school

of 2030 will be greatly impacted by digital technologies, such as social media; they propose that schools

will no longer have time and space constraints, be heavily 'platformized', and almost completely

dependent on digital data. The second way the literature suggests that social media can benefit schools is

with its ability to positively enhance school culture. Social media can benefit school culture in the way

that it can create academic support networks among peers (Khan, Wohn, & Ellison, 2014; Mao, 2014;

Wohn, Ellison, Fewins-Bliss, & Gray, 2013) and it has the ability to increase the student-teacher

relationship (Nowell, 2014).

The third and final part of the literature review looked at how social media affects school

principals. The research (Canadian Association of Principals, 2014; Powers & Green, 2016; Shear,

2015; Young, Tully & Ramirez, 2017) is clear in stating that, although many want to include social

media in their schools, principals are struggling in their responses to rectify the ills of social media.

Similar to O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson's (2011) categorization of social media problems, Powers and

Green (2016) have narrowed down principals' three main social media concerns: the social media

misbehaviours that are common with young people, student privacy issues, and access issues. Shear

(2015) argues that schools need to heed caution when creating policies around social media, as there are

more examples of failed policies than there are of policies that have worked. To avoid principals

creating more failed social media policies, the literature review then closed by looking at Robinson's

(2011) OLC's and leadership theory.

As analyzed in the literature review, there is ample research on how teens and preteens are using social media, but less is known about how children are using it. Several studies have now called for new research on children's use of social media (Felt & Robb, 2016; Kowalski et al., 2014; Pacheco & Melhuish, 2019). Further to this, school principals are struggling to deal with problems (e.g., cyberbullying, sexting, privacy issues, depression) associated with young people using social media even when social media applications and mobile devices are banned during the school day (Canadian Association of Principals, 2014; Powers & Green, 2016; Shear, 2015; Young, Tully & Ramirez, 2017). Gaining a deeper understanding of how children are using social media may aid school principals and educators in reducing negative social media behaviors and promoting positive social media usage in and out of school. Hence, this is an area that requires study.

Chapter 3

Methodology and Methods

Introduction

In seeking to understand this phenomenon, the study addressed one central question and four follow-up questions. The central question was: How do children engage with social media and what are elementary school principals' perceptions about and leadership practices related to student social media usage? The four follow-up questions included: (a) What types of social media are children most using? (b) How and why do children use social media? (c) What is the elementary principal's perception of children's use of social media? (d) What leadership practices are elementary principals using to support positive student social media usage?

In this chapter, I described the study's research methodology and included the following areas: (a) theoretical underpinnings, (b) rationale for qualitative study, (c) rationale for case study methodology, (d) research setting, (e) research participant recruitment, (f) data collection methods, (g) data collection procedure, (h) analyzing case study evidence, (i) ethical considerations, (j) trustworthiness, and (k) delimitations.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Rooted in Vygotsky's (1978) work that learning is a social enterprise, I would describe myself as a social constructivist and interpretivist. Vygotsky (1978) was one of the first theorists to make the claim that there were multiple ontologies and that knowledge was socially constructed. He claimed that learning takes place not in isolation, but rather, in social settings or arrangements. Specifically, he observed that as learners interacted with more experienced peers, teachers, or parents, they were able to advance beyond their present level of development to a higher one. To expand on this idea and relate it to the study's topic of social media, it could also be argued that social media are places where people co-construct meaning and knowledge on a regular basis.

Similar to social constructivists, interpretivists believe research on human beings by human beings cannot yield objective results (Miller, 2004). Interpretation involves attaching significance to findings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 133) and as Patton (2002) explains: "An interesting and readable report provides sufficient description to allow the reader to understand the basis for an interpretation, and sufficient interpretation to allow the reader to appreciate the description" (p. 503). My epistemological views are in alignment with the idea that meaning and learning are social constructs; as such, I chose to design a study that afforded student participant agency and the co-creation of new knowledge.

Rationale for Qualitative Research

A qualitative approach to this study was beneficial for many reasons. First, according to Patton (2002) "qualitative methods facilitate study of issues in depth and detail. Approaching fieldwork without being constrained by predetermined categories of analysis contributes to the depth, openness, and detail of qualitative inquiry" (p. 14). Therefore, with my research focused clearly on developing a deeper understanding of children's usage with social media and their principals' perceptions and leadership practices of this usage, a qualitative approach provided for the depth, openness and detail of inquiry this study demanded. Conversely, I could have subscribed to a quantitative approach to this study which, according to Patton (2002), would have allowed me to measure the social media experiences of more children and elementary principals and therefore would have made the findings more generalizable. This was the approach taken by many of the studies described in the literature review – especially the ones from the big research institutes such as Pew Research Center, Cyberbully Research Center, MediaSmarts, and Common Sense Media. However, the strength of qualitative research is that it "typically produces a wealth of detailed information about a much smaller number of people and cases. This increases the depth of understanding of the cases and situations studied…." (p. 14). With reference to this study, and in contrast to the rigidity of quantitative research, qualitative research allowed me to

have a holistic understanding of the individual's experiences – both, the individual child and the individual principal - with social media.

This study also benefited from an emergent and flexible design, which is a qualitative research characteristic, as identified by researchers like Creswell (2012) and Bloomberg and Volpe (2012). In this qualitative study, I was responsible for all data collection and did not rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers. According to Creswell (2012), "qualitative researchers collect data themselves…they may use a protocol—an instrument for collecting data—but the researchers are the ones who actually gather the information" (p. 175). Likewise, in keeping with Creswell's parameters for qualitative research, this study's design was emergent meaning that: "the initial plan for research was not tightly prescribed, and all phases of the process may change or shift after the researcher enters the field and begins to collect data" (pp. 175-176). With the research I conducted, it was imperative for the study to be free-flowing and not tightly-prescribed; to give depth to the research, I needed to be responsive to what I was learning in each phase of the study and then go a little deeper with the next phase. To give a few examples of this, the data from the student questionnaires tailored the questions for the student focus groups, the data from the first student focus group influenced the questions created for the second focus group, and the principal interviews were semi-structured and went in different directions depending on what came up in conversation. The emergent design of this study afforded me a deeper understanding of how children are using various social media platforms and of how their principals are being affected by this usage.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), qualitative research is also a situated activity that locates the observer in the world and consists of a set of interpretive practices that make the world visible. Similarly, Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) identify six key features to qualitative research, and two of these are: (a) developing contextual understanding and (b) adopting an interpretive stance. Given that I have been a teacher, counsellor, and now vice principal, and have had many experiences with children

and social media, it was important to place myself and my experiences in the research. As such, the

epistemological stance for this study was of a qualitative, constructivist, and interpretivist nature.

In summary, because the goal of qualitative inquiry is to elicit understanding and meaning

pertaining to a certain phenomenon (elementary children's usage of social media and their principal's

perceptions and leadership practices pertaining to it) and I adopted an emergent and flexible design that

went deeper as the study progressed, and since I used fieldwork to gather, record and analyze findings

and then report them in a descriptive manner – all while situating myself and my experiences in this

process - my inquiry lends itself to a qualitative approach.

Rationale for Case Study Methodology

Given that I conceive knowledge as being socially constructed and emerging from peoples' social

practices, my case study is most epistemologically aligned with Merriam (1998) and Stake (1995). Stake

(1995) mentions four defining characteristics of qualitative research that fit well with qualitative case

studies: holistic, empirical, interpretive, and emphatic. The study I conducted was both holistic and

interpretive. Holistic characteristics refer to the interrelation between the phenomena and the context

(Stake, 1995). My study was holistic, as I attempted to understand how children engage with social

media, and how their principals make sense of this and lead accordingly, within a specific geographic

context. The interpretive characteristics of the study were reflected in the researcher-subject interaction

of data generation and, further, in my development of analysis, processes that are in tune with my

constructivist epistemology (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995).

A case study is an intensive description and analysis of a bounded social phenomenon, often

including multiple methods of data collection (Creswell, 2015; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). Much like

Stake's definition, Merriam mentions three distinct characteristics of a case study. She says they must be

'particularistic' (focused on a specific situation), 'descriptive' (a complete account of the happenings),

and 'heuristic' (gives the reader further insight into the happenings). Her definition, as quoted, is "an

intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit" (p. xiii). Thus, I define my study as a single case study; the students and principals in the study all belong to a single and bounded system or context, which is one school district in the interior of British Columbia.

Research Setting

Case studies involve a detailed description of a setting and its participants (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012). This case study occurred in a medium-sized urban school district, which was chosen because it is my site of employment. The district serves nearly twenty-two thousand students and expands across two cities and two district municipalities. Within the district, there are 31 elementary schools, six middle schools, five high schools, and one alternative school. With a budget of 221 million dollars, it employs 1300 teachers and 1500 support staff.

With regard to the specific school sites chosen to participate in the study, both School 1 and School 2 are elementary schools. School 1 resides in an upper-middle class neighbourhood and serves approximately 600 students. School 2 resides in a lower-middle class neighbourhood and serves approximately 350 students.

Research Participant Recruitment

Selecting a case to study requires that the researcher establish a rationale for a purposeful sampling strategy. I utilized a purposeful sampling procedure to select the student and principal participants in this study. To yield the most important information about the phenomenon under study, purposeful sampling is a method that aligns well with case study methodology (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990). The logic of purposeful sampling lies in selecting formation-rich cases, with the objective of yielding insight and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

I purposefully emailed two elementary principals – one female and one male - that serve different socio-economic communities within our district with hopes of having them participate in the

study (Appendices B, C, and L). The criteria for the principals selected was that they must either be a principal or a vice-principal at either School 1 or School 2 and they had to consent to volunteer for the study. I was also hoping they would allow me to conduct the study in one grade four or five class from their school, as there is a void of research with regards to how this demographic is engaging with social media. Fortunately, both agreed to volunteer themselves and their school to participate in the study.

After securing the schools that the study would be taking place in, the next step was to find two grade four or five teachers who would be willing to host the study. Principal 1 gave me the name of a grade five teacher who wanted to participate in the study, meanwhile Principal 2 gave me a list of names of grade four and five teachers. With this list of teachers, I chose to email one teacher directly. The teacher from School 2 happened to teach "in community" with another teacher, and thus, the entire community (two classes) wanted to participate in the study. Next, I met with the consenting teachers from the two different schools (separately) and explained the purpose of the study and asked them if they were interested to have their classes volunteer to be a part of the study (Appendices D and E).

Once I obtained consent from principals and teachers, the next step was to obtain consent and assent from student participants. To recruit students, the teachers shared a poster (Appendix M) that went over the basics of the study with their classes and provided students with the Parent Letter and Consent Form (Appendices F and G) to take home. The following day the teachers went over the Student Assent Form (Appendix H) with their students and gave them the choice to participate in the study. The criteria for students to be included in the study was that they had to be in either grade four have a homeroom in one of the two classes (or "communities") being studied, and have obtained parental consent and given student assent to participate in the research.

Data Collection Methods

The use of multiple methods and triangulation, especially with regards to case study methodology, is critical in attempting to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under

study. This strategy, according to Creswell (2015), Denzin and Lincoln (2011), and Stake (1995), adds

rigor, breadth, and depth to the study and provides corroborative evidence of the data obtained.

Therefore, in this study I included a number of different data collection methods, including a survey,

two separate focus groups, and interviews (Figure 3.1).
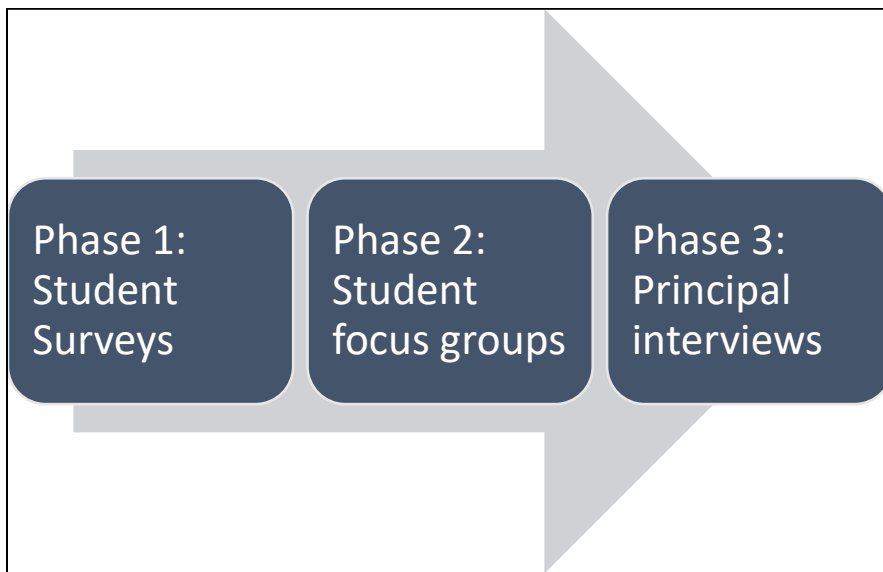
Figure 3.1. Three Phases of Data Collection.

Surveys. Surveys are forms (often written) that ask exact questions of all individuals in a sample

group (Mertler & Charles, 2005). Depending on how the survey is conducted, participants can either

respond together and simultaneously or at their own convenience (Mertler & Charles, 2005). Surveys are

effective tools for standardizing questions and providing comparability measures (Axinn & Pearce,

2007). The advantage of survey methodology is that it is relatively easy to administer and manage

(Fowler, 1993). It is important to note, however, that surveys can be of limited value for examining

complex phenomena. For the purposes of this study, the survey was used to generate some general

information about elementary-aged students and their social media usage. In keeping with the qualitative

research tradition, the survey was designed to include mostly open-ended, short-answer questions. There

were a few questions that elicited responses that could have been quantified. This information, however,

was not meant for statistical purposes; with qualitative research surveys, quantified data is meant to be a snapshot of what is happening in a specific time and place and to inform in a descriptive way.

Focus groups. At the simplest explanation, a focus group is an informal discussion with a group of people about a particular topic. There are four key benefits to the focus group method: (a) they can observe interactions on a specific topic which provides rich and complex data, (b) they are efficient - researchers are able to collect data from several individuals all at the same time instead of having to conduct several different interviews, (c) they are less intimidating than one-to-one interviews, and (d) in the lens of constructionists and postmodernists, they are power-sensitive in that they "create data from multiple voices" (Liamputtong, 2011). Unarguably, the focus group researcher will always have some impact to the data produced; however, focus groups provide rich opportunities for researchers to appreciate the way people see their own realities, and ultimately, to get more intimate with the data.

Practically speaking, focus group interviews consist of between six to ten people who come from similar social and cultural backgrounds or who have similar experiences or concerns. They come together to discuss a specific topic with the help of a moderator in a particular setting where participants feel comfortable enough to engage in a dynamic discussion for a predetermined and specific amount of time. Focus groups do not aim to reach consensus, but rather to provide evidence about similarities and differences in the participants' opinions and experiences. Focus groups in academic settings can be conducted either with great rigidity and structure or with less rigidity and structure (Liamputtong, 2013). Due to the fact that I worked with student participants, I encouraged an easy-going and relaxed structure. The benefit of conducting a focus group in this way was that the participants appeared to be more willing to talk to each other – and add to each other's comments and ideas – instead of simply answering my list of questions.

Furthermore, I decided to incorporate a focus group into this study because of Barbour and Kitzinger's (1998) research that showed that group interviews with children "made the young people more comfortable about attending the sessions" (p. 37), and Bogdan and Biklen (1998) work that showed how focus groups are a particularly appropriate arrangement for student interviews because they encourage young people close in age and in similar roles to talk openly about their experiences. As Liamputtong (2013) states, "the aim of the focus groups in social science research is to understand the participants' meanings and interpretations" (p. 3), and this was certainly my intent as I listened to the children speak to me and to their peers about their social media experiences.

Like all research methods, the focus group method is not without fault. With regards to focus group, the greatest criticism is that the moderator, in the name of maintaining the interview's focus, influences the group's actions. Liamputtong (2011) defends this accusation by refuting that "this problem is hardly unique to focus groups because the researcher influences all but the most unobtrusive social science methods" (p. 8). Further to defend this point, Liamputtong (2011) claims there is no hard evidence that the focus group moderator's impact on the data is any greater on the data than the researcher's impact in two other popular qualitative research methods, participant observation or individual interviewing (p. 8). This being said, without a doubt, the questions I asked and my reactions to student responses, unavoidably influenced the data the students provided.

Interviews. The benefit of the interview method is that it has the ability to elicit rich, detailed descriptions. I used the interview as an opportunity to delve deeper into the adult perspective of how social media have impacted the social nature of elementary schools. Creswell (2012), Denzin and Lincoln (2008), and Marshall and Rossman (2011) claim that a major benefit of collecting data via individual and in-depth interviews is that they offer the potential to capture a person's perspective of an event or experience. The research interview is an "attempt to understand the world from the subject's point of view, to unfold the meaning of the subject's point of view, to unfold the meaning of the

subject's experiences, to uncover their lived world" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 1). Patton (1990) agrees with this claim, asserting that qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" (p. 278). Having conversations with people about their experiences is a legitimate way of gathering information, and thus my decision to have a conversation with elementary principals.

Interview methods, like all methods, also include some limitations. Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) discuss three limitations to interviews (p. 121). They claim not all interview participants are open and willing to share about their experiences, interviews require researcher skill, and interviews are open to researcher bias and misinterpretation. Interviews are not neutral; they are the result of an interaction between a researcher and a participant and the context in which the interview takes place. This being said, I was intentional about making my interview participants feel comfortable and not providing a large reaction by anything they said.

Data Collection Procedure

Prior to collecting any data, the first step was to obtain approval for this study from the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB) of the University of Calgary. Once the CFREB approved the study, the next step was to obtain consent from the district in which the study would take place. A letter outlining the study (Appendix A), as well as the district-created "Application to Conduct Research" package was sent to the superintendent of the school district. Six days after submitting the package to the district, I was notified that my study had been granted district approval. After acquiring consent from both CFREB and my school district, there were three phases to collecting data in this study. The first phase was the student survey, the second phase was the student focus groups, and the third phase was the principal interviews.

Phase 1: Survey.

After the Parent Consent and Student Assent Forms were returned, I identified which parents consented and students assented to have their survey used for research purposes and participate in the student focus group. Following the collection of consent and assent paperwork, I set up a time with classroom teachers to teach a lesson on social media. In order to protect the confidentiality of participants and to preserve instructional time, the student survey was embedded into a curricular classroom activity. As per the requirements of BC curriculum, it is expected that all grade four and five students will be able to "recognize the intersection of their personal and public digital identities and the potential for both positive and negative consequences" (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2017).

For the student survey, I facilitated a lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness in each classroom (the lesson plan is included in Appendix D). Before students began the survey (Appendix I), I provided them with Obar and Wildman's (2015) definition of social media – it includes (a) Web 2.0 Internet-based applications, (b) user-generated content, (c) the user profile, and (d) the ability to facilitate the development of social networks. With regard to specific social media platforms, I allowed students to decide what platforms constituted as social media. The students completed the survey prior to my lesson on social media.

Questions from the student surveys can be found in Appendix I. Despite efforts made to make the surveys appear identical, the only surveys used for research purposes were those for whom Consent Forms and Assent Forms were received. Four different surveys had to be created for this study. School 1 employed Survey 1 (questions for research purposes) and Survey 2 (questions not to be used for research purposes) and School 2 employed Survey 3 (questions for research purposes) and Survey 4 (questions not to be used for research purposes). The slight difference between Surveys 1 and 2, and between Surveys 3 and 4, was the inclusion of a few demographic-based questions for Surveys 1 and 3. However, after looking at the results of the first round of surveys, and because the initial plan with qualitative research "is not tightly prescribed, and all phases of the process may change or shift after the researcher

enters the field and begins to collect data" (Creswell, 2012, p. 175-176), I needed to make some changes to the survey questions.

To help add clarity to the information I was seeking, I made four changes to the surveys used at School 2 (see Appendix O). I changed one question from "how do you use social media," to "what types of things do you upload on social media?" A second change I made was from the question, "Does your teacher ever use social media in your classroom (YouTube, Google Docs, etc)? If yes, do you think this helps you with your learning?", to "How does your teacher use social media in your classroom? What types of things can people learn from social media?" A third change I made to the student surveys was "Do you ever learn about social media at school? If yes, what do you learn about?" to "Do you ever learn about social media at school? If yes, does your teacher ever talk about things that you should do or should not do online?" The last change I made was to the question, "What is your ethnicity?" As a result of the students not understanding the question, I removed the question altogether. A rationale for these changes can be found in Appendices O.

Phase 2: Focus groups. In the given study, I included one focus group per school. I invited every student who wanted to participate and who had parent consent to participate in the focus group. Depending on student interest, I was willing to host multiple focus groups if needed. As an effort to ensure the focus group student participants would not miss out on valuable instructional time, the focus groups were hosted over the lunch hour period and both lasted approximately thirty minutes. The purpose of the focus groups was twofold: (a) to add clarity and depth to the information obtained from the survey, and (b) to provide additional data to ensure trustworthiness and credibility in the study. The questions asked in the student focus group were created based on the analysis of the data gathered from the student survey (see Appendix J). I used a semi-structured and open-ended focus group format to gain a deeper understanding of the students' every-day and general usage of social media.

Phase 3: Interviews. There were two interviews conducted in this study. I interviewed the elementary principals of the two schools that participated in the research. My purpose for the principal interview was twofold: (a) to gather insight about their perceptions of how their elementary-aged students are using social media, and (b) to learn about the leadership practices they use to support positive student social media usage.

Following the interviews, I conducted member checks (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012) with both principals. They were both given two weeks to review, delete, or edit the transcripts. Neither chose to make any changes to the transcripts. This will all done via email correspondence.

Analyzing Case Study Evidence

Case study methodologists differ in their approaches to analyzing data due to their similarities in conceiving reality and knowledge (Yazan, 2015). Data analysis is the process of making sense out of the data and this involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said; ultimately, it is making meaning from the data (Merriam, 1998). Similarly, Stake (1995) describes data analysis as "a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations" (p. 71). Both Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) agree that data collection and data analysis happen simultaneously, as this is a quintessential feature of qualitative research, which distinguishes it from positivist epistemology.

During the stages of data collection, this study benefited from sequential analysis. Essentially, sequential analysis occurs when the results from one phase of a study are used to build the next phase of the study (Creswell, 2015). In this study, this was done as a means to inform the questions asked during phase 2 and phase 3 of the study. This sequential analysis was separate to my actual analysis of the study's data. The survey results (phase 1) influenced the questions asked in the focus group (phase 2). The data from the focus groups influenced the questions that I asked the principals in their interviews (phase 3). With the exception of the sequential analysis, the results of the data from the three different methods in this study were all analyzed at the same time.

With regard to the survey data, the majority of questions asked were open-ended and this data was coded the same way I coded the interview transcripts. There were, however, a few questions asked that had student participants select from a list of pre-designed options (for example, "What types of social media do you use?"). For these questions, I calculated the frequencies of responses by category. I used the raw frequencies data to supplement the qualitative data that I collected as I constructed understandings in relation to my research questions.

My case study adopted data analysis strategies from Creswell (2015); Krueger and Casey (2000); and Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014). I used Creswell's six steps to data analysis as a starting place and as a general framework to analyze the data and two other strategies to support the process (see Figure 3.2.). Within that framework, I analyzed the data using two separate strategies. First, I used Kruger and Casey's "long table" approach, and second, I used a thematic analysis approach guided by the suggestions of Miles et al. (2014).
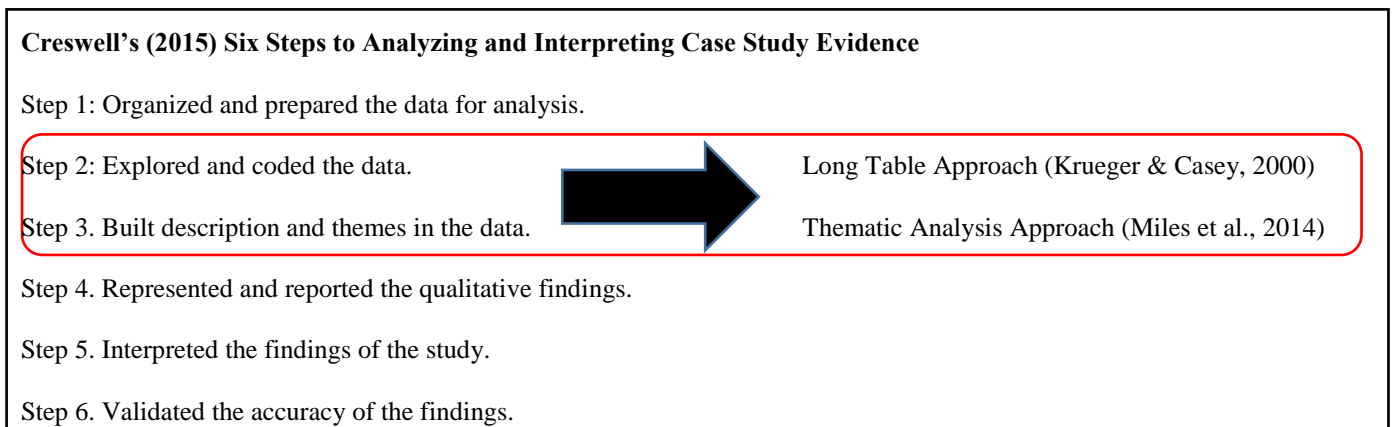
Creswell's (2015) Six Steps to Analyzing and Interpreting Case Study Evidence

Step 1: Organized and prepared the data for analysis.

Step 2: Explored and coded the data.   Long Table Approach (Krueger & Casey, 2000)

Step 3. Built description and themes in the data.   Thematic Analysis Approach (Miles et al., 2014)

Step 4. Represented and reported the qualitative findings.

Step 5. Interpreted the findings of the study.

Step 6. Validated the accuracy of the findings.

Figure 3.2. Data Analysis Process.

Six steps to data analysis. To organize the data analysis process, I used Creswell's (2015) six steps to analyzing and interpreting qualitative data.

Step 1. Step 1 of data analysis, according to Creswell (2015), is to organize and prepare the data for analysis. Forty-eight hours after the student surveys were collected, I anonymized each survey by cutting off the "name" section of the survey. To consolidate and summarize the survey data, I input all

student surveys into an Excel sheet. After inputting the survey data into the Excel sheet came the task of

personally transcribing the four audio recordings. I transcribed the audio recordings of the two student

focus groups first, and then shortly after replaced each student name with a pseudo-number (i.e. "S1").

Next, I transcribed the audio recordings of the two principal interviews. I emailed a copy to both

principal participants and gave them the option to either delete, edit, or add to any part of the

transcription – essentially, I wanted to ensure that my transcript and interpretation of the interview was

an accurate reflection of the principals' feelings and experiences. Both principals accepted the

transcriptions as they were and made no requests for changes.

Step 2. Creswell (2015) asserts that after the data is organized, the next step is to explore and

code the data provided from the study. The process of constructing codes consists of creating the names

for the codes and developing a system for placing data into the created categories (Merriam, 1998).

Merriam reminds researchers of the following when coming up with names for codes: codes should

always reflect the *purpose* of the study, be exhaustive and inclusive of all the data, be mutually

exclusive, and be conceptually congruent (pp. 183-194).

Step 3. Third, I attempted to group similar codes as a way to build description and themes in the

data. This step of the analysis process included "answering the major research questions and forming an

in-depth understanding of the central phenomenon through description and thematic development"

(Creswell, 2015, p. 246). It was in this step that I tried to reduce the overwhelming amount of data into a

smaller, more manageable chunk of key information. (Creswell, 2015). This key information created the

themes of the study which aided in answering the main research questions.

Step 4. The main purpose of step 4 was to represent and report the qualitative findings. This was

achieved by creating visual displays and writing out the narrative of the data. To help give a quick

snapshot of some of the data, I created some figures, tables, and charts. For the narrative discussion, I

simply typed up all of the relevant information and quotes that would help answer each research question.

Step 5. Interpreting the findings of the study is the main objective for step 5. Interpretation involves making sense of the data. As Creswell (2015) states, "interpretation in qualitative research means that the researcher steps back and forms some larger meaning about the phenomenon based on personal views, comparisons with past studies, or both" (p. 256). In this phase of analysis, I summarized the findings, conveyed my personal reflections of the study, and made comparisons to what the pre-existing literature was saying about the phenomenon. It is also in this step of analysis that I offered the limitations of my study and suggestions for future research.

Step 6. Lastly, step 6 includes validating the accuracy of the findings. In my efforts of creating a trustworthy, qualitative study, I used Guba and Lincoln's (1994) terms of credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability, to argue that the given study had merit.

Long table approach. According to Creswell's (2012) six steps of analyzing data, Step 2 consists of coding the data, and Step 3 consists of grouping the codes to create themes. To help with Steps 2 and 3 of Creswell's six steps, I employed two other approaches to verify the codes and themes I came up with. One of the data analysis processes I undertook was an adaptation of Krueger and Casey's (2000) focus group "long table" approach. According to these researchers, "it is a time-tested method and breaks down the process into manageable chunks" (p. 132). Further to this, it is a low-technology option that is used to identify themes and categorize results. Specifically, I printed out a copy of a summary of all of the student survey responses, student focus group transcripts, and principal interview transcripts. Before I cut up any paper, I did a quick reading of all of the data as an attempt to capture a big picture scope of the study's information.

To start, I cut up all of the survey questions and answers and placed them on the table. Next, I took all of the student focus group questions and answers and cut them up and placed them on the table.

Lastly, I did the same with the principal interview transcripts. I labeled every paper cut-out so that I

would remember where the information came from (ie. "P1" = Principal 1). After all of the study data

was cut up into small pieces, I taped four flip-chart pieces of white paper to the table; at the top of each

piece of chart paper, I wrote down one of the main four research questions (see Appendix P). From here,

it was time to start categorizing the data – for example, whenever a student mentioned using social

media for gaming purposes, I clustered all of that data together on the chart paper. After categorizing the

study's data, I followed Krueger and Casey's (2000) recommendation and wrote a descriptive summary

for each chart paper. This process was helpful in solidifying some key themes to each research question.

Thematic analysis approach. I used Creswell's (2015) six steps of analyzing data as a

framework for my data analysis. The initial approach I used to analyze the data was the long table

approach. To confirm my analytic categories, I opted to analyze the data using a second approach. This

second approach was Miles et al.'s (2014) process to analyzing qualitative data, or what I will henceforth

call, the "Miles et al. (2014)" approach.

Miles et al. (2014) orient themselves as "pragmatic realists" (p. 7). They believe that social

phenomena exist not only in the mind but also in the world and that "stable relationships can be found

among the idiosyncratic messiness of life" (p. 7). Miles et al. (2014) align themselves with

interpretivists, in that they believe knowledge is a social and historical product laden with subjectivities.

They claim their tests do not use the deductive logic of classical positivism. Instead, they look to

understand how differing structures produce the events they observe.

The coauthors of the Miles et al. (2014) data analysis text say they do not subscribe to any one

particular genre of qualitative research. They say their analytic sequence is probably closest to

ethnographic methods with some borrowed techniques from grounded theory. Or in other words, their

approach,

moves from one inductive inference to another by selectively collecting data, comparing and

contrasting this material in the quest for patterns or regularities, seeking out more data to support

or qualify these clusters, and then gradually drawing inferences from links between other new

data segments and the cumulative set of conceptualizations. (pp. 9-10)

Miles et al. (2014) say that classic qualitative data analysis includes the following sequence of events

(p.10). Assigning codes throughout the data was the first step. Second, sorting and sifting through the

coded material helped to identify patterns and themes. The third step consisted of isolating these patterns

and processes, commonalities and differences, and then out to the field in the next wave of data

collection. After isolating these themes, the next step to qualitative data analysis was noting reflections

or other remarks in jottings, journals, and analytic memos. Then came the elaborating a small set of

assertions, propositions, and generalizations that covered the consistencies discerned in the database.

The last step in the sequence of events was to compare these generalizations with a formalized body of

knowledge in the form of constructs or theories.

As a way of making meaning from my data (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995), and to confirm my

analytic categories created in the long table approach, I adopted the Miles et al. (2014) approach as a

second way to analyze the data from the study.

First cycle codes. Miles et al. (2014) define codes as "labels that assign symbolic meaning to the

descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (p. 71). Saldaña (2013) describes the

coding phenomenon as a researcher-generated construct that symbolizes attributed meaning for later

purposes of knowledge creation (p. 3-4). Codes prompt for deeper reflection on the data's meaning, and

thus, "is a data condensation task that enables you to retrieve the most meaningful material, to assemble

chunks of data that go together, and to further condense the bulk into readily analyzable units" (Miles et

al., 2014, p. 73).

First cycle coding methods are used to assign chunks of data (Miles et al., 2014, p. 73). There were three elemental methods used in the coding process of this data. First, descriptive coding, assigning a label to data to summarize in a short word or phrase, was used to break down data into a simple noun. Second, in vivo coding, creating codes based on the participant's own language, was also employed as a way to create codes with the data from the study. This approach uses quotation marks to differentiate the codes from researcher-generated codes. In vivo coding honours the participant's voice. The last method I used to create codes was process coding. This coding method uses gerunds to connote observable actions in the data. In addition to these three fundamental coding methods, I also used a bit of simultaneous coding, which applies "two or more codes to a single qualitative datum" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 81). I used simultaneous coding to ensure that I would capture the multiple meanings of single datum.

Given that I see myself as a social constructivist, I wanted to be open and see what the research had to say, rather than forcing my data into preexisting codes. With this, I used an inductive coding approach instead of a deductive approach. Throughout the coding process I tried to remain open and flexible; I wanted to allow the codes to evolve. The codes in this data analysis changed and developed over time. As I was inserting codes into the margins of the transcripts and charts, I added the codes to the code list (see codebook in Appendix Q). This list was an evolving document over time.

Second cycle coding: pattern codes. While first cycle coding is a way to summarize chunks of information, second cycle coding, which is also called "pattern coding," is "a way of grouping those summaries into a smaller number of categories, themes, or constructs" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 86). As I went through the second cycle coding process, I tried to stay true to the inductive process. I tried to create categories of similar data based on recurring phrases or words (In Vivo codes) or common threads and comments made by the participants. Once I felt comfortable with the pattern codes, I made a coding

map (see Appendix R); it helped, visually, to create a network display of how all of the individual codes were related.

After I mapped out the coding categories, I photocopied all of the coded data on to different colours of paper. I used green paper for P1, blue paper for P2, yellow paper for FG1, pink paper for FG2, and white paper for survey results. Colour-coding the source of the data was helpful in keeping track of where the information or quote came from. Next, and similar to the long table approach, I used four pieces of chart paper and wrote the research question at the top of the chart paper. I then answered each research question by placing relevant quotes and information on to each piece of chart paper (see Appendix S).

Narrative description. Miles et al. (2014) assert that narrative description comes after second cycle coding. This process has the researcher compose a section that identifies the pattern codes and support these patterns with data from the study. This process is very similar to what the long table approach calls "descriptive summaries" (Krueger & Casey, p. 135, 2000).

All three strategies were helpful for me as a researcher. I appreciated the simplicity of Creswell's (2015) six steps – it was a great starting place and umbrella framework for analyzing the data. The long table approach (Krueger & Casey, 2000) was beneficial in that it allowed me to literally put my finger on each and every piece of data and to be able to physically manipulate the data in an effort to create themes. Lastly, I found the thematic analysis approach (Miles et al., 2014) to be intentional with each step and helped me to rethink about the steps I had taken in the long table approach. The most helpful aspect of analyzing the data a second time was to confirm my analytic categories.

Ethical Considerations

In any research study, ethical issues relating to protection of the participants are of vital importance (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Merriam, 1998). A qualitative researcher is responsible for both informing and protecting respondents. All research needs to include a

process where participants understand the purpose of the study and that enlisting is voluntary. I

conducted an ethical inquiry by carrying out the following actions. First, I ensured I had permission and

assent from all involved parties. I obtained permission from the school district in which the study took

place, approval from the University of Calgary CFREB, signed consent from the parent/guardian of the

child participants, signed assent from the child participants, signed consent from the teachers who

allowed their students to participate in the study, and signed consent from the elementary principals who

agreed to be interviewed and have the study take place in their schools. Second, I treated all participants

with kindness and respect. I allowed the principals to dictate the time of the interviews and the teachers

to dictate the time of the social media lessons, I used as little time as possible to respect the students'

precious learning and socializing time, and I used humor and kindness to create comfortable and relaxed

atmospheres. Third, I attended carefully to all my participants' privacy and confidentiality throughout

my research process by assigning pseudonyms to protect their identities. The transcribed data made use

of pseudonyms with corresponding names stored in a digital file that is password-protected and can only

be accessed by me. Other electronic data continues to be stored on an encrypted computer which is also

protected by a password. All hard copies of signed consent and assent forms are stored in a locked filing

cabinet of which only I have access to. I will continue to store these documents for five years, after

which time they will be destroyed permanently.

One final ethical matter that I needed to pay attention to was the possibility for student

disclosure. Students expressing vulnerable information is comfortable territory for me as I am a trained

school counsellor. Had any concerns come up during the study, I would have responded in the same way

I always do. I would have asked the student some clarifying questions, notified the school principal of

the disclosure, and depending on the nature of the comment, this could have led to my duty to report if I

felt the child's safety was at risk. Although there was some inherent risk for students to participate in this

study, I felt that it would have been a greater ethical concern to not include students at all. To this point,

Tisdall, Davis, and Gallagher (2008) conclude: "arguments are now well established that researchers' should recognize children's agency, their citizenship as human beings now and not just in the future, and involve children as (the central) research participants" (p. 2). That said, there were efforts made to protect the emotional safety and wellbeing of the children who participated in this study. There were no student disclosures made at any point during the course of the study.

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness characteristics consist of any efforts by the researcher to address the more traditional quantitative issues of validity and reliability. In my efforts of creating a trustworthy, qualitative study, I will examine Guba and Lincoln's (1998) terms of credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability.

Credibility. Both Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) claim that research is more credible when it is triangulated. Stake (1995) offers four strategies for triangulating data: data source triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation. To enhance the credibility of the study, I triangulated both data sources and data collection methods. Learning from both children and principal participants helped me to understand a phenomenon from multiple perspectives. Gathering data from surveys, focus groups, and interviews yielded a fuller and more in-depth picture of the phenomenon under review. By learning directly from children about their social media experiences, and by comparing this understanding to the elementary principal's understanding, I was closer to the participants' reality and therefore, able to "uncover the complexity of human behavior … and to present a holistic interpretation of what [was] happening" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 244) in this given case study. In doing so, this increased the credibility of this case study.

Another strategy used to increase the credibility of my case study was to ask the principal participants to engage in member checking (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). After transcribing the interview data, I sent the transcripts back to the participants for member checking (Creswell, 2015; Merriam,

1998). I gave the principal participants one week to make changes and confirm the transcript was an accurate representation of their thoughts and beliefs. Both principal interview transcriptions were member checked by the participants.

Dependability. Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) state that reliability in the traditional sense refers to the idea that research findings can be replicated again and again in other studies. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue the most important aspect in qualitative research is not reliability, but rather, dependability and consistency between the data collected and the study findings. The goal in case study analysis and direct interpretation is not to eliminate inconsistencies but to ensure that the researcher understands when they occur. Thus, ongoing reflection and analysis was imperative throughout my research process.

Throughout the coding process, I tried to ensure uniformity between the data and the findings. I used three different procedures to code this data as a means to ensure dependability of the coding process. The first process was Creswell's (2015) six steps to coding qualitative data. The second process was Krueger and Casey's (2000) long table approach. Finally, the third process was Miles et al.'s (2014) first and second cycle coding procedure. There was significant similarity with the analytic categories that these three coding procedures created, and thus I felt there was dependability between my data and the findings produced in this study.

Confirmability. Confirmability is comparable to the idea of objectivity in quantitative research; it ensures that the findings are the result of the study, rather than an outcome of the biases and subjectivity of the researcher (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 126). Confirmability was used in this study by my ongoing process of reflection and self-disclosure. Constant reflection in this study meant that I was responsive to what the data was saying. When I didn't understand something in the student surveys, I ensured I tailored the focus group questions so that I could fully understand children's social media experiences. To manage my own subjectivity, I positioned myself in the introductory chapter of this

dissertation. Throughout the process of this study, I was both an elementary counsellor and vice principal. I have had several experiences where students' social media usage has spilled into the school setting. In the discussion section of this dissertation, I compare this study's findings with my own personal experiences. Whereas quantitative research aims for objectivity between the researcher and the research, qualitative researchers challenge the notion of objectivity, and instead position themselves in their research (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

Transferability. Transferability occurs when the reader of a study determines whether and to what extent this particular phenomenon in this particular context can transfer to another particular context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the same vein, Patton (1990) encourages thinking of "context-bound extrapolations" (p. 491), which he describes as being "speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations under similar, but not identical conditions" (p. 489). To ensure my study was transferable, I endeavored to provide both detailed and in-depth descriptions of both children's experiences with social media and the principals' perceptions and leadership practices that pertained to students' social media usage. I provided direct quotations from the focus groups and interviews and figures from the surveys to show evidence for each theme. By doing this, it was my hope that school leaders and parents could make connections to their own experiences and situations that dealt with children and their social media usage. Patton (1990) refers to this notion as extrapolating the findings to similar situations. Ultimately, I gained rich data that I hope will benefit school leaders, teachers, and parents, so that they have a better understanding of how children are using social media and can proactively respond to this usage.

Delimitations

Delimitations refer to the boundaries set by the researcher that limit the generalizability of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). My study was delimited by the elements of participants, time, and place. The case study only included 36 grade four and five students and two elementary principals.

Students in other grades and principals at different levels were excluded in this study. The duration of

the study fit within two school terms – it took approximately three months to obtain permissions to

conduct the study and about another three months to conduct all stages of the study. Lastly, the findings

were inclusive of two elementary schools in a medium-sized city in British Columbia.

Summary

In the methodology section of this dissertation, I explained how I employed a qualitative

approach to this research. As outlined by Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), qualitative research features

include: (a) understanding the process by which events and actions take place, (b) developing contextual

understanding, (c) facilitating interactivity between researcher and participants, (d) adopting an

interpretive stance, and (e) maintaining design flexibility. Within the realm of qualitative research, this

study was most epistemologically aligned with Stake's (1995) and Merriam's (1998) descriptions of case

study. The former (Stake, 1995) conceptualizes case study research as being holistic, empirical,

interpretive and emphatic. Similarly, the latter (Merriam, 1998) asserts that case study research includes

the following characteristics: 'particularistic' (focused on a specific situation), 'descriptive' (a complete

account of the happenings), and 'heuristic' (gives the reader further insight into the happenings).

This qualitative case study occurred in a medium-sized urban school district, with a total

population of about twenty-two thousand students – two elementary schools were invited to participate

in this study. Although it would have been interesting to learn from all the various stakeholders who

have a vested interest in social media in schools, two key participant groups were chosen to be a part of

this study: student participants were chosen to be a part of the study because of the insufficient existing

literature on children and social media (Kowalski et al., 2014), and elementary principals were chosen as

several studies (Canadian Association of Principals, 2014; Powers & Green, 2016; Shear, 2015; Young,

Tully & Ramirez, 2017) have indicated that principals, specifically, are struggling to deal with the

effects of social media in school.

There were three phases to collecting data in this study. Phase 1 included a student survey with grade four and five students. To glean even more information from the students in a setting they were most comfortable to speak in (Barbour and Kitzinger's, 1998), Phase 2 included student focus groups. The final phase of collecting data consisted of Phase 3 which included elementary principal interviews. As argued by Creswell (2015), Denzin and Lincoln (2011), and Stake (1995), the use of multiple methods and triangulation, especially with regards to case study methodology, is critical in attempting to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. After obtaining the data from the student and principal participants, I analyzed the information using Creswell's (2015) six steps to analyzing and interpreting qualitative data, the long table approach (Krueger & Casey, 2000), and a thematic analysis approach (Miles et al., 2014). These steps included organizing and preparing the data for analysis, exploring and coding the data, using the various codes to create themes and general descriptions, representing and reporting the qualitative findings, interpreting the findings, and lastly, validating the accuracy of the findings.

The methodology section also included the various ways in which I planned to be ethical throughout the study. I explained how I obtained permission from the school district in which the study took place, approval from the University of Calgary CFREB, signed consent from the parent/guardian of the child participant, signed assent from the child participant, signed consent from the teachers who will be allowing their students to participate in the study, and signed consent from the elementary-principals who will be interviewed. Other matters of ethics, such as encouraging respect and confidentiality in focus groups and ensuring there is a safety plan in the event that students become emotionally provoked during any phase of this proposed study, were also discussed in this section of the dissertation.

Finally, I explained, in the methodology section, how I made effort to create a trustworthy, qualitative study. I used Guba and Lincoln's (1994) terms of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, to showcase how the given study had merit. Employing data triangulation increased

the study's credibility (Stake, 1995). Ongoing reflection and analysis and highlighting inconsistencies

increased the study's dependability. The ongoing process of reflection and member checking enhanced

confirmability. Lastly, I addressed the issue of transferability by utilizing rich description of the

participants and the context in which the study took place.

Chapter 4

Results: Report of Research Findings

Introduction

This study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of how children are engaging with social media and of elementary principals' perceptions and leadership practices pertaining to this usage. In search of this deeper understanding, I purposefully selected two elementary schools in a mid-sized, Canadian city to learn from. There were three phases to the study. The first phase included a curricular-embedded survey, the second phase brought a small group of grade 4/5 students together in each school for a focus group to discuss the survey results, and the third phase of the study included an interview with the elementary principal of each school. The rationale for examining this topic was to better understand the daily social media experiences of children and to connect these experiences with their elementary principals' perceptions and leadership practices.

In seeking to understand the research problem this study was framed by one primary research question and four sub-questions:

➢ How do children engage with social media and what are elementary school principals' perceptions about and leadership practices related to student social media usage?

The four sub-questions that assisted in answering this primary research question are:

1. What types of social media are children most using?

2. How and why are children using social media?

3. What is the elementary principal's perception of children's use of social media?

4. What leadership practices are elementary principals using to support positive student social media usage?

As a means of analyzing the study's data, I have used Creswell's (2015) six steps of analyzing and interpreting qualitative data as a general framework. These six steps include: (a) organizing and preparing the data for analysis, (b) exploring and coding the data, (c) using the various codes to create themes and general descriptions, (d) representing and reporting the qualitative findings, (e) interpreting the findings, and lastly, (f) validating the accuracy of the findings. More specifically, I used two approaches to sort through the data and create themes and categories. The first approach in doing this was the long table approach (Krueger & Casey, 2000). To confirm the analytic categories created in the long table approach, I underwent a second process of analyzing the data. The second approach used was the thematic analysis process described by Miles et al. (2014).

The research results are organized by this study's four secondary research questions which, when answered, contribute to answering the primary research question. Before this chapter delves into the results of the four secondary questions, I will first give some contextual information of the participants of the study.

Participant Information

There were three phases and two types of participants in this study. Phase 1 included student surveys, Phase 2 included student focus groups, and Phase 3 included principal interviews. The two types of participants in this study were grade four and five student participants and elementary principal participants.

Table 4.1
Number of Participants

	Student survey responses	Students in focus group	Principal participants
School 1	21	7	1
School 2	15	8	1
Total	36	15	2

Survey participants. There were 28 grade five students in the class at School 1. In this class there were 22 students who had both parental consent and gave assent to have their survey used for research purposes; however, one student was away on the day of the survey, and thus 21 surveys were collected for research purposes. Of these 21 participants, 10 identified as male, nine identified as female, and two did not disclose their gender. With regard to age, 13 participants reported to be 10-years-old, seven reported to be 11-years-old, and one participant did not disclose their age. When asked if they lived in an urban or rural neighbourhood, 15 students said they lived in an urban neighbourhood and six said they lived in a rural one.

In School 2, there was a total of 48 grade four and five students in the community (class). Only 15 students had parental consent and gave assent to have their survey used for research purposes. Out of these 15 students, 8 identified as female and 6 identified as male. Only 1 participant did not disclose their gender. With regard to age, seven students said they were 9-years-old, six said they were 10-years-old, one said they were 11-years-old, and one did not disclose their age. When asked if they lived in an urban or rural neighbourhood, 13 students said they lived in an urban neighbourhood, one student said they lived in a rural one, and one did not disclose their type of neighbourhood.
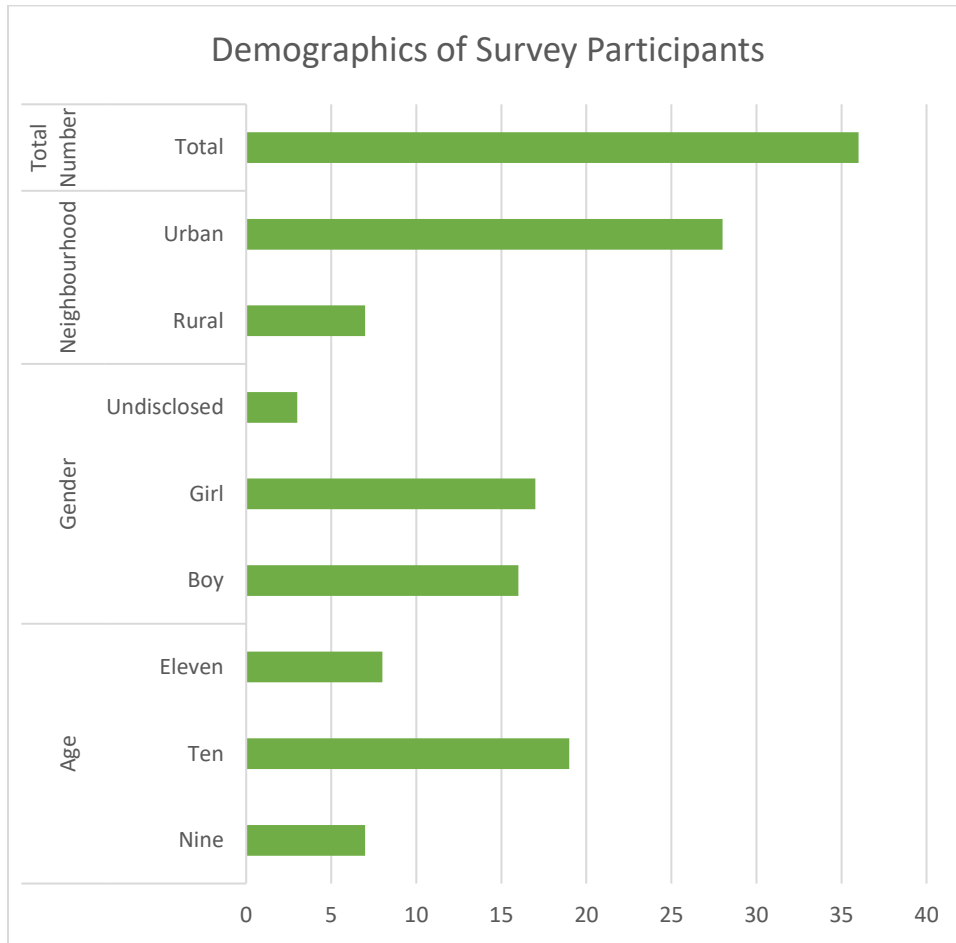
Figure 4.1. Demographics of survey participants.

Participants from focus groups. Eight students attended Focus Group 1, however, according to the classroom teacher, one of these students was an English Language Learner, and thus, did not contribute to the focus group. Of the seven remaining student participants, three were female and four were male participants. With Focus Group 2, there were a total of eight participants. Of these eight students, four were female and four were male.

Principal participants. The study took place at two school sites, and thus there were two principals interviewed. Principal 1 was a principal of a K to 6 school and Principal 2 was a principal of a K to 5 school.

Presentation of Findings

Drawn from this study's research problem, questions, and design, the findings are outlined and presented here in narrative form. Where applicable, exact responses from the surveys or quotations from the focus group and interview transcripts have been included. These responses and quotations convey participants' perspectives while both providing the reader an opportunity to better understand the reality of each research participant's perspective and capturing some of the complexity of children using social media and how this usage affects elementary principals. Sentences in which an in-line quote appears will follow with the following sourcing information: the method of data collection; when possible, the participant's pseudonym; and the transcript's page number. With block quotations, the sourcing information was provided at the end of each block quote. The emphasis on including direct responses and quotations is to have the elementary student and principal participants speak for themselves. Each of the four research sub questions and their related findings are presented separately and organized under the research questions.

Research question 1. What types of social media are children most using? The first question in the survey was "what types of social media do you use?" Students were provided with an option to select one or more options from a list of 11 popular social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp, Tumblr, Twitter, Skype, Reddit, or Pinterest). Students were also provided with an option to add an "other" option, and manually add a platform.

Finding 1.1. YouTube and TikTok are the social media platforms most used by children in this study. There was a total of 36 children who participated in the survey. YouTube was the most commonly used social media platform and TikTok came in second. The elementary students surveyed in this study reported to using a total of 16 different social media platforms (see Figure 4.2).
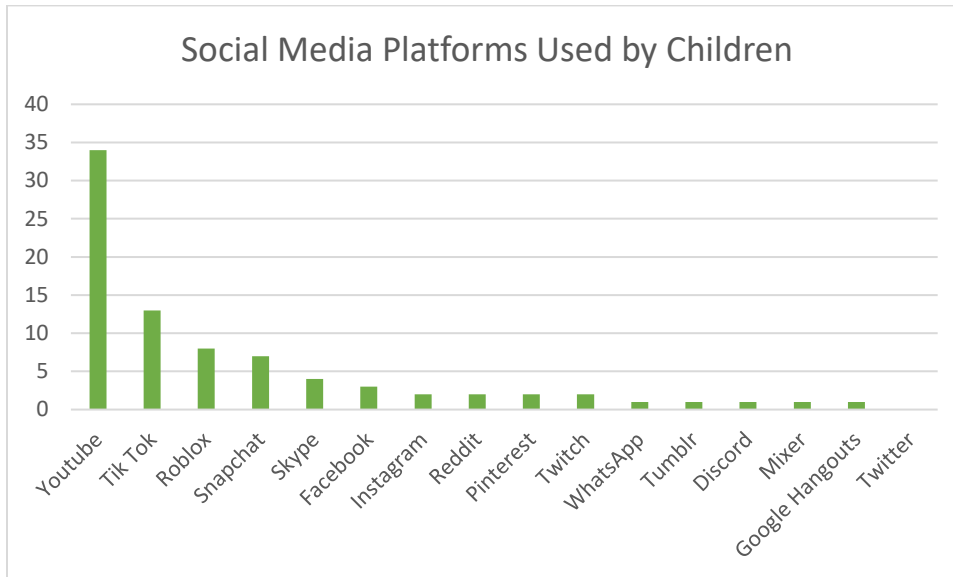
Figure 4.2. Social media platforms used by children.

As reported from the surveys, YouTube was the most commonly used social media platform by elementary students, with 34 out of 36 participants confirming they used YouTube. The second most commonly used social media platform was TikTok, with 13 out of 36 participants expressing usage. In third place came *Roblox*, with eight out of 36 participants claiming they used the gaming/social media platform. However, it should be mentioned that this number could have been higher had it been included as a part of the 11 given platforms on the survey. Students who indicated that they used *Roblox* selected "other" and then wrote in their response. Also, interesting to note is the various platforms that students added in the "other" section: one student added "Discord," one student added "Mixer," two students added "Twitch," one student added "Google Hangouts" and one student added "Messenger."

The popularity of YouTube amongst elementary-aged children was also evidenced in the focus groups. Given that the students in Focus Group 1 showed so much excitement in discussing YouTube, I tailored the questions in Focus Group 2 to include specific questions about YouTube. Although I had prepared eight questions for the focus group conversation, the bulk of the conversation (approximately 50% of the transcript) with this group of students was revolved around YouTube. S16, from Focus

Group 2, was one participant whose excitement for YouTube was particularly evident, as he repeatedly

interrupted other students and shared about his YouTube experiences:

> I've done a lot of comments from this one Minecraft YouTuber named BeckBroJack. He does a lot of mods… [it is] a new update basically for different things, so there's a new animals mod, there's a Star Wars mod, lots of other mods... And I keep asking for a mod – a Harry Potter mod – but it never comes up so I keep asking for more and more and more and more! (pp. 3-4)

Due to the YouTube topic dominating the FG2 conversation, I eventually had to say, "Okay, really good

answers. We're going to move on" (Focus Group 2, Interviewer, p. 6).

Consistent with the student survey responses and student focus groups, the two principals

interviewed also expressed that children in their schools were regular users of YouTube. P2 stated,

"some [children] are using [YouTube] to show off. Like, I am following one of my students' YouTube

accounts because I was worried about her" (Principal 2 Interview, p. 3). During the principal interviews,

I asked the principals what social media platforms they thought their elementary students were using;

both included YouTube in their responses. In addition, Principal 2 shared an experience where she felt

concerned when a grade three student was uploading videos on YouTube without her parents'

knowledge. YouTube was not the only social media platform that the principal participants thought their

students were using. Similarly related to the survey results, principals expressed that their students were

also using TikTok and gaming/social media platforms, although they gave no specific mention to

Roblox. With regard to TikTok, Principal 2 had a grade four student from her school who was posting

inappropriate TikTok videos with hopes of getting more "likes" from her followers. With regard to

gaming/social media platforms, Principal 1 felt that gaming platforms did not qualify as social media

platforms and he spoke at length about his concerns around children and gaming. For example, he stated

that children who are gaming too much "don't have empathy, they don't have persistence, they don't have

optimism, they don't have respect, resilience… they're having issues" (Principal 1 Interview, p. 7). In

this study participants indicated that YouTube and TikTok were the most commonly used social media platforms by grade four and five children from these two schools.

Research question 2. How and why are children using social media? To answer this question, I will be using data solely from the student surveys and focus groups.

Eight key themes around how and why children are using social media emerged during the data coding and analysis process.

- With findings 2.1 and 2.2, some general information around children's social media usage was discovered. These findings are:

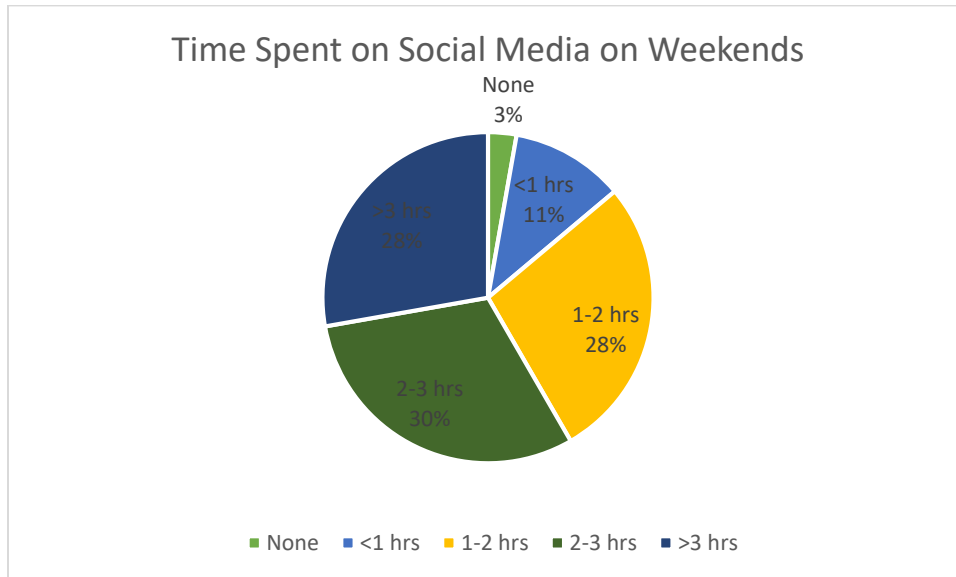 - Finding 2.1. Children in this study report to spend more time on social media on weekends than weekdays.

  - Finding 2.2. The tablet was the device most commonly used by children in this study to access social media.

- Findings 2.3 to 2.6 look at what children do when they are interacting on social media. The following four findings are:

  o Finding 2.3. Children in this study are active users of YouTube who interact in and with the 'comments' section and upload videos.

  o Finding 2.4. Children in this study use social media for gaming purposes.

  o Finding 2.5. Children in this study use social media to communicate with real and online friends.

  o Finding 2.6. Children in this study use social media at school to collaborate, view videos, and communicate learning to parents.

- This section will conclude by explaining some of the family rules pertaining to social media, which has a direct impact on how children are using social media. This finding is:

> o   Finding 2.7. Children report their social media usage is guided by family rules around
>
> social media.

Finding 2.1. Children in this study spend more time on social media on weekends than weekdays. The information provided in this finding helps the reader to understand how much time children are spending on social media. The Student Survey started by asking grade four and five students some basic questions about their social media usage. Two of the survey questions asked students about the amount of time they were spending on social media. When asked about the time spent on social media during weekdays, 70% of students either selected, "less than 1 hour" or "between 1 hour and 2 hours" (Figure 4.3). Interesting to note, there were several students (approximately 14% of participants) who indicated they were spending more than three hours on social media per school day. As expected, these numbers increased when students were asked about time spent on social media on weekends. When asked about time spent on social media during weekends, the numbers were almost evenly spread amongst the following time amounts: "between 1 and 2 hours," "between 2 and 3 hours," or "more than 3 hours" (Figure 4.4).
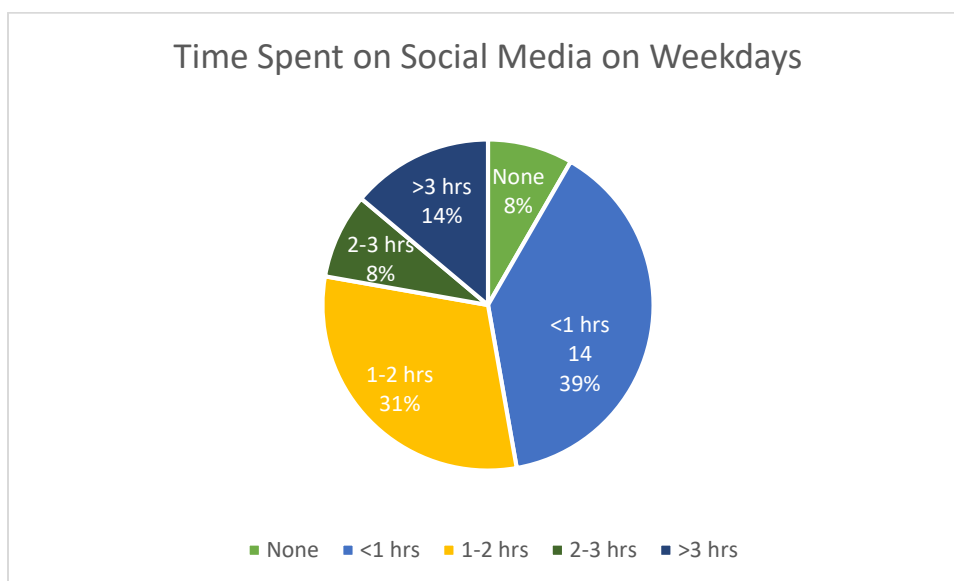
Figure 4.3. Time spent on social media on weekdays.

Figure 4.4. Time spent on social media on weekends.

Finding 2.2. The tablet was the device most commonly used by children in this study to access social media. I was also curious about which device students were using to access their social media accounts. I asked students if they were mostly accessing social media with either a cell phone, tablet, computer, MP3 player, or video game system. Students reported that they were mostly accessing social media with a tablet (Figure 4.5). The second device that students said they were most using to access their social media was a computer. After the tablet and computer, the order then went video game device, cell phone, and lastly, an MP3 player.
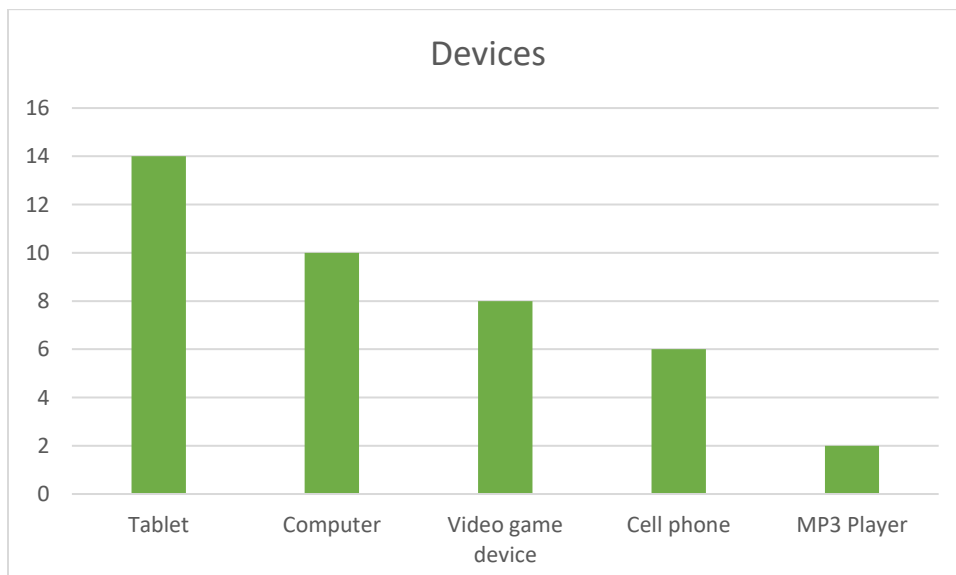
Figure 4.5. Device most used to access social media.

Finding 2.3. Children in this study are active users of YouTube who interact with the "comments" section and upload videos. Children are using social media to create and watch content. From the student surveys, there were 21 mentions of using social media to either create content or to watch content. Examples of content children are creating include clips of their stuffed animals or pets, drawings they have created, and doing dances with friends. There were also many mentions in the surveys of children using social media to watch YouTube. During FG2, my wonder was "has YouTube simply replaced cable television in homes for kids?" When asked if they still had cable in their houses, this was the response I received (Focus Group 2, p. 2):

S16 – what is cable?

I – Like when there are shows and channels on your tv.

S16 – we took cable off.

S15 – I have cable, where like, you can watch shows and change the channels and stuff.

I – Okay, so S15 you have cable, and so do you S9 and S14. So, three out of eight of us do. S10, go ahead.

S10 – my Nana has cable.

I – Okay, and S13?

S13 – We used to have cable but no one used it.

S16 – My Baba and Gida have cable on their 3 tvs… Yes, 3 TVs…

I – Wow. So most of us use YouTube to watch things then, is that right?

Group – yes

The general consensus from the group was that most did not have cable in their houses. Only three out of eight students had cable in their primary homes, and one student mentioned that he had cable at his grandparents' house.

After the group had given general consensus that most houses did not have cable, I was curious about the content they were watching on YouTube. I asked them, "what YouTube channels do you watch?" The students responded with the following (Focus Group 2, p. 4-5):

> S14 – DanTDM and Dollightful. She takes old beat up dolls and turns them into really pretty ones.
>
> S10 – Lachlan and also Minetrail
>
> S16 – yeah, *Fortnite* probably… and Beck…Bro…Jack… AND McNaveed. Another *Minecraft* guy. And I forget the third one.
>
> S12 – JoJo Siwa and So Yummy
>
> S11 – When I am bored, and I have nothing else to watch, I just watch random 5-minute craft videos.
>
> S16 – Oh that's what I meant! My third one is making origami videos. In this very library over here. I love making origami. As much as Lego. Almost as much as Lego. ALMOST. ALMOST. Key word is almost.
>
> S15 – Hacks. Like life hacks.
>
> S9 – Quizzes and Gotchya. Like, "who did this" or "who did that?"

The YouTube channels that students were watching included a wide range, including the following genres: gaming or gameplay, celebrity vlogs, crafting, baking, life hacks, and learning videos.

With Focus Group 2, I wanted to learn more about children's YouTube usage; I was curious to find out if they were merely using YouTube to watch videos or if they had a more involved and interactive role with their YouTube usage. I was curious about whether or not they were reading and adding comments and if they were uploading videos. When asked if the students ever read the comments section of a YouTube video, all except for one said that they had. The one exception said they never read the comments but that they frequently added comments to videos. In addition, 5 out of the 8 students in Focus Group 2 said that they have added a comment to a YouTube video before. When asked what types of comments people generally posted, the students said the following: S13 reported "what kind of video they should do next," S11 said "how good it is or how bad it is," and S9 added "what they would rate [the video]" (Focus Group 2, p. 3).

I was then curious about what types of comments the students themselves were posting on

YouTube videos, and they said (Focus Group 2, p. 3- 4):

> S11 – a guy did a flip in midair and then he landed on this pipe and I commented it was really cool.
>
> S13 - I've only done one comment and I forget what it was because it was a long time ago
>
> S16 – I've done a lot of comments from this one *Minecraft* YouTuber named BeckBroJack. He does a lot of mods (a new update basically for different things, so there's a new animals mod, there's a Star Wars mod, lots of other mods…)
>
> S12 – I comment on So Yummy it's a cake channel. And I write "wow, these cakes are amazing"
>
> S10 – like um, there was this guy… and he was like… so rude… and I said "calm down man"

All students in Focus Group 2 were either actively reading the comments or adding their own comments

in the comments section below the YouTube videos.

Although all students were reading or adding comments to YouTube, not all students were

uploading videos. When asked if they had ever uploaded a video on to YouTube, the students made the

following comments (Focus Group 2, p. 6):

> S11 – well, kind of. I help my cousin with her YouTube channel a lot.
>
> S13 – Well, I just make videos and then pretty soon I am going to be uploading them to YouTube.
>
> S10 – *Fortnite* and gaming ones. But I am not going to put my face up there. Because more random people will see me.
>
> S14 – I just put up the videos and then delete them after but I really want to start a YouTube channel on *Minecraft* because it's really cool. I love *Minecraft*.

Although not all children were uploading videos to YouTube, four out of eight of the participants had

either uploaded a video onto YouTube or expressed a desire to start uploading in the near future.

My final interest around students and their YouTube usage was around whose accounts they

were using to access YouTube. Three out of eight expressed they had their own YouTube accounts,

where they likely would have had to falsify their age in order to get their own account. Other students

reported that they were using the accounts of family members. For example, S16 said "I use my Baba's account," S12 said, "I think my dad signs me in," and S15 remarked, "on the laptop, it used to be my dad's old laptop but now it's mine, so it's my dad's account." (Focus Group 2, p. 5-6). Students differed in how they were logging into YouTube.

The children in Focus Group 2, the ones who I explicitly asked about their YouTube usage, would all be considered "active" users of YouTube – by this I mean they all either read or add to the comments sections of videos, and some even upload videos and have their own YouTube channels.

Finding 2.4. Children use social media for gaming purposes. In addition to creating and watching content, children are also using social media for gaming purposes. The students in Focus Group 1, spoke at length about online gaming and justified it as a form of social media. They argued that many video games fit within Obar and Wildman's (2015) definition of social media, as it included (a) a user profile, (b) the ability to social network, and (c) included user-generated or created content.

In the Student Surveys, there were 18 mentions of using social media for gameplay purposes. Two games and three gaming media platforms, specifically, were mentioned by the grade four and five survey participants. The games were *Roblox* and *Fortnite* and the gaming media applications were Mixer, Twitch, and Discord. To better conceptualize how this experience is a form of social media, I probed some gaming-related questions with the participants in FG1. S7 and S3 explained how they use Mixer and Twitch, they said it was "a community where you can post stuff, like you playing a game, and I do that a lot" (Focus Group 1 Transcript, S3, p. 12). S2 added, "yeah it's basically a live stream, so you're like doing it, and then they see it the exact second or minute you're doing it" (Focus Group 1 Transcript, p. 12). Although there appears to be some overlap with Mixer, Twitch, and Discord, S2 described Discord as the following: "it's basically like a community talking service. You can join like community servers for like talking with people or playing with people or interacting." (Focus Group 2, p. 12). To get a better understanding of the "social" part of these platforms, S7 explained, "and then in

the bottom right corner, when I do it, there's a little chat box, and people that are watching my stream, they can talk to me and I can answer back" (Focus Group 1 Transcript, p. 12). Not only are children communicating on the actual video games, such as *Fortnite* or *Roblox*, they are also using other social media applications, such as Mixer, Twitch, and Discord to livestream and enhance their gameplay.

Finding 2.5. Children use social media to communicate with real and online friends. Children are using social media for communication purposes. There were 17 mentions of children using social media for communication purposes in the Student Surveys. Some examples of comments made in the survey responses included "chatting with random people," "just texting with friends and family," and "I use Skype to keep in touch with friends in Vietnam." With the focus groups, I then tried to understand who children were communicating with on social media. When asked if they were communicating with online or "real-life" friends (that is, people they've met face-to-face), almost all students reported they were communicating with real-life friends and most students reported to communicating with online friends as well.

The majority of students in both focus groups said they were using social media to communicate with real-life friends. When probed a little further, students in FG1 said they used social media to ask their friends if they wanted to get together in-person, connect in an online game, and to discuss school-related things such as working on a project (Focus Group 1, p. 12).

Although a few students uttered that they only interacted online with real-life friends, it was common practice amongst the focus group participants to communicate with online friends, too. Of the students who said they did not interact with online friends, one voiced, "I used to play *Roblox*… [and] I used to have lots [of online friends] and then I deleted them all… because my parents told me to" (Focus Group 2, S12, p. 10). All seven students in FG1 and four out of eight students in FG2 said they regularly communicated with people they did not know. S7 vocalized that "some people [that I do not know] in *Fortnite* will send me a friend request and then I'll accept it" (Focus Group 1, p. 10). S9 and S15

mentioned that they both only had one online friend, but that they spent a lot of time playing *Roblox* with that one friend. In contrast, S7 and S13 mentioned that they interact with "hundreds" (S13) and "thousands" (S7) of friends that they do not know from real life.

Several of the students in the focus groups expressed that they had "friended" an online friend on multiple social or gaming media platforms (four out of seven in FG1, and one out of eight in FG2). S6 informed that, "On *Roblox* you can chat with random people. And this guy who has *Roblox*, he also has TikTok so like I can see what he looks like. He's from Georgia" (Focus Group 1, p. 10). When asked if they interacted more with people they know or people they do not know, the participants in FG1 interacted more with people they do not know – five interacted more with people they do not know and two interacted more with people they do know. S7 reported he interacts more with people he does not know, "I have thousands of people I don't know and maybe just a few people that I do know… Some of them they've told me about them and I've told them about me. So like we're kind of friends now" (Focus Group 1, p. 11). One student said he interacted more with people he knew, "more with people I know and one person I don't know. Because I have like a lot of friends. Like I might have six of my friends and my brother has like six of his friends. And then like one friend I don't even know" (Focus Group 1, S8, p. 11). Interestingly enough, one student even shared how he communicates with both real-life and online friends in the same game, "In *Fortnite*, you can go into a Squads game, and so there are three other people, and hopefully they have mics so you can talk to them and then they are random people. And again, you can also play with your [real life] friends" (Focus Group 1, S3, p. 11). Communicating with both real-life and online friends appears to be common practice with children from the focus groups in this study.

Finding 2.6. Children in this study use social media at school to collaborate, view videos, and communicate learning to parents. Although it was mentioned much less than the other reasons, there were seven mentions of students using social media for learning purposes when they were asked how

and why they use social media. Survey responses included: "I use it because I want to learn new things" and "sometimes for help with something." When specifically asked if social media was used at school to help with their learning, students explained how they used Google Docs or Slides to collaborate on projects, their teachers used YouTube to explain math strategies and to demonstrate "directed draw" activities, and their teachers used FreshGrade to communicate their learning. The information that came from the surveys around using social media for learning purposes was verified by the students in the focus groups. In FG1, S8 explained to me about how he uses Google Docs and Slides to collaborate with a partner:

> We can work with a partner. First you do the immigration research on Google Docs. And then you copy and paste it on your Google Slides. And you can do backgrounds and such. And then you present it. Like we we're doing today… and then we'll work together on two different computers but we'll be working on the same Google Doc. (Focus Group 1, p. 9)

S8 also continued to explain how they have started turning work into their teacher on Google Classroom instead of printing it out and handing it in. When asked if they enjoyed collaborating on projects using the G Suite applications, one student exclaimed, "I just like typing way more than pencil and paper. I find pencil and paper so like 1990s" (Focus Group 1, S3, p. 10). Students from FG1 also gave examples of how YouTube has helped their teacher's instruction. S2, S3, and S6 all gave examples of times when their teacher used YouTube to help teach a variety of math strategies and techniques. The students also added that learning with YouTube videos was more interesting than learning from a book. The students in FG2 explained how they and their teachers were using FreshGrade to communicate and share their learning with parents. S12 explained the process, "We can upload our stuff that we've learned and then our parents can see it and we can comment on our learning" (Focus Group 2, p. 11). The students in FG2 really seemed to enjoy sharing their learning with their parents over social media, "it's real time so your

parents can see it right away when you post something. And we can add things to it and we can also

comment on it. And the teachers and parents can comment on it too" (Focus Group 2, S11, p. 11). When

asked who had family conversations about the information on FreshGrade, six out of eight students

agreed that they spoke to their parents about their FreshGrade information.

> *Finding 2.7. Children report their social media usage is guided by family rules around social
> media.* After analyzing the data with the Miles et al. (2014) approach, I decided to create a sixth

category to fully explain Research Question 2. The First Cycle codes produced too many codes around

the idea of "family rules" to ignore. Understanding the limitations that parents have set for their children

illustrates a better sense of the "how" and "why" when it comes to understanding children's use of social

media.

The children from the focus groups had mixed feelings when they were asked if they thought

their parents had a good understanding of how they used social media. Some participants justified why

they thought their parents had a good understanding, "because they always ask me what I do and they

know what I am doing just because I play all day" (Focus Group 1, S2, p. 2) and "because my parents

use social media a lot. And my mom follows like 200 people on Instagram" (Focus Group 2, S14, p. 8).

In contrast, some participants, like S12 and S15, thought their parents would be shocked by the

inappropriate comments posted by children on social media. The students reported their parents had

varying levels of social media knowledge.

Not only did parents have varying levels of social media knowledge, they also differed in the

types of rules they gave their children. The students in the focus groups had discussions around family

rules with regard to social media. Family rules around social media include: do not show face, limit the

amount of time on social media, limit the type of applications being used, have parents monitor social

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media accounts, do not watch inappropriate content, ask for permission before downloading new

applications, and set accounts to private (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2
Family Rules Pertaining to Social Media

Rule	Quote
Do not show face.	"on social media, you're not allowed to put your face on… because people will know you're a kid and stuff. And they will like try to do something." – S15 "with *Fortnite* and gaming [applications], I am not going to put my face up there [because] random people will see me." – S10 "My brother is a Twitch streamer. And he really wants a face cam but my parents won't let him." – S3 "My parents really don't care how long I play. And I just really can't show my face … apparently my parents think I'll get harassed." – S2
Limit the time on social media.	"I can't do more screens than like 5 hours a day [on weekdays] … and on weekends I just do whatever I want" – S3 "My mom put on a parental lock… I can only use *Animal Jam* on weekdays from 4 to 6." – S16
Limit the type of applications being used.	"On school days I am not allowed to have the controllers. Only Friday nights to Sunday. I can go on TikTok or *Roblox* on my iPad or my iPod, though." – S8
Have parents monitor social media accounts.	Several of the focus group participants responded positively when asked if their parents check their social media accounts.
Do not watch inappropriate content.	"Obviously I am not allowed to watch anything that's inappropriate." – S13 "Before I watch a YouTube channel I have to show my mom, and then we see if they know anybody I already watch, and then we have to watch one of the videos together to see if it is appropriate." – S14
Ask for permission before downloading new social media.	"If I am going to download anything that is like social media, I need to ask my mom." – S12
Set accounts to private.	"On my Instagram account, I am only allowed to post things on private." – S6

Given that children are under the guidance of their parents, it is important to understand how family rules may impact their use of social media.

These findings all come from the voices of the children involved with this study. The next section will look at two elementary principals' perspectives with regards to children's social media usage.

Research question 3. What is the elementary principal's perception of children's use of social media? Much of the preexisting literature spoke to how principals felt improperly trained to deal with matters pertaining to social media. Thus, I was curious if elementary principals felt they had a good handle on what today's kids were doing on social media. I grouped the principals' perceptions of children's use of social media into three main groupings: (a) Principals in this study assumed their grade four and five students are using social media, (b) Principals in this study felt that parents used social media and technology to occupy their children, (c) Elementary principals identified social media problems from home impact the school environment and social media problems at school interfere with student learning.

Finding 3.1. Principals in this study assumed their grade four and five students were using social media. To start, we will look at the principals' basic assumptions about children's use of social media. In terms of social media platforms, both principals assumed some of their grade four and five students were using social media. P1 said, "I can infer that the grade 4/5s are using social media. My hope is that it would be less than 20%. But I'd say all the boys are using *Fortnite* or other games to communicate" (Principal 1 Interview, p. 5). P2 expressed that her grade four and five students were using social media, too. She said, "when I think of them accessing social media, I know they are using things like Snapchat and TikTok and Instagram a little bit. Those are probably the ones I know" (Principal 2 Interview, p. 1). In terms of specific applications, they both made mention of Facebook,

Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, and TikTok. During the school week, both principals felt their students were spending between one to two hours on social media per night and more than three hours during the weekends. The principals believed that their grade four and five students were most accessing their social media accounts through either a tablet or cell phone. P2 mentioned on two occasions that she felt that the majority of her grade four and five students had their own personal cell phones. Overall, it seemed that the principals' understandings were closely aligned with the students' reports of their social media activities. P1 underestimated how many of his students were regularly communicating on social media but had a good understanding of their video game usage. He assumed, "My hope is that it would be less than 20% [of children using social media]… But when I say that I say specifically an app. But I'd say all the boys are using Fortnite or other games to communicate." (Principal 1 Interview, p. 5). Both principals confirmed some social media usage from their grade 4 and 5 students.

Interestingly enough, the students themselves felt their principals would be surprised by how they used social media. As per the student survey, 24 grade four and five students thought their principal did not understand how they use social media, six thought their principal had a good understanding of their social media usage, and three thought their principal knew a little bit about their social media usage. The main reasons why students thought their principal did not have a good understanding of their social media usage was because students did not show principals their social media, the principals wouldn't understand the social media platforms, the principals were too busy, and that principals were too old to understand.

For the focus group portion of the study, I asked the student participants, "many of you thought that your principal wouldn't know how kids use social media… is that just because it's [Principal 1 or 2], or do you think it would be the same for all adults his/her age?" FG1's response differed than FG2's response. FG1 students backtracked and half of them decided that Principal 1 probably had a good understanding because his daughter uses it and he has an Apple Watch. Whereas FG2's participants

unanimously agreed that Principal 2 would be surprised about students' engagement with social media.

FG2 students indicated their principal would not know what they do on social media because they do not

show her. They also indicated that many students lie to her about what they do on social media.

Additionally, they explained they think she'd be surprised by the random nature of things that children

post on social media, "the most popular picture on Instagram – it was a picture of an egg!" (Focus Group

2, S13, p. 7). Lastly, they thought their principal would be surprised by the unkind things that were said

on social media. S12 said she'd be surprised by "comments … like not saying nice words" and S15

added "sometimes some kids post stuff that are way too old for their age" (Focus Group 2, p. 7). There

seemed to be some mixed thoughts from the children in the study as to whether or not their principals

had a good understanding of children's social media usage. The majority of students in the survey and

FG2 felt their principal would be surprised by their social media usage, whereas the participants in FG1

felt their principal had a good understanding of their social media usage.

    Finding 3.2. Principals felt that parents used social media and technology to occupy their

children. When the principals were asked why they thought their grade four and five students were

using social media, they both indirectly referred to social media and technology as a tool that keeps

children occupied. Principal 1 first gave some background information, "I don't actually deal with a lot

of social media stuff with those grades. I deal with a lot of gaming. But I would deal with a lot of social

media stuff at the grade six level" (Principal Interview 1, p. 3). P1 went on to explain why he thought his

grade four and five students were using video games and gaming media platforms:

    But when we talk about gaming, for them, it's an outlet. It's them playing. It's lack of supervision.

    Planning activities that they could be outside that are not occurring, that they are staying home.

    Use that as a babysitting tool. You see more and more that parents are both working, and kids go

    home, and they play *Fortnite* for a couple of hours until their parents are home. (Principal

    Interview 1, p. 5)

Similarly, P2 also made mention to the fact that kids were using social media at younger ages and that parents were enabling this experience. She elaborated a bit later in the interview by saying, "when they are babies, their parents are giving them their phones" (p. 5). P2 explained, "On a school day I bet they are spending at least an hour or two… Probably weekends are a lot more. [Because] probably less parent supervision" (p. 2). Both principals felt that social media aided families with occupying their children.

P1 asserted that although families may claim they have rules pertaining to social media and technology for their children, in his experience, he claimed that some families do not follow through with these rules. P1 described a common conversation he has with parents, "I have had some aggressive conversations with families, 'you know your daughter's digital footprint is massive right now and we need to be supervising' … and they say 'but I am supervising!' … But they are not" (Principal 1 Interview, p. 3). P1 gave another example of this lack of follow through, "When I talk to families, they say 'this is what we've structured,' but when you talk to the child and I say, 'how was your summer?' … they say 'oh it was awesome, I played *Fortnite* six or eight hours a day' " (Principal 1 Interview, p. 6). Similar to P1, P2 also expressed that some of her families have told her that they have social media rules in place, however, P2 was doubtful about the parent follow-through with this rule.

Finding 3.3. Elementary principals identified social media problems that affect school climate, student learning, and student safety. Both principals were able to recall problems that they had encountered relating to grade four and five students and social media. These issues have been divided into three groups. The first group of problems all negatively impact school climate. The second group of problems negatively affect student learning. The third group of problems affect student safety.

The first set of problems negatively impact school climate. The principals in this study claimed that children were encountering social media and gaming problems at home and that these issues were spilling into the school setting. P1 described that his grade 5 and 6 boys lack empathy and they are encountering problems when they play video games, and that these conflicts can spill into the school

setting the following day. P2 said, "I've dealt with kids who are threatening other kids and then their parents see it and they get the schools involved" (Principal 2 Interview, p. 4). When asked if social media conflicts were spilling into the school setting, P2 exclaimed, "Absolutely … The same way that an after-school fight would spill into a school" (Principal 2 Interview, p. 4).

Secondly, the principals in this study claimed that social media usage at school was interfering with learning. P2 gave a couple of examples of what she is seeing at her school. One of her current frustrations was around a new student who is constantly using social media "to do inappropriate things" – she said she is having to constantly monitor him. She also gave another example of how YouTube was interfering with her students' learning. Our conversation is as follows (Principal 2 Interview, p. 5),

> P2 – It is starting to interfere with our instruction is what I am noticing. For example, when they are getting a laptop to do research, the teachers are coming to me saying they are streaming all kinds of videos
>
> I – They have no self-control?
>
> P2 – Yeah, they are listening to music. I have to take laptops away from students that have very inappropriate music that they are streaming with tons of swear words. And then they are listening to it and then they are sharing it, "oh listen to this."

P1 also spoke to the lack of self-control that comes with this age demographic. He made references to social media and screens addiction and vehemently felt that Instagram, for example, had no place in a school.

Third, the principals in this study also included issues that related to student safety. P2 dealt with a problem where a grade four student was posting promiscuous videos on TikTok in an attempt to get more "likes" for her videos. Because the child disclosed this information to school personnel, P2 had to act and notify the child's parents. Another safety-related concern that P2 brought up was about a grade 3 student who was regularly contributing to her YouTube channel unbeknownst to the child's parents.

Because P2 felt the safety of these two students was at risk, she felt obligated to involve parents. Again, P1 did not feel social media usage was as rampant with his grade four and five students, however, he described that he would feel compelled to intervene if unsafe comments were made on social media. He said comments that would require him to intervene would be "like 'go kill yourself' or 'I am going to take a gun or a knife' " (Principal Interview 1, p. 4). Similar to P2, he also explained that he has had to have conversations with parents about their child's large online presence. Principals feel the need to get involved with social media problems when they feel a child's safety is at risk.

To represent the principals' perceptions of students' social media usage in this section, I presented the following findings: (a) principals in this study assumed their grade four and five students are using social media, (b) principals in this study felt that parents used social media and technology to occupy their children, and (c) elementary principals identified social media problems from home impact the school environment and social media problems at school interfere with student learning.

Research question 4: What leadership practices are elementary principals using to promote positive social media usage? Based on the data from the study, I was able to identify seven actions that principals took to promote positive social media usage for their students. The seven actions that principals take include:

1. Principals encourage teaching values-based mindsets and explicitly teaching about social media.

2. Principals hire outside agencies as a strategy to promote positive social media usage at home and at school.

3. Principals inform themselves of district policy pertaining to social media.

4. Principals work closely with parents to resolve social media issues.

5. Principals collaborate with the technology department.

6. Principals check students' social media accounts after an issue arises.

      7.   Principals ban cell phones during instructional times.

To fully answer Research Question 4, I will describe each leadership practice.

     Finding 4.1. Principals encourage teaching values-based mindsets and explicitly teaching about social media. Both principals made comments about encouraging a values-based mindset with their school community and having explicit teaching and conversations around social media. In relation to teaching a values-based mindset, P2 states "I think we're also trying to be proactive… [by] talking about safety and awareness and that critical thinking piece … 'does it make sense?' and 'is it the right thing or wrong thing to do?' " (Principal 2 Interview, p. 7). P1 also spoke about teaching kids values like empathy, flexibility, optimism, resiliency, and respect. His belief was that if these values were taught, then "when [kids] get to social media, those areas are well developed and [they] know what's right and wrong" (Principal 1 Interview, p. 6). The principals in this study both encouraged values-based conversations amongst their school communities.

     It wasn't only generic values-based conversations that principals were encouraging, principals also made references to explicitly teaching students about social media. Although P1 emphasized teaching students about values rather than the "dos and don'ts" online, he still made a reference to teaching students about social media. When I asked him "do kids in this school learn about social media at all?", he replied with "no, they learn about safety and Internet. And that's in our physical and health [curriculum]" (Principal 1 Interview, p. 6). I would argue that teaching kids about safety and Internet does directly relate to social media. When I asked P2 the same question, she replied with "Absolutely. I know there are conversations happening all the time between teachers and students about it" (Principal 2 Interview, p. 5). The principals promote positive social media usage by having conversations about social media directly and indirectly.

     Finding 4.2. Principals hire outside agencies as a strategy to promote positive social media usage at home and at school. Both principals voiced that they hired "outside" professionals to help

teach their students about positive social media usage. P1 hired a local non-profit, called "Courage for Youth," whose mission is "to resource and equip youth and those who work with youth to help youth successfully navigate their most challenging years," (Courage for Youth, 2019) to help facilitate a program, called "Scream," that is tailored towards helping children build "trustworthy character." One of the curricular outcomes of this program is "to discern authentic and healthy interactions with social media and on-line interactions." (Courage for Youth, 2019). P1 expressed that he brought this group in to work explicitly with his intermediate students (grades four to six).

P2 had a similar experience with hiring an outside service to promote positive social media use. She says, "we brought in a presentation called the 'White Hatter' here at our school, and we encouraged parents to go to the night time [presentation], as well" (Principal 2 Interview, p. 5). She continued to explain that only grade four and five students attended the daytime performance. The White Hatters refer to themselves on their website as, "Internet Safety and Digital Literacy Education Specialists" (The White Hatter, 2017). White Hatter's website says that the grade four and five curriculum speak to cyberbullying, safety, etiquette, and privacy.

   Finding 4.3. Principals inform themselves of district policy pertaining to social media. Both principals were able to speak to school district policy that pertained to students' social media usage. P2 shared her knowledge about these policies,

> I know that there is a policy for student use and a policy for adult use or teacher use. The policy
>
> is you have to use them for educational purposes. And the kids have to sign a contract around
>
> that and everything. And when they don't, when they breach that, then you take it away.
>
> (Principal 2 Interview, p. 6)

P1 was able to refer directly to the policy because he said he used to constantly refer to it when he was an administrator in a middle school. When asked about district policy pertaining to social media, his response was, "Yeah, it's Policy 486 actually. It's a student electronic and social media communication

agreement" (Principal 1 Interview, p. 8). P1 also shared how this policy and his leadership practices around student's use of social media is evolving. He added, "The things I did ten years ago at middle school, I could not be getting away with today. Because I was confiscating cell phones and going through them and saying, 'hey, this is inappropriate.' Can't do that now" (Principal 2 Interview, p. 8). Both principals in the study were able to refer to the school district's policy around student social media usage.

Finding 4.4. Principals work closely with parents to resolve social media issues. It was clear that both principals, more than any other leadership practice, valued working closely with parents when it comes to resolving social media issues. When social media issues come up in the school setting, both principals said they bring the parents in and try to work together with them to sort through the issues. If there is an issue related to safety, the principals expressed that they would confiscate the phone, bring parents into the school, and then have the child's parent go through their social media account – both principals also stated that they would not personally search through a child's social media account without parent permission, unless immediate danger was involved. P1 describes this relationship, "When I have conversations with parents about social media or inappropriate Internet use, I am often coaching and working together with them" (Principal 1 Interview, p. 4). P1 explained that if he has a feeling about something weird happening with a child's social media account, he does not hesitate to call the parents and ask them to browse through their child's social media accounts. P2 gave a couple of examples where she, too, supported and "coached" parents through their child's social media misbehavior. With the question, "whose responsibility is it to teach kids healthy social media usage?" P2 passionately claimed, "I think it is the responsibility of our society in general. I think it is parents, government, teachers – everybody. We all have to be involved" (Principal 2 Interview, p. 6). The principals believed a home-school partnership was essential to resolving social media issues with children.

Finding 4.5. Principals collaborate with the technology department. P1 shared about a time when he had to collaborate with the district technology department to help pinpoint a student who was making inappropriate comments to others on a school computer. With the support of the technology department, they were able to identify what time the student was making the offences and on which device. From there, they compared that information to the teachers' records of who the laptop belonged to during that specific time. With this teamwork, P1 shared that they were successfully able to identify the culprit of the offences.

Finding 4.6. Principals check students' social media accounts after an issue arises. P1 described one of his memories where a student created a fictitious Facebook account for the purpose of slandering him. Once P1 heard of this happening, he created a Facebook account so that he could search the student's social media account and see what the student had been saying about him. This lead P1 to contacting Facebook and asking them to shut down the fictitious and slanderous student account. When P2 was concerned about one of her young students, she described a story where she also had to check in on a grade three student. The grade three student was attempting to be a famous "YouTuber" – as per the student's request, P2 started following the YouTube channel of the young student making these videos. P2 immediately contacted the student's parents and informed them about what their daughter had been doing online. Both principals that I interviewed were able to identify a time where they went online and searched a student's profile because they were concerned about what a student was posting.

Finding 4.7. Principals ban phones during instructional times. Banning cell phones during class time was a leadership decision both principals had made for their elementary school. P1 described why he felt that cell phones at school were not a big problem for his elementary school, "I would say up until this year here, in my five years here, social media, cell phone use, almost nonexistent. The cell phone use is not even here – because we are pretty tight with that – so really it's happening outside" (Principal Interview 1, p. 3). P2 gave a more thorough description of her rules pertaining to cell phones

at school. She explained that most of her grade four and five students had their own phones. She said if

they have to bring their phones to school, because they are walking to and from school and their parents

want to be able to get a hold of them, then the rule is that cell phones stay in backpacks between 8:30 am

to 2:30 pm. P2 added that you'll see phones on the playground before and after school, but that she was

adamant that they stay away during learning time, unless the student has their teacher's permission.

In fully describing the practices that the elementary principals in this study were using to

promote positive social media usage with their students, the data spoke to seven specific practices.

These practices include:

1. Principals encourage teaching values-based mindsets and explicitly teaching about social
   media.

2. Principals hire outside agencies as a strategy to promote positive social media usage at
   home and at school.

3. Principals inform themselves of district policy pertaining to social media.

4. Principals work closely with parents to resolve social media issues.

5. Principals collaborate with the technology department.

6. Principals check students' social media accounts after an issue arises.

7. Principals ban cell phones during instructional times.

There was a variety of approaches used to promote positive social media usage with students.

Summary

To summarize Chapter 4, I would like re-state the central research question and then

answer the three parts to the question by reviewing the findings. The central research question for this

study was: How do children engage with social media and what are elementary school principals'

perceptions about and leadership practices related to student social media usage?

The first part of the central research question asks how children engage with social media. The information provided from the students in the surveys and focus groups was clear in Finding 1.1: YouTube is the most commonly used social media platform by students, and TikTok is the second-most used platform. Further information about how children are using social media was given by describing students' general usage of social media, specifically, the amount of time children are spending on social media and with which devices they are accessing their social media accounts. Findings 2.1 and 2.2 are called, "Children in this study spend more time on social media on weekends than weekdays," and "The tablet was the device most commonly used by children in this study to access social media." Findings 2.4 to 2.7 look at what children do when they are interacting on social media. These sections were titled, " Children in this study are active users of YouTube who interact in and with the 'comments' section and upload videos," "Children in this study use social media for gaming purposes," " Children in this study use social media to communicate with real and online friends," and "Children in this study use social media at school to collaborate, view videos, and communicate learning to parents." Lastly, I concluded answering how children use social media by explaining some family rules pertaining to social media usage. Finding 2.8 is titled " Children report their social media usage is guided by family rules around social media."

The second part of the central research question asks about the elementary principals' perceptions about children's use of social media. With Finding 3.1, both principals in this study assumed their grade four and five students were using social media. As discussed in Finding 3.2, principals in this study also felt that parents were using social media and technology to occupy their children. Lastly, Finding 3.3 looked at the problems that principals experienced when children used social media. These problems were divided into three groups. The first group of problems all negatively impact school climate. The second group of problems negatively affect student learning. The third group of problems affect student safety.

Finally, the last part of the central research question asked about the leadership practices the elementary principals are using to support positive student social media usage. It was found that the elementary principals in this study are using proactive and reactive practices to promote positive social media use with their students. These practices include the following:

1. Principals encourage teaching values-based mindsets and explicitly teaching about social media.

2. Principals hire outside agencies as a strategy to promote positive social media usage at home and at school.

3. Principals inform themselves of district policy pertaining to social media.

4. Principals work closely with parents to resolve social media issues.

5. Principals collaborate with the technology department.

6. Principals check students' social media accounts after an issue arises.

7. Principals ban cell phones during instructional times.

This chapter conveyed the everyday grade four and five student perspectives of their online experiences, with specific regard to social media. Secondly, it also conveyed the perceptions and experiences of elementary principals who are working diligently to promote positive social media usage for their students. Where possible, the findings were presented in a rich narrative form using accurate quotations taken from the student surveys, student focus groups, and principal interviews to portray multiple perspectives from each of the participants' unique perspectives and experiences. The narrative data were connected and synthesized through direct quotations and explanatory text. Where possible, the emphasis was on allowing participants to speak for themselves, especially with the student participants, to better appreciate the participants' perceptions and experiences.

In Chapter 5, a discussion, grounded in connections to theory and research from the literature review, of the findings will be provided. Additionally, interpretative insights, further analysis, and

synthesis of the major themes will be examined to build a more holistic understanding of grade four and five students' social media usage, as well as the elementary principals' perceptions and leadership practices pertaining to student social media usage.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was twofold. First, the purpose was to better understand how children engage with social media. Second, the purpose was to better understand elementary principals' perceptions and leadership practices towards children's social media usage. The purpose of this chapter is to provide interpretive insights into these findings. Moreover, the purpose of this chapter is also to compare these findings to previously reviewed literature, discuss the limitations of the study, and to suggest directions for future research.

Analysis, Interpretation, and Synthesis

The research questions that steered this study guided the analysis of the qualitative case study. The data were coded, analyzed, and organized first by research question, and then by categories and subcategories, as depicted in Chapter 2. In seeking to understand the research problem, this study was framed by one primary research question and four sub-questions:

➢ How do children engage with social media and what are elementary school principals' perceptions about and leadership practices related to student social media usage?

The four sub-questions that assisted in answering this primary research question are:

1. What types of social media are children most using?

2. How and why are children using social media?

3. What is the elementary principal's perception of children's use of social media?

4. What leadership practices are elementary principals using to support positive student social media usage?

Analytic categories were created to directly answer this study's research questions. In the analysis, I primarily searched for connecting patterns within the analytic categories, as well as the

connections or themes that emerged among the various categories. To do this, I commenced the process by creating an Interpretation Outline Tool (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 174) which essentially had me critically reflect on the evidence for each finding. Secondly, this tool also required me to make connections between my findings and the existing literature around social media, young people, and school principals. As Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) suggest, the next step is to search for patterns and themes amidst the findings. To do this, Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) recommend the creation of an Analytic Category Tool (p. 184). It made sense to me to combine my Interpretation Outline Tool and my Analytic Category Tool (see Appendix T). The creation of this tool aided my process in analyzing and synthesizing the findings from my study and the existing literature.

The synthesis in this chapter was a result of interpreting and considering patterns across the findings, comparing the findings to the literature, and my own reflections on the emerging findings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Two analytic categories, or themes, emerged from the data collected: (a) children are active users of social media and (b) elementary principals use proactive and reactive leadership practices to promote positive social media usage with students. The remainder of this section explores how the two themes relate to the literature.

Theme 1: Children in This Study Were Active Users of Social Media

This study used Obar and Wildman's (2015) definition of social media. Essentially, social media have three defnining parts: (a) a user profile, (b) the ability to network with other users, and (c) the ability to create user generated content. With this definition, this study has shown that children are active users of social media. In this section, the first two research questions of this study will be answered. As such, this section will be divided into two parts. To start, I will discuss the findings of this study that speak to the social media platforms that children are engaging with. Next, I will explain why and how children are actively engaging with social media. In both sections, I will compare these findings to relevant existing peer reviewed literature.

Research question 1: What types of social media are children most using? As mentioned in the literature review, there is ample research about teens and social media (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2015; Kaplan, 2010; O'Keefe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011; Pew Research Center, 2011, 2015, 2018; Stephens et al., 2017). However, despite the US Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) requiring that young people be at least 13-years-old to use the bulk of social media websites (Federal Trade Commission, 1999), it appears as if children around the world are still using social media (Bedrošová et al., 2018; Broadcasting Standards Authority and NZ On Air, 2015; Kafai & Fields, 2013; Livingstone, 2011; Livingstone et al., 2017; Pacheco & Melhuish, 2018**;** Steeves, 2014). Steeves' (2014) study was the only Canadian study I was able to find which explicitly looked at children's use of social media. In Steeves' (2014) study, approximately a third of grade four to six students claimed to have a Facebook account.

In contrast to Steeves (2014) finding, children in this study were using Facebook at a much lower rate than was reported in 2014. Steeves' (2014) study found that 33% of grade four to six students were using social media. In the present study, only 8% of students reported to being users of Facebook. This finding may highlight the ever-changing and ever-evolving world of social media. As can be seen with failed social media platforms such as MySpace and Digg, platforms that are wildly popular can quickly fall to nonexistence. It would be a stretch to claim that this finding suggests a decreasing popularity of Facebook in general, but it does show that the children in this study report to using it less than the children did in Steeves' (2014) study from five years ago.

In this study, YouTube and TikTok were the most popular social media platforms with the grade four and five student participants. Almost every student in the student surveys claimed to use YouTube (94%) and a little over a third (36%) reported to using TikTok. Conversation around YouTube dominated the conversations with the student focus groups and was also brought up during the principal

interviews. Both of the principals interviewed in this study claimed that some of their grade four and five students were using social media.

This study suggests a difference in the preferred social media platforms between children and teenagers. The children in this study articulated that YouTube and TikTok were their preferred social media platforms. The Pew Research Center's (2018) study found that teenagers' preferred social media platforms were YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat. About 94% of children in this study and about 85% of teens in the Pew Research Center's (2018) study said they used YouTube. The striking difference is with the second and third most popular platforms. For teens, their second favourite pick was Instagram and their third favourite pick was Snapchat (Pew Research Center, 2018). For the children in this study, these platforms were not popular – yet. Their second favourite platform was TikTok and their third favourite was Roblox.

Research question 2: How and why are children using social media? Children in this study provided information about their social media usage. The children in this study also gave much evidence of being active social media users. Escobar-Viera et al. (2018) say active social media usage occurs when "users share life experiences; create text, audio, or video content; and respond frequently to other users" (Escobar-Viera et al., 2018, p. 437). This was evidenced by their active YouTube usage, communication with real and online friends on social media, involvement with gaming and gaming media platforms, and using social media for learning purposes at school.

Children's general use of social media. Similar to teens, children are spending a fair amount of time on social media. Rideout (2015) claims that preteens (defined as those between the ages of 8-to-12-years-old) and teens are spending about two hours on social media per day. My findings, with regards to how much time children are spending on social media, would be mostly consistent with this. On average, children in this study report to spending between one to two hours on social media per school day and more than two hours per weekend day.

Although not a significant difference, female teens are spending slightly more time on social media than male teens. This was reported by both Perrin (2015) and Rideout's (2015) studies. Consistent with existing research, the female children in this study reported using social media at slightly higher rates than the male children in this study. It was interesting to note that girls in this study spent slightly less time on social media on weekdays than boys, yet more time on social media on weekend days.

Children in this study reported to using tablets more (39%) than any other device to access their social media. When it came to cell phones, they were the second least popular option for children. Only 17% of children reported to using a cell phone to access their social media accounts. Given that 67% of teens in Rideout's (2015) study and 88% of teens in the Pew Research Center's (2015) study claimed to owning their own phone, I would hypothesize that the reason for tablet popularity is due to children's lack of cell phone ownership.

Active YouTube usage. YouTube was the most commonly used social media platform with the children in this study. As per Escobar-Viera et al.'s (2018) definition of "active social media usage," children in this study reported to having an active and involved role with YouTube. When asked about this usage specifically, every child in focus group 2 was able to identify their favourite YouTube channel. Further to this, all 8 out of 8 children in focus group 2 reported to reading the comments section of a YouTube video after watching a video. To make this usage even more active, five out of eight of the children reported to adding comments to the comments section. Additionally, four out of eight of the children had either posted a video on YouTube or were hoping to post a video in the near future. Not as common was having their own YouTube channel. There were, however, children in both focus groups who discussed having a YouTube channel and were concerned about their follower count. Most children in this study fell into Escobar-Viera et al.'s definition of active social media usage.

In terms of the content they are posting on to YouTube and social media, the findings from this study compare to the findings of Lange's (2016) findings. In her book, Lange (2016) contended that

children posted "personally expressive media" on YouTube. She describes this as being content that involves "any mediated artifact or set of media that enables a creator to communicate aspects of the self" (p. 16). Similarly, when the children in this study were asked about the content they post, they discussed posting videos about their gameplay, what they were currently doing, items in their rooms such as stuffies or drawings, or doing dances by themselves or with friends. Lange (2016) says, "YouTube is much more than a place to go and see viral videos. Although kids have fun simply watching YouTube, many choose to make their own videos" (p. 9). Although children have passive social media usage components to their YouTube usage, children in Lange's (2016) study and in this study, reported to having active social media usage aspects to their YouTube usage.

Communicating with real-life and online friends on social media. This study aimed to see if children were actively communicating with other children on social media. Active social media usage occurs when social media users share life experiences and respond frequently with other users (Escobar-Viera et al., 2018). Children in this study said they use social media to communicate with both real-life (those they have met face-to-face) and online friends in both the student surveys and focus groups. When asked for examples of why they would communicate with real-life friends on social media, S3 provided some examples, "like, 'do you want to hang out?' or 'do you want to play *Fortnite* or video games?' or 'do you want to come over?' … stuff like that" (Focus Group 1, p. 12). Similarly, S7 said, "I do it after school, like, when my dad gets home. I usually go on and my friend Hayden, he's always on, and so I invite him to the party. And then we both play" (p. 12). Other students said they communicated on social media with family members who lived away, and some said they communicate with friends when they are bored or when they need to collaborate on a school project. Children in this study confirmed their active social media usage via their online communication.

What is most interesting, though, is that the majority of students in Focus Group 1 claimed to communicate more on social media with online friends than real-life friends. In their (2015) study, Best,

Taylor, and Manktelow investigated the influence of online friend networks on adolescent wellbeing.

These researchers concluded that online friendships influence mental wellbeing as they create

perceptions of social support, belonging and social status (p. 142). This was observed through one

student in the focus groups. S7 presented as a very quiet and shy young person. He did not participate

much in the focus group and appeared to be very nervous up until the topic of online friendships was

mentioned. With confidence, S7 contributed, "I have thousands of people I don't know and maybe just a

few people that I do know [on my social media accounts]. One of them is in the class and some of them

they've told me about them and I've told them about me. So like we're kind of friends now" (Student

Focus Group 1, p. 10). It appeared as if S7 was proud of the social support and belonging that his online

friendships provided. The researchers (Best et al., 2015) also noted that the influence of online

friendships can be both positive and negative – depending on if the friendships are supportive or

unsupportive. Albeit this study did not get into the details of the online friendships, some of the children

participants in the current study did describe how they were so close with their online friends that they

had added them to multiple social media platforms. The findings of this study showed that children's

online communication fit with Escobar-Viera et al.'s (2018) definition of active social media usage

because children shared their life experiences online and because they frequently responded to other

users. Further, for at least one student in this study, it appeared as if his online friendship provided him

with a sense of wellbeing or confidence, which is a benefit of online friendship, according to Best et al.'s

(2015) study.

Involvement with gaming media and gaming media platforms. Although I did not initially

intend to include gaming media as a form of social media, the children in the study chose to include it. I

provided the children from both schools with Obar and Wildman's (2015) three characteristics of social

media: (a) a user profile, (b) the ability to network with other users, and (c) the ability to create user

generated content. With this definition, the children from both schools decided that games such as

Fortnite and *Roblox* should be included as social media platforms. When the children were asked which social media platforms they used, eight of the 36 children wrote in "*Roblox*" as an alternate option. Had I included *Roblox* in with the list of social media platforms, it is very possible that these numbers would have been much higher. Again, I was curious to learn if children's video game usage fit with Escobar-Viera et al.'s (2018) passive or active social media usage definitions. Based on Perry et al.'s (2017) findings, they claim video games provide an environment where individuals can not only play, but also interact with a wide range of other people. This was made very clear by the findings of this study. Children in this study spoke at length about how they played video games in collaboration with others – both real-life from school and online friends from all around the world. This information also coincides with Kafai and Fields' (2013) work about connections being at the core of digital playgrounds. Kafai and Fields claim that virtual gaming worlds can extend relationships with existing friends and create opportunities for children to meet new friends. This was evidenced by S3's comment about playing *Fortnite,* "In *Fortnite*, you can go into a Squads game, and so there are three other people, and hopefully they have mics so you can talk to them and then they are random people. And again, you can also play with your [real life] friends" (Focus Group 1, p. 11). The students in this study spoke at length about their experiences with what Kafai and Fields (2013) call "connected play."

Not only did the children in this study claim to playing video games, they also provided information about how they actively used gaming social media platforms. These platforms include applications like Twitch, Discord, and Mixer. S2 explained how these platforms are "basically a live stream, so you're like [playing a game], and then they see it the exact second or minute you're doing it" (Focus Group 1 Transcript, p. 12). S2 went on to call these platforms "gaming community talking services." S7 explained, "and then in the bottom right corner, when I do it, there's a little chat box, and people that are watching my stream, they can talk to me and I can answer back" (Focus Group 1 Transcript, p. 12). Between actively strategizing and playing with other online gamers in video games,

and livestreaming and communicating about game play in gaming social media platforms, children's video game usage would fall within Escorbar-Viera et al.'s (2018) definition of active social media usage.

   Social media for learning purposes at school. The OECD (2019) report on innovation in education claims that innovation in education should improve some educational outcome, such as students' learning outcomes (measured through tests), students' engagement, equity, cost-efficiency, or even teachers' work wellbeing (2019, p. 17). The children in this study claimed that social media applications supported their learning in three key ways. Students explained how their teachers used YouTube to explain math strategies and to demonstrate "directed draw" activities, they used G Suite Applications to collaborate on projects, and their classes used FreshGrade to communicate their learning to their teacher, parents, and classmates. I would suggest that active social media usage, as described by Escobar-Viera et al., (2018), occurs in the latter two examples, as both G Suite applications and Freshgrade require active involvement.

   Vega and Robb contended in their (2019) study that next to video-streaming services such as YouTube, productivity and presentation tools, like Google G Suite for Education, constituted the second most common type of digital tool, used by approximately half of teachers with their students. When students collaborate on Google G Suite Applications to work on an assignment, it requires active communication between two or more students. This active communication can help forge strong ties between two classmates and even encourage higher-level discussion. Tucker (2015) found in her study that "Social media may slightly improve the time it takes for group members to get to know one another because of the transparency it provides, and it may also encourage higher stages of purposeful discourse" (p. 54). This claim was supported by the participants of Focus Group 1. When asked about their experiences of using G Suite Applications, S8, S3, and S2 fondly explained how just that day they

completed an immigration research project together using Google Docs and Google Slides. They

informed me that they started working on the project using a Google Doc at school, but then had to

complete the project using Google Slides at home. By way of observing how these participants

communicated with each other, it was clear that they had some level of friendship and were comfortable

communicating online with each other. This study's findings about elementary students actively

engaging with social media for learning purposes, such as G Suite Applications, fits well with Vega and

Robb's (2019) findings and with Tucker's (2015) claim that when social media are used for learning

purposes, they can help to forge closer bonds with peers. Further to this, the examples provided by the

students in this study show that because of G Suite applications, collaborating on school projects outside

of school time and space has been made easier, an example of what the OECD (2019) report on

innovation would call an innovation in education.

Second, e-portfolios, such as FreshGrade, are digital collections, created by students or by their

teachers, of their course-related work. Included in e-portfolios are essays, posters, photographs, videos,

and artwork that showcase the student's learning. One of the OECD's seven Principles of Learning is that

learning is social by nature (Dumont et al., 2010; Vygotsky, 1978) and they claim that learning is

actively constructed through social negotiation. E-portfolios allow for other users (ie. peers, teachers, or

family members) to provide commentary or feedback of student learning and work. It was indicated by

the students in this study that they and their teachers used e-profiles at school to communicate their

learning with family members. Nicolaidou (2013) advocates for e-portfolios as her study provided

evidence that e-portfolios can also support the development of students' writing performance and peer

feedback skills in the context of primary school essay writing. While this study did not investigate the

effectiveness of peer editing, almost all students in focus group 2 spoke claimed they received learning

feedback from parents on FreshGrade. E-portfolios, such as Freshgrade, provide students with the

opportunity to digitally convey their learning through pictures and videos in real-time. Further, they also

allow students to track their learning progression and invite feedback from other users who follow their learning story; The OECD's report on innovation (OECD, 2019) would classify e-portfolios as forms of innovation in education because of these improvements.

The students in this study claimed to using two types of active social media usage at school which helped to support their learning – these usages included collaborating with peers on social media such as Google Docs and Slides and using e-portfolios to communicate and track their learning.

Children in this study provided much evidence for why and how they were engaging with social media. Children in this study are averaging between one to two hours on social media per weekday and over two hours on social media per weekend day. Girls in this study spend slightly more time on social media than boys, however, this difference is minimal. Lastly, the children in this study report to using the tablet more than any other device to access their social media accounts.

One of my primary goals of analysis was to discover if children's social media usage would be classified as passive or active social media usage according to Escobar-Viera et al.'s (2018) definitions. Escobar-Viera et al. (2018) argue that active social media usage occurs when "users share life experiences; create text, audio, or video content; and respond frequently to other users" (p. 437). Children's active social media usage was evidenced by how they upload videos on to YouTube, TikTok, and Freshgrade; used social media to stay connected with both real-life and online friendships; were socially connected through gaming play and gaming social media platforms; and lastly, actively used social media for innovative learning purposes at school.

Valuable insights to create a holistic understanding of how children are engaging with social media, especially children's active social media usage, were explained in the section above. The next theme looks at how principals are proactively and reactively responding to social media in schools.

Theme 2: Elementary Principals Use Proactive and Reactive Leadership Practices to Promote

Positive Social Media Usage with Students

This section will start by examining the perceptions of principals about student's social media usage, specifically with the problems that social media cause in schools. After discussing the problems, I will describe the seven leadership practices that principals in this study use to promote positive social media usage with students.

Research question 3: What is the elementary principal's perception of children's use of social media? The elementary principals in this study were able to recall problems that they had encountered relating to grade four and five students and their social media usage. I categorized these issues into three groups in the previous chapter: problems that affect school climate, problems that affect student learning, and problems that affect student safety. For this part of the analysis, I wanted use existing literature to discuss these three problem areas.

Social media can negatively impact school climate in elementary schools. First, elementary principals in this study spoke about social media issues that can negatively affect school climate. According to several studies (Hinduja & Patchin, 2007, 2008; Marczak & Coyne, 2010; Ybarra, Diener-West, & Leaf, 2007), there are a number of ways in which cyberbullying and social media problems can impact student well-being. This can include: school avoidance, increased school absences, isolation, alienation, negative perceptions of school climate, not feeling safe at school, higher risk for school problems, and a greater likelihood for carrying weapons to school. In comparing these perceptions to the perceptions of the elementary principals interviewed in this study, the elementary principals also claimed that social media were starting to cause school climate problems in elementary schools.

To provide evidence of how social media are causing problems for school climate in elementary schools, P1 explained that he has had incidences where grade four and five boys bring their *Fortnite* and *Roblox* conflicts to school and the conflict continues in the school setting. P2 said she has dealt with incidences where elementary students have made threats online at night time and then the problem spills

into the school setting the next day. P1 has also had to call home and inform parents about social media threats that are happening at home but have negatively affected school climate, "it's not happening during school, it's happening outside of school and this is what we're dealing with right now" (Principal Interview 1, p. 4). In addition to online conflict and threats, P2 confirmed that she has also had to deal with cyberbullying incidences (Principal Interview 2, p. 4).

   Social media can disrupt elementary students from learning. Previous studies have indicated it is hard for students to stay on task when social media are just a click away; 52% of students said they were occasionally or regularly distracted by social media in classrooms where it was permitted for students to have their own devices (Kay, Benzimra & Li, 2017). Similarly, in a study that looked at middle and high school students and their social media distractions, student participants averaged less than six minutes on task with academic activities prior to switching to browse their social media accounts (Rosen, Carrier & Cheever; 2013). In this same study, the authors also reported that students who accessed Facebook regularly had lower GPAs than those who avoided it. Not surprisingly, a 2014 study of the "Future of the Principalship in Canada" determined that one of the biggest struggles for Canadian principals was the "pernicious and frequent use of social media among students" (p. 11). Although P2 believes social media can be leveraged to support student learning, she also provided evidence for how it was starting to distract elementary students from learning.

   P2 provided examples of students browsing social media websites, instead of doing their learning tasks, when they are given school-owned electronic devices. P2 added that not only are students being distracted from their learning, but they are also using social media to view inappropriate content. P2 informed me of what this looks like:

    We have a student who wasn't here last year and now he's the one this year who I am having to

     constantly monitor him. Even though we are telling him this is a tool, it's got to be used in the

school setting for learning… well, he's still using it to do inappropriate things. (Principal 2

Interview, p. 6)

Unlike P2, P1 did not provide examples of how social media was distracting students at his school from

learning. P1 stated that he had not noticed cell phone use at his school up until recently, because they

were "tight" with their rules around students and cell phones (Principal 1 Interview, p. 3).

Social media can compromise elementary students' safety. Corrigan and Robertson concluded

that the high-school vice principals in their (2015) study felt obligated to act when student safety became

compromised in the online world. They reported that the vice principals saw their role as maintaining

school communities as safe places and that they enacted policy when students made unsafe choices on

social media. Similarly, the principals in this study both provided examples of times when they felt

students' safety was being compromised because of their involvement with social media. P1 spoke about

having to have conversations with parents because of their child's large digital footprint and P2 spoke

about a grade 4 student who was posting promiscuous videos on TikTok and about a grade three student

who was regularly uploading videos to their YouTube channel without their parents' knowledge. Similar

to the high-school vice principals in Corrigan and Robertson's (2015) study, both elementary principals

in this study discussed having to get involved when they felt their students' safety was being

compromised.

The bulk of existing research pertaining to principals' perceptions on student social media usage

comes from the perspective of middle and high school principals. This section has compared the

elementary principals' perceptions to that of the middle and high school principals from existing

literature. Now, this section will shift to focus on principals' proactive and reactive leadership practices

used to promote positive student social media usage.

Research question 4: What leadership practices are elementary principals using to support positive student social media usage? For this section, I will briefly review each principal practice and then immediately follow up by discussing what peer reviewed literature has to say about each practice. I will explain the proactive practices first and the reactive practices second. When I use the term "proactive," essentially, I am referring to actions that principals take to encourage positive social media usage with their students. When I use the term "reactive," essentially, I am referring to actions that principals take after a social media problem has occurred. This section will close by looking at the practice "banning cell phones," as this practice can be looked at as being both proactive and reactive.

Leadership practice #1: Principals encourage teaching values-based mindsets and explicitly teaching about social media. MacKay et al. (2013) stated that school administrators must ensure that schools properly teach cyberconduct and the responsible and safe use of social media. Some may call these types of online behaviours "digital citizenship," which Frau-Meigs, O'Neill, Soriani, and Tome (2017) define as "the ability to have competent and positive engagement with digital technologies" (p. 15). Children must be shown exactly what is acceptable or expected of them in terms of social media. When it comes to the explicit teaching of digital citizenship, approximately 60% of the 1200 teachers surveyed in Vega and Robb's (2019) study say they use some type of digital citizenship curriculum or resource with students in their classrooms. This same study also showed that teachers' social media conversations with students mostly involved topics pertaining to cyberbullying and safety. Further to these studies, the parents in Cassidy et al.'s (2012a) study talked about the importance of teachers building in opportunities for youth to voice their social media concerns and grapple with finding effective solutions. Some parents also expressed they wanted actual lessons in school on online etiquette and appropriate social media usage.

In this study, there was evidence from both principals that teachers were proactively teaching values-based mindsets and explicitly teaching about social media. P2 explained that it was important to

teach children critical thinking skills and to get them to think about what is wrong and right. She also said that teachers were having conversations with students about social media "all the time" (Principal 2 Interview, p. 5). P1 differed a bit in his response, as he didn't believe his teachers were explicitly teaching about social media – although he made a reference to teaching about online safety, "And we need to share with the kids what's appropriate behavior and Internet safety, because as you know, there are older people out they who are wanting to prey on younger kids" (Principal 1 Interview, p. 7), but rather, he said it was important to teach child values that would help them to make good decisions both in the real and online worlds.

Drawing from Cassidy et al's (2009; 2012a, 2012b) work on cyber-kindness, it would seem that schools in this district might encourage more explicit conversations among key stakeholders about how to integrate concepts of "cyber-kindness" into their curricula. Principals, in conversation with students and with teachers, could take the lead on developing bespoke programs informed by the realities of social media misbehaviours in their school and that aim to integrate practices and mindsets known to shift school cultures in ways that help all students feel safe, and connected. As a starting place, principals and students could look for ideas in the "teen-friendly" book called, *Words Wound: Delete cyberbullying and make kindness go viral* by Justin Patchin and Sameer Hinduja (2013).

Leadership practice #2: Principals hire outside agencies as a strategy to promote positive social media usage with children. A second proactive way in which principals in this study were promoting positive social media use was by hiring outside agencies to come and speak to their school communities. Essentially, both principals had hired outside speakers who specialize in the area of social media to come in and speak with their intermediate students. P2 also hired her outside speaker to come in at night time and give a presentation to parents.

I would suspect that the principals in this study opted to hire outside agencies to speak to their students about social media as a result of them not feeling comfortable with this content. Principals in

other studies have expressed their knowledge gap within this area (Canadian Association of Principals, 2014; Herold, 2018, Powers & Green, 2016); Young, Tully, Ramirez, 2017). According to one survey of over 500 American school leaders conducted by the Education Week Research Center (Herold, 2018), school principals say they're extremely concerned about children's use of social media and only 14 percent describe themselves as "very prepared" to help students use social media responsibly (p. 21). Part of the challenge school leaders face is that there is no set checklist they can follow in order to proactively keep students safe on social media or respond effectively when things go sideways. Herold (2018) claims "Many of the platforms and services young people use--such as Snapchat, Instagram, musical.ly, WhatsApp, Kik, and LINE--may be unfamiliar to the average principal" (p. 20). Herold adds that even if school principals are able to understand the various social media platforms, they must navigate murky legal waters before reacting to social media issues – there is a fine line between freedom of speech and speech that violates other students' rights and disrupts school climate. Figuring out where that line is drawn can be tricky. As explained, most principals don't feel prepared to deal with issues pertaining to social media, and this is why I suspect principals in this study hired outside agencies to come in and speak to their students about social media.

Leadership practice #3: Principals inform themselves of district policy pertaining to social media. Smale and Hill (2016) advocate that in order to efficiently deal with problems relating to social media, school districts must have clearly defined and enforced policies – knowing and enforcing district policies is the third proactive strategy used by principals in this study. MacKay et al. (2013) explained that principals and schools must adhere to the rights and expectations of freedom of speech and expression in addressing issues and problems that arise from student use of social media and cellular phones. Vander Broek et al. (2009) identified the principal's role as balancing "the use of Internet-based tools that enrich learning against the need to maintain order and a safe learning environment" (p. 11). Shear (2015) lists several American examples of where school districts have been successfully sued for

overstepping their boundaries with social media policy. Shear explains how district policies have violated freedom of speech, privacy rights, and contradicted state laws.

Although the principals in this study were not responsible for creating social media policies in their schools, they both had a responsibility to know their governing district's social media policies. With the district in which the study took place, essentially, these social media policies required students to practice digital citizenship both at home and at school, practice safe online behavior, and ensure that personal use of electronic communication systems do not interfere with learning. Both principals were able to provide some general information about their district's policies.

As discussed in the Shear (2015) article, several principals and schools have been sued for the ways in which their principals responded to a social media situation. P1 in this study knew that he was no longer able to look through a student's phone:

> We can't confiscate a cell phone unless we have a reason to because there is an unsafe behavior happening. It's kind of like a locker search, you need to have a reason, not because you suspect lightly, but because you highly suspect that something is going on and then you can go in. (Principal 1 Interview, p. 4).

P1 continued to explain that if he had a reason to be concerned over a child's safety due to something posted on social media, and the child refused to show him their account, he knew that his next step would be to call in the child's parents. By P1 knowing how to effectively deal with a social media issue before it happens, he is potentially avoiding a future lawsuit due to his knowledge around district policy.

Leadership practice #4. Principals work closely with parents to resolve social media issues.
Cassidy et al. (2012a) sought to find parents' perspective on who should bear the responsibility of teaching young people appropriate social media usage. These researchers assert in their abstract, "Since most cyber bullying emanates from the home computer, parents can play an important role in preventing cyber bullying and in fostering a kinder online world, or what might be termed 'cyber kindness' " (Cassidy et al.; 2012a). In general, the 315 parents in their study acknowledged the need for the adults in

their children's lives to play a key role in encouraging youth to be kinder and more respectful in the online world. These parents highlighted that both home and school have a responsibility to teach children about positive interchanges and online behavior. It was evident by the principals in this study that they collaborate closely with parents in their efforts to rectify social media issues with children. The principals in the study gave examples of contacting parents when students were engaging in online conflict, making threats on social media, or engaging in activities that potentially compromised their safety. When asked whose responsibility it was to teach kids about how to safely and positively use social media, P1 replied with "It's a partnership … I don't think it's going to work if we do it alone, I don't think it's going to work if the parents do it alone, it's gotta be together" (Principal 1 Interview, p. 7). Similarly, P2 replied with "I think that's a responsibility of our society in general. I think it's parents, government, teachers – everybody. We all have to be involved" (Principal 2 Interview, p. 6).

The parents in Cassidy et al.'s (2012a) study and the principals in this study both claimed that home and school needed to work together to combat social media issues with children and to teach children appropriate social media usage. In practice, this could look like a principal sharing a school's social media concerns to a school's Parent Advisory Council or at a family community forum night, where collectively, the various stakeholders aim to problem-solve together.

Leadership practice #5: Principals collaborate with the technology department. Hargreaves, Boyle, and Harris (2014) argue that in the past decades, views on leadership have increasingly focused on the importance of collaboration and social relationships for successful leadership in a variety of contexts, including education. Moolenaar and Sleegers examined the "networked principal" in their (2014) study. They concluded that the work of leaders is increasingly done "through" social relationships and in interaction with a large number of stakeholders inside as well as outside the school boundaries. The job of a principal is demanding and complex and they cannot be expected to

individually deal with every issue that comes their way. One of the principals in this study explained

how he turns to his "IT network" when he needs to respond to a student social media issue.

P1, a non-user of social media, described how he would go to the information technology (IT)

department if he wasn't familiar with a particular social media platform. P1 recalled:

> Back in the day when I was at [the middle school], whether it was Hotmail or whatever, I went to
> IT and said help me out here. Somebody has misused their account or what have you. And they'd
> log in and tell me what time it was and how it happened. (Principal 1 Interview, p. 9)

P1 said that now that he was in an elementary school, he would still not hesitate to call IT if there was a

social media issue that he was not comfortable with. P1's leadership practice of asking the IT department

for help fits well with Hargreaves, Boyle, and Harris' (2014) belief that principals ought to be

collaborating in a team.

There are several people in a school setting that may be beneficial for a school principal to

collaborate when it comes to matters of social media. The school counsellor will be a vital resource for

helping in matters of online conflict. If these matters are serious enough to be classified as

cyberbullying, then a school resource officer may also be called in to discuss the legalities of a particular

situation. As discussed through the example of P1, principals may need to call upon their IT colleagues

if they have concerns around inappropriate student usage of school devices. A principal may also call

upon a group of teacher leaders to develop local curricula that aims to promote cyber-kindness (Cassidy

et al., 2012a) or digital citizenship (Frau-Meigs, O'Neill, Soriani, & Tome, 2017). Lastly, and possibly

the most beneficial resource, principals should learn from and collaborate with the students themselves

as they are often the local experts on specific social media platforms.

Leadership practice #6: Principals check students' social media accounts after an issue arises.

A third reactive strategy that principals in this study employed was to check on a student's public social

media account if they had reason to be concerned. P1 searched a student's Facebook account when he

heard the student was slandering him. Similarly, P2 started "following" a grade 3 student's YouTube channel when she became concerned about her publicly posting videos on to YouTube.

I think an important distinction to make with this practice is that the principals in this study were monitoring a student's *public* account for a specific reason. In general, when a principal has a reasonable suspicion that a student has broken the law or school rules, or that their safety is being compromised, they have the right to search a student's personal belongings on school grounds. Shear (2015) cautions principals, "Unfortunately, there is no clear definition of what constitutes 'reasonable suspicion,' so school officials should tread carefully before searching a student's personal digital devices and social media accounts" (p. 2). The principals in this study said they would never check a student's account from their device, but rather, they would check a student's *public* account, or if absolutely needed, have a child's parent check their child's account.

It is a general understanding that principals are responsible for the wellbeing of the students they serve. In the same way that a principal might check in with a teacher or friend of a student that she is concerned about, checking in on a child's public social media account is no different. If the principal sees anything that is concerning, he may decide to speak to the child, inform the school counsellor or even inform the child's parents.

Leadership practice # 7: Principals ban cell phones during instructional times. Generally speaking, it could be argued that banning cell phones in schools is a proactive leadership practice, as it controls a situation and prevents problems from happening at school. However, it could also be argued that banning cell phones is a reactive leadership process, in that it is a principal response to the issues that may arise from having phones at school.

As schools struggle with regulating student cell phone use, it appears as if banning cell phones is becoming increasingly popular. In July of 2018, the French government passed a law which banned cell phones in schools. In a Canadian context, cellphones will also be banned in schools in the province of

Ontario during instructional time, starting in September of 2019. Similar to the French government and province of Ontario, the elementary principals in this study both had pretty strict rules about banning cell phones at school. P2 believed that a "majority" of her grade four and five students had cell phones (Principal 2 Interview, p. 1) and that some of her students are bringing their phones to school:

> If they have to bring their phones to school, because they are walking and parents want them to have a phone as they go to and from school, they have to leave them in their backpacks and they can't come out between 8:30 and 2:30. (Principal 2 Interview, p. 2)

At her elementary school, P2 made the decision to ban phones during the school day, but allowed phones on the playground before and after school. P1 indicated that they were very strict about no cell phones allowed at his elementary school, and up until recently, he had not even noticed students bringing their cell phones. He attributed this to their "tight" no-cell-phone policies.

Although it has become common practice to outright ban cell phones at school, it should be mentioned that not all districts are happy with this ban – the Toronto District School Board used to have a cellphone ban, but reversed it after four years to let teachers dictate what works best for their classrooms. In a Canadian Broadcasting Company news article, the author writes "the Toronto District School Board has previously said that enforcing an outright ban was next to impossible, and said that to curb technology use would be to place limits on educational opportunities as well" (Jones, 2019, p. 1).

One study that tracked the effects of banning cell phones suggested improvements with student test scores. Beland and Murphy's (2016) study published by the London School of Economics traced the impact of banning mobile phones at schools on exam scores. Researchers found that students in schools with phone bans earned higher test scores and that low-performing students benefited the most. However, although Beland and Murphy's (2016) study suggested that banning cell phones in schools would improve student test scores, most educators would argue that test scores and the ability to memorize and regurgitate information are not the primary focus of education today. Others would

suggest that instead of banning cellphones a more proactive way of dealing with the cell phone problem in schools would be to teach children skills and behaviours that would promote digital wellness, digital citizenship, and cyber-kindness.

Further, some say that enforcing cell phone bans is simply impossible. Anita Charles, Director of Secondary Teacher Education at Bates College, has observed classrooms and analyzed technology policies for years. In 2017, she wrote a chapter titled, "'There's a relationship': Negotiating cell phone use in the high school classroom" in Researching New Literacies: Design, Theory, and Data in Sociocultural Investigation. Charles found that when schools attempted a blanket policy, invariably, it was unenforceable because teachers and students developed work-arounds (Knobel & Lankshear, 2018).

In 2007, when cell phones first started appearing in schools, the New York City Department of Education created a policy that prohibited students from bringing electronic devices to school. Several groups denounced the heavy-handedness of the policy, which became the target of an unsuccessful 2007 court challenge in the case of *Price et al. v. New York City Board of Education*. The reason the district lost the court case against banning cell phones in school was because "the school board had overreached its statutory authority and acted arbitrarily and capriciously and that parents had been denied their constitutional right to communicate with their children" (Kiedrowski et al., 2009, p. 44).

When districts decide to ban cell phones in schools, they need to consider if enforcing cell phone bans is realistic and be careful not to infringe upon a parent's right to communicate with their child. Further, cell phones are not the same as social media platforms – however, in schools, the two are often conflated because young people seem to leverage cell phone applications in so many ways, including ways that are problematic, harmful, and hurtful to themselves and to others. Banning the cell phone means banning all of its potential uses from schools – including ones that may offer benefits as young people learn to make meaning with digital tools for diverse academic purposes. What we really need – more than bans – are solutions that enable principals, teachers, families and students to develop

strategies, mindsets and practices that allow kids to use these technologies in productive ways. Robinson claims that when school leaders impose their views rather than invite conversation, they create a variety of negative reactions with their stakeholders (Robinson, 2011, p. 38). Although the principals in this study did not create their district's social media policies, they did have freedom to create their elementary school's cell phone guidelines.

To close Theme 2 of Chapter 5 of this dissertation, I would like to include Smale and Hill's (2016) understanding of what it means to be a principal in today's digital world:

> The principal's ultimate task is both to provide engaging learning opportunities for students by using an effective blend of teaching and technology implementation, while ensuring that all stakeholders' rights and freedoms are protected, and to create a safe, nurturing environment for all involved. (p. 27)

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. First, many students were either not able or did not want to obtain parent consent. Some students obtained parental consent but refused to give personal assent for their information to be used for research purposes. These variables could have excluded potential participants from being involved in this study.

Secondly, because I have had several encounters and involvements with young people and their social media usage, both in the role of both elementary counsellor and middle and high school teacher, my own bias could have served as a limitation to this study. My past experiences had the ability to impact my assumptions and interpretations of the data. In an effort to minimize bias and open transparency, I used as many direct quotations from principals and students as possible.

Thirdly, my lack of experience with research and collecting and analyzing data also provided as a limitation to this study. It is very possible that someone with more research experience could have walked away from the study with different findings or interpretations of the data. To compensate for my

limited research experience, I used research literature and my supervisory team as guides to help me walk through the experience of conducting and analyzing a study.

I also recognized other notable limitations. One drawback of the study was the number of the research participants. Had I included more than two schools, and specifically two principals, the results could have been much different. A similar drawback was that both schools in the study belong to the same school district and region. The results could have differed had I conducted the study in different school districts or parts or even provinces. Another limitation was the culturally homogenous nature of the participants. Both principals and almost all of the student participants were Caucasian. Perhaps, with a more diverse participant group, more ideas could have come forward. Lastly, had I included a wider range of student ages and grades, the results could also have been vastly different with regards to their social media usage.

Summary

The purpose of this case study was twofold. First, the purpose was to better understand how children engage with social media. Second, the purpose was to better understand elementary principals' perceptions and leadership practices towards children's social media usage. The case study methodology benefitted this study in that it allowed me to intimately explore the social media experiences of children and their elementary principals in an extremely 'bounded' setting. The study took place in two elementary schools in one school district in Western Canada. A rich description of children's social media experiences, accompanied by their elementary principals' perspectives – from a bounded setting – has been provided in this dissertation. As I considered the findings in relation to the research questions that guided this study, it became apparent that larger analytic themes provided possible interpretations of the findings and plausible answers to the research questions. Therefore, the 19 major findings were synthesized and interpreted according to how they related to the two analytic themes as listed below:

Theme 1: Children in This Study are Active Users of Social Media

Active vs. passive social media usage

Theme 2: Elementary Principals Use Proactive and Reactive Leadership Practices to Promote Positive Social Media Usage with Students

This study would suggest that children are active users of social media. It would also suggest that elementary principals are experiencing problems that pertain to students using social media. Lastly, the principals in this study have incorporated several leadership practices to promote positive student social media usage; some of these practices can be considered proactive and some can be considered reactive.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Introduction

The given study attempted to better understand children's use of social media and elementary principals' perceptions and leadership practices related to this usage. It is hoped that the information provided in this study will serve useful for those who have an interest in encouraging children to use social media for positive purposes. The final chapter of this dissertation has three parts: implications for practice, directions for future research, and researcher reflections.

Implications for Practice

Given the shortage of research on how children are using social media and on elementary principals' perceptions and leadership practices pertaining to this usage, school leaders, educators, and parents have mainly studies that include teenage participants from which to draw. This study, that exclusively looked at children's use of social media, addresses a gap in the literature.

The findings of this inquiry suggest that children in this school district are active users of social media and that their elementary school principals are responding to this usage with both proactive and reactive practices. Being such a small study, the findings are not generalizable to other contexts; however, the study suggests that the following constructs may be useful in the work of promoting positive social media usage with children in elementary schools in other settings in Canada too.

Invite conversation about social media with children. First, if parents and educators are to have conversations with children about their social media usage, then it may be helpful to discuss the right platforms in conversation. Although Facebook is still the most commonly used social media platform in the world today, only 8% of the students in this study said they used Facebook. In order for these social media conversations to be effective, parents and educators need to have a relevant understanding of which platforms children are using and with how they are engaging with these

platforms. Posting something on Facebook – where typically only "friends" can see it – is much different than posting a video onto YouTube or TikTok, where likely anyone can see the video. Moreover, YouTube and TikTok are both video sharing platforms, and this finding could suggest that children engage more with video sharing platforms than traditional platforms like Facebook or Instagram, where the majority of uploads are text or pictures.

Knowing that children are active users of social media, primarily YouTube, TikTok, and gaming platforms, I would encourage parents and educators to embrace conversations with children about these platforms. Given that the popularity of any given platform is likely to evolve, so parents and educators may seem more relevant to children if they continue to familiarize themselves with platforms that are most popular with the children they care about and serve. Moreover, parents and educators could invite conversation with children to discuss the benefits and inherent risks or potential dangers with each platform. My recommendation is that parents create social media guidelines together with their children and engage in ongoing conversations about their social media experiences. This could also include some regular parental monitoring with younger students, such as parents monitoring their children's direct messages and privacy settings. Social media usage is inevitable with young people and this study would suggest that children are actively using it. I would not recommend parents or educators from banning this usage, as some studies (Kiedrowski et al., 2009; Knobel & Lankshear, 2018) have indicated that at outright ban is an ineffective solution, but rather, walk through this usage together with their children or students.

Encourage active (but safe) and not passive usage. Second, the children in this study had very involved and active roles with their social media platforms. Again, this study adopted a fairly broad definition (Obar & Wildman, 2015) of social media, and thus it included any platform that had a user profile, the ability to network with others, and user generated content. This being said, the children in this study provided much evidence for their active involvement with social media. Almost all students

confirmed that they wrote in the YouTube comments section and about half of the students had uploaded

a video onto YouTube before. Many students discussed their social gaming experiences with games

such as *Roblox*, *Minecraft*, or *Fortnite*. Further to this gameplay, children in this study explained how

they use social media gaming platforms to enhance their gameplay; these platforms included Twitch,

Discord, and Mixer. Children in this study also used social media to enrich both real and online

friendships; the majority of students said they communicate with online friends more than real-life

friends on social media. Lastly, the students in this study were also actively using social media for

learning purposes at school. Students discussed collaborating with partners using GSuite platforms and

co-creating e-portfolios with their teachers to showcase their learning to parents. Previous studies

(Aalbers et al., 2019; Blease, 2015; Escobar-Viera et al., 2018) have shown that passive social media

usage can lead to feelings of isolation and depression. In contrast, some of these studies (Aalbers et al.,

2019; Escobar-Viera et al., 2018) have also shown that active social media usage can lead to

psychological empowerment. Therefore, a connection that could be made from the children observed in

this study is that the earliest users of social media are using social media actively rather than passively.

If children are going to be users of social media, then adults should encourage this active-but-safe usage

as children turn into teenagers.

Principals should encourage educators to use social media for learning purposes at school.

Third, although it was not an overly common occurrence, there was some evidence in this study that

suggested that elementary principals were having to deal with problems related to student social media

usage. This finding contributes to the research that is dominated by middle and high school principals

that says the problems of social media are spilling into school settings (Canadian Association of

Principals, 2014; Herold, 2018; Powers & Green, 2016; Shear, 2015; Young, Tully & Ramirez, 2017).

Although the principals in this study said that social media problems were not a very common

occurrence in elementary schools, both principals stated that social media problems are beginning to

happen more at the elementary level. The elementary principals in this study provided examples of how social media can negatively impact school climate, disrupt students from learning and can compromise students' safety. This information might be helpful for schools to determine the grade level that schools should start infusing lessons and conversations around digital citizenship, positive social media usage, and cyber-kindness. Common Sense Media is one website in particular that has a wealth of resources with curricula of this type.

Principals should encourage educators to use social media for learning purposes at school. There is much evidence that supports the benefits of leveraging social media as a learning tool. Moreover, this can serve as a positive way to gradually introduce social media to children and coach them through this usage. This could also afford the opportunity for educators to co-create healthy social media and technology guidelines and expectations *with* children.

Principals should take a proactive approach to combatting social media woes. Fourth, the principals in this study listed several practices they use to promote positive social media usage with their students. During the stages of thematic analysis, I divided these practices into two groups: proactive practices and reactive practices. The proactive practices were: encouraging teaching around values-based mindsets and explicitly about social media, hiring outside agencies who specialize in social media to speak to their school communities, and informing themselves of district policy pertaining to student social media usage. The reactive practices outlined in this study were: working closely with parents to resolve social media conflict, collaborating with the technology department if they needed technological assistance, and checking students' public accounts after issues occur. The final practice, that I did not place into either the proactive or reactive categories, was banning cell phones. My lingering wonder with these leadership practices is: if principals were to have a stronger focus on the proactive practices to promote positive social media usage, would they need to resort less to reactive approaches in combatting the woes that happen when children use social media? Regardless, this study may have

indicated that even at the elementary school level, principals are needing to incorporate a range of leadership practices to deal with elementary students and their usage of social media.

If a principal is feeling overwhelmed with social media problems in their school community, I would recommend taking a *proactive* approach to combatting these issues. Leithwood's (2011) four core practices can create a roadmap for principals to address a social media crisis. Leithwood says successful school leaders (a) set direction, (b) develop people, (c) refine and align the school organization, (d) and improve the instructional program. These four core practices, along with some of the advice offered in the paragraph above, can serve as a helpful starting place for a school experiencing many social media-related problems.

Principals can leverage social media to positively affect school climate. The literature review (Cassidy et al., 2009, 2012a; Hinduja & Patchin, 2012; Kaya & Bicen, 2016) and data from this study expressed that social media can be leveraged to positively affect school climate. One student from Focus Group 1 provided an example of how social media can positively affect school climate, "for example: Pink Shirt Day. A guy got bullied and then two guys texted all their friends and told everyone to wear a pink shirt the next day to help support him" (Focus Group 1, S3, p. 8). Principals could consider using social media to advertise school events, highlight school successes, or to promote positivity with their school community.

Parents need to model healthy social media and technology usage. The children in this study reported to having several different family rules around social media. Ironically, the children in this study also expressed their frustration with their parents not following these rules. Although, it was beyond the scope of this study to investigate the effectiveness of these social media rules at home for children, it could be argued that children would benefit from parents who have healthy social media and technology usage. By this I mean it would be helpful if children observed their parents regulate their usage, make good decisions, think critically about their own responsibilities, and develop the

fundamental dispositions of kindness when using social media and technology. To support parents with healthy social media usage and digital wellness, principals could consider hosting community forums or parent nights to touch on research related to children's social media activities and effective parenting strategies that are understood to support children as they develop foundational dispositions in relation to their own identity development.

Other minor implications. In addition to the six larger possible implications noted above, there were also a few smaller implications that were highlighted as a result of this study. First, the children in this study reported to using tablets more than any other device to access their social media accounts. This finding may be helpful for parents so that they are more able to properly supervise and support their children with their social media usage. Second, as previously mentioned, the majority of students in this study claimed to having online friends, and several even discussed how they added the same online friends to many of their social media and gaming platforms. In order to keep these friendships positive and safe, children could benefit by having conversations with parents and educators about healthy relationships – both real-life and online. Finally, the children in this study did not think their principals had a good understanding of how children used social media. To address this implication, schools could normalize the practice where adults speak and learn about social media *with* and *from* children.

Future Research

Further research could be potentially completed in several areas. First, it was indicated in this study that YouTube and TikTok are the most popular social media platforms with children. I would be curious to know if these platforms will stay with children as they turn into teenagers, or will children switch to using platforms that are more popular with teen users, such as Snapchat and Instagram. Second, this study highlights that children are active – as described by Escobar-Viera et al.'s (2018) definition of 'active' – users of social media. I would be interested to know if children maintain their

"active" involvement with social media as they turn into teenagers, or if their activity level decreases as they become increasingly self-aware teenagers. Third, the data in this study showed that children have family rules pertaining to social media. It would be a worthwhile study for parents to know the effectiveness of these rules; which rules promote positive social media usage with children? Fourth, it was evident in this study that online friendships are common with children. More research is required to understand these friendships, as well as the associated benefits and risks that come with children having online friendships.

Although the elementary principals in this study claimed that some social media problems were spilling into their elementary schools, it was not a dominating concern for them unlike some of the research on middle and high school principals suggests. It would be a worthwhile longitudinal study to look at: if elementary principals are encouraging conversation and teaching about positive social media usage with their elementary students, do the problems and risks of social media lessen as the students go into middle and high school? Essentially, if elementary schools become more proactive about teaching and learning about social media, will children learn to become more informed, and to make better choices online?

Finally, schools and governments right now are struggling with whether or not to ban cell phones in educational settings. In this study I briefly highlighted some research that touched on both sides of the argument, but little reviewed literature is available on this topic. It would be beneficial for school and government leaders to have more studies on the effects of banning cell phones in learning environments in comparison to studies that showcase leaders who adopt an open-to-learning-conversations (Robinson, 2011) approach with addressing these problems that cell phones in schools create.

Researcher Reflections

In reflecting upon this study, some surprises and wonders came forward. In the first part of this section, I reflect on my learning around the child as a social media user, and in the second part, I reflect

on my learning around the principal's perceptions and leadership practices pertaining to student social media usage.

Several years ago, I knew that many of my grade four and five students were using social media, but I did not understand their usage. For example, I knew that our students were communicating online, but when I asked them if they had Instagram or Snapchat, they would often tell me their parents did not allow them to have those applications. In some ways, I was surprised to learn that YouTube and Tik Tok were the preferred platforms for the children in this study.

To fully understand children's social media experiences, my conception of social media also had to evolve as this study progressed. Initially, I set out to learn about how children were using the various communication social media applications, such as Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat. As the previous paragraph mentioned, the children in this study were using communication applications like YouTube and Tik Tok, but they were also communicating in their online games that had social media components (ie. the user profile, ability to network, ability to create content). Further to this, it appeared to me that social media had crept its way into classrooms as well, where students were communicating their learning to parents on their e-portfolios and collaborating with peers on projects through G Suite applications. I did not intend to include online games or online learning tools as forms of social media; however, I provided the students with a definition of social media, and these were the experiences the students brought forward.

Another critical learning piece for me was the prevalence of the online friend. It appeared to me based on the conversations I had with grade 4 and 5 students, most of them had online friends. For some of the students in the focus groups, they added their online friends to more than one social media application. When I asked the students if they communicated more with real-life friends or online friends, the majority of students responded that they communicate more on social media with online friends. I wonder if, in the age of seeking social media "likes," a like from a stranger holds equivalent

social clout than a like from a real-life friend? I also wonder if our common advice we give to kids –

"don't talk to strangers" – has become irrelevant and antiquated? Perhaps a healthier and more realistic

conversation could include the question, "what is good information to share with an online friend?"

The second part of this study looked at principals' perceptions of and leadership practices

pertaining to children's social media experiences. I only included two principals in this study, as my

initial thinking was that my major focus would be on the child's experience with a minor focus on the

principal. In reflection, it would have been interesting to include more principal perspectives. I would

say, overall, both principals had a good surface-level understanding of children's social media

experiences. This being said, the two principals I met with had contrasting views on social media in

schools; my interpretation was that one principal embraced all forms of it to be included in classrooms if

it had the ability to enhance learning, meanwhile the other firmly felt cell phones should be banned from

elementary schools.

Another post-study reflection I had was around the idea of school leaders banning cell phones. In

the literature review, I provided a couple examples of school districts that had banned cell phones in

schools. Both the New York City Department of Education (Kiedrowski et al., 2009) and the Toronto

District School Board (Jones, 2019) are examples of districts that recanted their decision to ban cell

phones in schools, as a result of the cell phone ban being impossible to enforce and thus only creating

more problems for schools. This being said, I have the utmost empathy for middle and high school

teachers where students' cell phone usage is an all-day, everyday battle. My wonder is if we, as

elementary educators work with children to help them understand how their usage can both positively

and negatively affect them and the others around them, would we as elementary educators be helping

our middle and secondary colleagues with the massive cell phone problem in schools? Upon completing

this dissertation, and because I have been influenced by several studies (Kiedrowski et al., 2009; Knobel

& Lankshear, 2018; New York City Department of Education, 2007) that do not support banning cell

phones in schools, I don't think outright banning is the answer. I am curious to learn if early intervention and education could help change the way students use their cell phones and social media as they turn into teenagers.

Given that this dissertation was almost a four-year journey, there is much to ponder. In the above paragraphs, I have reflected on a few of my key post-thesis-writing wonders.

Summary

This chapter had three parts: implications, directions for future research, and researcher reflections. The six key implications of this study primarily come as a result of the two key findings of this inquiry which suggest that: (a) children are active users of social media and that, (b) elementary principals are responding to this usage with both proactive and reactive practices. Social media are a double-edged sword. It can be used to create and maintain friendship, connect and entertain individuals through gameplay, and enhance learning in classrooms and at home. On the flipside, social media can be distracting and make learning at school impossible, or it can even be dangerous when children use it to harass, send naked photos, or give private information to online predators. Elementary principals have the ability to positively influence children's use of social media.

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Appendix A - District Letter

Date

Dear School District,

I am writing to you today to request your permission to conduct research in your school district, on the topic: Children's Use of Social Media and Elementary Principals' Perceptions of and Leadership Practices Pertaining to This Usage. I am conducting this project as part of the dissertation requirements for completion of an EdD Degree in the Department of Graduate Studies, Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary.

The purpose of this proposed case study will be twofold; the first part of this study will attempt to better understand how children use social media and the second part will aim to learn more about elementary principals' perceptions about and leadership practices pertaining to student social media usage. This understanding would enable us to better support our students with positive social media usage.

Specifically, I would like to have the opportunity to facilitate a lesson with two grade four or five classes around the topics of social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness (that will include a student survey), and then afterwards follow up with some student focus groups for those students who are interested and have parent consent. The social media lesson will take about 1 hour and the focus group will take about 30 minutes. The lesson and survey will take place during instructional time and the focus group during lunch hour. Additionally, I would also like to have the opportunity to engage two elementary principals in an interview that will last about 30 to 45 minutes. I would like to ask your principals about their perceptions of elementary students' social media usage and about their leadership practices pertaining to it.

There is no obligation to participate in this study. Even if you initially agree to have your district volunteer in this study, you will be allowed to withdraw from the study up until one week after the principals look at their interview transcripts.

Additionally, the data gathered in the study will be kept in strict confidence, and will be stored at a secure location, to which only I will have access. I will retain the surveys in a locked cabinet and digital recordings in a password-protected computer that includes password-protected files. A final copy of the dissertation can be made available to you if requested.

This study received approval through the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board of the University of Calgary. There will be minimal risk for participating in this study.

Please contact me at (250) 869-9094 or email me at Jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca so that we can set up a time to meet and discuss the study. You may also wish to contact my research supervisor, Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio, at (403) 220-6277.

Thank you for considering this request. I am very excited about the possibility of learning more about social media practices in our district.

Sincerely,

_____

Jeremy Sanbrooks

EdD Candidate

Appendix B - Principal Letter

Date

Dear Elementary Principal:

I am writing to you today to request your participation, and one classroom from your school's participation, in a university research project on the topic: Children's Use of Social Media and Elementary Principals' Perceptions of and Leadership Practices Pertaining to This Usage. I am conducting this project as part of the dissertation requirements for completion of an EdD Degree in the Department of Graduate Studies, Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary.

The purpose of this proposed case study will be twofold; the first part of this study will attempt to better understand how children use social media and the second part will aim to learn more about elementary principals' perceptions about and leadership practices with relation to student social media usage. This understanding would enable us to better support our students with positive social media usage.

Specifically, I would like to have the opportunity to survey one of your grade four or five classes and then follow up with interested students in a focus group afterwards. The survey will be embedded into a curricular lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness. The lesson will take about 1 hour and the focus group will take about 30. I plan to facilitate the social media lesson and survey during instructional time and the focus group during lunch hour. Additionally, I would also like to have the opportunity to engage you, the principal, in an interview that will last about 30 to 45 minutes. I would like to ask you about your perceptions of elementary students' social media usage and about your leadership practices pertaining to student social media usage. If you are interested in being a part of the study, please email me at Jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca.

You are under no obligation to have yourself or your school participate and, if you do consent to participate, you may, and without consequence, decide not to continue your involvement or to refuse to answer any question. Once the interview has been completed and transcribed, you will have the opportunity to review the interview transcripts and, if you choose, make additions, corrections, or deletions to the record of the things you have said. You will have the right to withdraw your interview data and your students' data no later than one week after looking at the interview transcript. Further, at any point, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your involvement with it.

Additionally, the data gathered in the study will be kept in strict confidence, and will be stored at a secure location, to which only I will have access. I will retain the surveys in a locked cabinet and digital recordings in a password-protected computer that includes password-protected files. A final copy of the dissertation can be made available to you if requested.

This study received approval through the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board of the University of Calgary. As such, I do not see any harm or predictable risks for participants in this research. Please feel

free to contact me at 250-869-9094 or email me at Jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca if you have any questions. You may also wish to contact my research supervisor, Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio, at (403) 220-6277. Please complete the attached consent form to indicate your decision and return the form to me.

Thank you for considering this request. I am very excited about the possibility of learning more about your perspectives. Thank you in advance for your interest, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

_____

Jeremy Sanbrooks

EdD Candidate

Appendix C - Principal Consent Form

Name of Researcher:	Jeremy Sanbrooks Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education p: (250) 869-9094 e: jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca	UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
Supervisor:	Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education	
Title of Project:	Children's Use of Social Media and Elementary Principals' Perceptions of and Leadership Practices Pertaining to This Usage	

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study.

Participation is completely voluntary. You are free to discontinue your participation or your school's participation up until one week after you have approved the transcript of your interview.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study will be twofold; the first part of this study will attempt to better understand how children use social media and the second part will aim to learn more about elementary principals' perceptions about and leadership practices with relation to student social media usage.

What Will I Be Asked To Do?

All participating elementary principals will be asked for a list of grade four or five teachers working at their school. I will then send an email to these teachers asking if they would like their class to participate in the study. One teacher/class will be selected.

After gaining teacher and parent consent and student assent, students will participate in one survey (which will be embedded into a lesson on social media and cyber-safety and occur during instructional time). At the end of the student survey, students will be asked if they would like to volunteer to be a part of a follow up focus group. As a follow up to the survey, all interested students will get the chance to be a part of a student focus group. If there are more than ten students wanting to participate in the focus group, there will be more than one focus group conducted. The focus group(s) will occur during the

lunch hour and will last approximately 30 minutes. In addition, it will need to be held in a confidential place in the school setting.

Proceeding the student survey and student focus group(s), I will then meet with the school principal to conduct an interview that will take between 30 to 45 minutes to conduct. Questions in the survey will attempt to learn about the elementary principal's perceptions of student social media use and about their leadership practices that pertain to student social media use. For example, principals will be asked questions like, "what types of social media do you think your grade four and five students are using?" and "does students' use of social media ever spill into the school setting?"

Having your school participate in this study is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate altogether, may refuse to participate in parts of the study, may decline to answer any and all questions, and may withdraw from the study up until one week after you have looked at the interview transcript.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?

No personal identifying information about principal participants will be collected in this study. However, due to the small number of participants in the study, it is possible that some members of the district's administration will be able to infer which principals participated in the research. Secondly, the information gathered from the students in your school will be linked to your interview data as principal of the same school. Students' names will be used for the survey but then anonymized 48 hours after the survey is conducted by replacing names with participant numbers. Only the investigator, Jeremy Sanbrooks, his supervisor, and a professional transcriber will have access to the surveys and the recordings.

I grant permission for one classroom in my school to participate

in the social media lesson and survey (pending parent consent

and student assent):   *Yes: ___ No: ___*

I grant permission for interested students (with parent consent and

student assent) to participate in the student focus group(s):   *Yes: ___ No: ___*

I grant permission to be interviewed by the researcher (and

audiotaped for transcribing purposes):   *Yes: ___ No: ___*

Are there Risks or Benefits if I Participate?

There are minimal risks for the principal participants in this study. The questions in both the student survey and the semi-structured focus group are very general (i.e., "which social media platform do you use most?" or "how do you use social media?"). If a student starts to discuss personal negative social media happenings during the focus group, I will quickly and politely redirect the participant back to the original question. Additionally, due to the fact that the I am also a counsellor in Central Okanagan Public Schools and bound by a "Duty to Report," the potential for confidentiality to be breached is a possibility in the event that a student reports a plan to harm others or self, or if a student discloses abuse.

All students, regardless of their involvement in the study, will benefit from a curricular lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness. The purpose of the lesson is to encourage students to be critical and reflective thinkers about the ways in which they (or others) use social media. Students involved in the focus group will be provided with the opportunity to take this learning one-step deeper. This research will be used to provide educators and other researchers real-life examples of the ways in which students use social media and ways in which elementary principals perceive this usage and find ways to encourage positive social media uses with students.

What Happens to the Information My Students and I Provide?
The data (audio-recordings) from the student focus group and principal interview, once collected, will be transcribed. Other than myself and my supervisor, a professional transcriber will have access to the recordings. He or she will be required to complete a confidentiality agreement before transcription may begin. The recordings will never be shown in public. I will be editing the transcripts for speech ticks, grammar, repeated words, etc. for the only purpose of smooth reading (not for content).

You are under no obligation to have yourself or your school participate and, if you do consent to participate, you may, and without consequence, decide not to continue your involvement or to refuse to answer any question. Once the interview has been completed and transcribed, you will have the opportunity to review the interview transcripts and, if you choose, make additions, corrections, or deletions to the record of the things you have said. You will have the right to withdraw from the study no later than one week after looking at the interview transcript. Further, at any point, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your involvement with it.

The data gathered in the study will be kept in strict confidence, and will digitally be stored at a secure location, to which only I, Jeremy Sanbrooks, will have access. Further, the surveys will be held in a locked cabinet and the digital recordings will be held in a password-protected computer with password-protected files. All data will be deleted or shredded five years after it is collected. A final copy of the dissertation can be made available to you if requested.

Signatures

Your signature on this form indicates that (a) you understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation and your school's participation in this research project, and (b) you agree to participate and your school participate in the research project.

SOCIAL MEDIA, CHILDREN, AND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Principal's Name: (please print) _____

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Name: (please print) _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Questions/Concerns

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Jeremy Sanbrooks
Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education
p: (250) 869-9094   e: jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca

or

Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio
Faculty of Graduate Studies, EducationIf you have any concerns about the way you or your student has been treated as a participant, please contact the Research Ethics Analyst, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at (403) 220-6289/220-4283; email cfreb@ucalgary.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. The investigator has kept a copy of the consent form.

Appendix D - Teacher Letter

Date

Dear Grade 4/5 Teacher:

I am writing to you today to request your class' participation in a university research project on the topic: Children's Use of Social Media and Elementary Principals' Perceptions of and Leadership Practices Pertaining to This Usage. I am conducting this project as part of the dissertation requirements for completion of an EdD Degree in the Department of Graduate Studies, Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary.

The purpose of this proposed case study will be twofold; the first part of this study will attempt to better understand how children use social media and the second part will aim to learn more about elementary principals' perceptions about and leadership practices with relation to student social media usage. This understanding would enable us to better support our students with positive social media usage.

Specifically, I would like to have the opportunity to survey one of your grade four or five classes and then follow up with interested students in a focus group afterwards. The survey will be embedded into a curricular lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness. The lesson will take about one hour and the focus group will take about 30 minutes. I plan to facilitate the social media lesson and survey during instructional time and the focus group during lunch hour.

You are under no obligation to have yourself or your class participate and, if you do consent to participate, you may, and without consequence, decide not to continue your involvement or refuse to have your students answer any question. You will have the right to withdraw your students from the study at any point and you will also have the right to withdraw your students' data no later than one week after the focus group occurs. Further, at any point, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your involvement with it.

Additionally, the data gathered in the study will be kept in strict confidence, and will be stored at a secure location, to which only I will have access. I will retain the surveys in a locked cabinet and the digital recordings in a password-protected computer that includes password-protected files. A final copy of the dissertation can be made available to you if requested.

This study received approval through the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board of the University of Calgary. As such, I do not see any harm or predictable risks for participants in this research. Please feel free to contact me at 250-869-9094 or email me at jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca if you have any questions. You may also contact my research supervisor, Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio, at (403) 220-6277. Please complete the attached consent form to indicate your decision and return the form to me.

Thank you for considering this request. I am very excited about the possibility of learning more about your students' perspectives.

Included in this letter is the student poster (to be reviewed with the students when discussing the study details) and the proposed social media lesson (that would take place after the survey is distributed).

Sincerely,

_____

Jeremy Sanbrooks

EdD Candidate

Student Presentation Poster

Lesson Plan: Social Media, Cyber-Kindness, and Cyber-Safety

Grade: Adaptable for G. 4-5
Curriculum connection: Career Education
Competency connections: Communication and Social Responsibility

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Rationale

Students are starting to use social media at younger and younger ages. Rather than outright ban all forms of social media, we need to be educating out students how to use social media safely and kindly. The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to a general definition of social media, and then to have them think about their experiences with it (if any).

The story, _Nerdy Bird Tweets_, is about a bird who takes an unflattering picture of a friend and posts it on social media. At the beginning of the story, Nerdy Bird values getting "likes" more than he values his friendship with his real friend, Vulture. By the end of the story, Nerdy Bird realizes that having one real friend is worth more than a 1,000 likes. The purpose of this book is to get children to think about what they should do before posting a picture… and to think about what happens when something is posted online. It also provokes thinking around the value of a real-life friend vs. an online "friend."

The movie clip, "Social Media" from _Brainchild_ is about two groups of students who have to give feedback to a pretend singing audition (where the singer is actually an actress who intentionally sings terribly). One group is told that their feedback will be given to the "singer" and the other group is told their information will be anonymous. Unsurprisingly, the anonymous group is gives cruel feedback to the singer. The purpose in showing this clip is to get students thinking about the different ways that people can act when they are anonymous.

Finally, the class will close the lesson by co-creating a "Guide to Safely and Kindly Using Social Media". Rather than give students a set of rules to follow, students will co-create their own social media principles to follow so that they are better prepared to navigate the online world in a safe and kind manner.

Social Media in BC's Revised Curriculum

Core Competency connection
    Communication
- "I recognize that there are different points-of-view and I can disagree respectfully."
    Personal Awareness and Responsibility
- "I can participate in activities that support my well-being, and tell/show how they help me."
- Social Responsibility
- "I can advocate for others."
- "I am kind to others, can work or play co-operatively, and can build relationships with people of my choosing."

Curricular connection

Career Education G. four and five
- "Students are expected to recognize the intersection of their personal and public digital identities and the potential for both positive and negative consequences."

Materials Needed

The picture book, *Nerdy Bird Tweets* by Aaron Reynolds

A small clip from the series *Brainchild,* episode titled "Social Media" – clip length 15:00 to 23:00

Brainstorm sheet: What do all kids need to know to be safe and kind when they are using social media?

White board + markers

Social Media Lesson Plan

Student Survey: *15 minutes*
1. Open with question, "what is social media?"
2. Tell the students, before we say anything else, I'd love to tap into your prior knowledge about social media. Before anyone starts the survey, I am going to pre-read all of the questions for you so that you understand what each question is asking you.
3. Distribute survey. Tell students to draw a picture on the back if they finish early.

Nerdy Bird Tweets: *20 minutes*
1. *Prior to reading the story*, ask students to make some predictions based on the cover and title of the story and to keep things in the back of their minds for discussion afterwards
2. Read the story as a class
   a) During the read-aloud possible questions to ask students:
      - What does this book tell us about real-life friends vs. online friends?
      - What does this book tell us about posting pictures of people?
      - Can you think of something that Nerdy Bird could have done to spread kindness to Vulture instead of spreading meanness to him?

Brainchild – Social Media: *15 minutes*
1. Opening question: do you think people act the same or different online?
2. Show video clip (15:00 to 23:00) – *8 minutes*
3. Discussion on anonymous vs. being known … prompt questions:
   a. "if people are usually meaner when they don't know their audience, is it a smart idea to have people we don't know on our "friends" list?"

Co-constructing a Class Guide to Cyber Safety: *15 minutes*
1. Have the students get into small groups and brainstorm 2 to 3 ideas of things they think younger students should know about staying safe with social media.
2. Engage in a class discussion. Compile a list of the most important things kids need to know when using social media.

Close
1. Thank the students for learning together today.
2. Remind them that I will only use the surveys of the students who have given me their permission (and their parents have given me permission, too).
3. Remind them about the upcoming focus groups for the kids who have expressed interest (and have parent permission).

Adaptations
- Some students may need assistance understanding (reading) the questions of the survey
- Some students may need to sit in a chair instead of the carpet (or ground) for the read-aloud

- If there are any hearing impairments, the captions can be turned on in the video
- To alleviate any unnecessary dysregulation or peer conflict, students will have a choice to brainstorm cyber-safety and cyber-kindness tips on their own (instead of being in a group)

Appendix E - Teacher Consent Form

Name of Researcher:	Jeremy Sanbrooks Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education p: (250) 869-9094	
	e: jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca	
Supervisor:	Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education	
Title of Project:	Children's Use of Social Media and Elementary Principals' Perceptions of and Leadership Practices Pertaining to This Usage	

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study.

Participation is completely voluntary and confidential. You are free to discontinue your class' participation up until one week after the focus groups occur.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study will be twofold; the first part of this study will attempt to better understand how children use social media and the second part will aim to learn more about elementary principals' perceptions about and leadership practices with relation to student social media usage.

What Will I Be Asked To Do?

I, Jeremy Sanbrooks, will be surveying two grade four or five classes (from two different schools). There will be no questions directly asked from teacher participants, however, I will need the teacher's support with: discussing the purpose of the study to students (showing the class a pre-made poster), distributing and collecting consent and assent forms, co-teaching a lesson on social media (lesson outline attached), and booking a private space for the student focus group(s).

After the Parent/Guardian Consent and Student Assent Forms are returned, together you and I will organize a time for me to come into the school and facilitate the social media lesson (which includes the student survey). I will give a lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness; but prior to giving the lesson, I will get the students to think about their pre-existing knowledge pertaining to social media by distributing a "social media survey". The only surveys that will be used in the study will be

those for whom informed consent forms and assent forms were received. Before the participating students begin the survey, I will follow a script of points to ensure that I provide the information they will need to understand fully what is meant, in the terms of the study, by the term "social media". At the end of the student survey, students will be asked if they would like to volunteer to be a part of a follow up focus group. As a follow up to the survey, all interested students (with parent permission) will partake in a focus group that will occur during lunch time (depending on student interest, there may need to be more than one focus group). The focus group will need to be held in a confidential place in the school setting and will last for a total of about 30 minutes. The teacher does need to be present for the focus group.

Having your class participate in this study is completely voluntary. You may refuse to have your class participate altogether, withdraw from the actual study at any point, or withdraw your students' data up until one week after the last focus group takes place.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?

Students' names will be used for the survey but then anonymized 48 hours after the survey is conducted by replacing names with participant numbers. Only the investigator, Jeremy Sanbrooks, his supervisor, and a professional transcriber will have access to the surveys and the recordings.

I grant permission for my class to participate

in the social media lesson and survey:

Yes: ___ No: ___

I grant permission for interested students (with parent consent and

student assent) to participate in the student focus group(s):   *Yes: ___ No: ___*

Are there Risks or Benefits if I/ My Students Participate?

There are no risks for the teacher participants in this study. However, if at any point the teacher participant believes the research activity is interfering inappropriately, they have the right to ask that the research stop and be modified. If a modification cannot be made that satisfies the teacher, the teacher may ask that the research stop. At this point, the researcher must advise the CFREB that the research has stopped.

There are minimal risks for the student participants in this study. The questions in both the student survey and the semi-structured focus group are very general (i.e., "which social media platform do you use most?" or "how do you use social media?"). If a student starts to discuss personal negative social media happenings during the focus group, I will quickly and politely redirect the participant back to the original question.

Please be advised that although I will take every precaution to maintain confidentiality of the data, the nature of focus groups prevents the researchers from guaranteeing confidentiality. Additionally, due to the fact that the I am also a counsellor in Central Okanagan Public Schools and bound by a "Duty to

Report," the potential for confidentiality to be breached is a possibility in the event that a student reports a plan to harm others or self, or if a student discloses abuse.

All students, regardless of their involvement in the study, will benefit from a curricular lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness. The purpose of the lesson is to encourage students to be critical and reflective thinkers about the ways in which they (or others) use social media. Students involved in the focus group will be provided with the opportunity to take this learning one-step deeper. This research will be used to provide educators and other researchers real-life examples of the ways in which students use social media and ways in which elementary principals perceive this usage and find ways to encourage positive social media uses with students.

What Happens to the Information My Students Provide?

The student surveys will be anonymized 48 hours after the surveys are conducted. Each student name will be replaced with number pseudonyms ("participant # ____"). The data (audio-recording) from the focus group, once collected, will be transcribed. Other than myself and my supervisor, a professional transcriber will have access to the recordings. He or she will be required to complete a confidentiality agreement before transcription may begin. The recordings will never be shown in public. I will be editing the transcripts for speech ticks, grammar, repeated words, etc. for the only purpose of smooth reading (not for content).

You are under no obligation to have yourself or your class participate and, if you do consent to participate, you may, and without consequence, decide not to continue your involvement or refuse to have your students answer any question. You will have the right to withdraw your students from the study at any point and you will also have the right to withdraw your students' data no later than one week after the focus group occurs. Further, at any point, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your involvement with it.

The data gathered in the study will be kept in strict confidence, and will digitally be stored at a secure location, to which only Jeremy Sanbrooks will have access. Further, the student surveys will be kept in a locked file and the digital recordings will be held in a password-protected computer with password-protected files. All data will be deleted or shredded five years after it is collected. A final copy of the dissertation can be made available to you if requested.

Signatures

Your signature on this form indicates that (a) you understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation and your students' participation in this research project, and (b) you agree to participate and have your students participate in the research project.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Teacher's Name: (please print) _____

Teacher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Name: (please print) _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Questions/Concerns

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Jeremy Sanbrooks
Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education
p: (250) 869-9094   e: jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca

or

Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio
Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education

If you have any concerns about the way your student has been treated as a participant, please contact the Research Ethics Analyst, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at (403) 220-6289/220-4283; email cfreb@ucalgary.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. The investigator has kept a copy of the consent form.

Appendix F - Parent/Guardian Letter

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian of Child in Ms./Mr. _____'s Class:

I am writing to you today to request your child's participation in a university research project on the topic: Children's Use of Social Media and Elementary Principals' Perceptions of and Leadership Practices Pertaining to This Usage. I am conducting this project as part of the dissertation requirements for completion of an EdD Degree in the Department of Graduate Studies, Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary.

The purpose of this proposed case study will be twofold; the first part of this study will attempt to better understand how children use social media and the second part will aim to learn more about elementary principals' perceptions about and leadership practices with relation to student social media usage. This understanding would enable us to better support our students with positive social media usage.

Specifically, I would like to have the opportunity to facilitate a lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness and conduct a survey with your child's class. All students will participate in the lesson as it meets the needs of the grade 4/5 BC curricular outcomes, but only the data from the surveys of the students who have parent consent and personal assent will be included in the study. In addition, interested students will be given the opportunity to volunteer in a more in-depth, one-time focus group that will occur at a later date. The focus group will take about 30 minutes over the lunchtime period and will be audio recorded.

All students will be given the social media survey as a part of the classroom lesson. However, only surveys that have parent consent and student assent will be included in the study. Students participating in the focus group will be assigned number pseudonyms (i.e., "Participant #1") so as to ensure anonymity.

You are under no obligation to have your child's survey information included in the mentioned study or to have your child participate in the focus group. If you do consent to have your child's survey information included in the study or to participate in the focus group, you may, and without consequence, decide not to continue your child's involvement before the survey or focus group commence. You will also have the opportunity to withdrawal your child's survey information 48 hours after the survey is conducted – at this point, the surveys will go through the process of anonymization. Even if you initially agree to your child participate in the focus group, you will be able to change your

mind after the survey. However, due to the nature of focus groups and audio recordings, I will not be able to guarantee that total confidentiality and data withdrawal with the focus group is a possibility. Further, at any point, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your child's involvement with it.

Additionally, the data gathered in the study will be kept in strict confidence, and will be stored at a secure location, to which only I will have access. I will ensure the surveys are held in a locked cabinet and the audio recordings are held in password-protected computer with password-protected files.

This study received approval through the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board of the University of Calgary. As such, I do not see any harm or predictable risks for participants in this research. Please feel free to contact me at [phone number] or email me at [email address] if you have any questions. You may also contact my research supervisor, Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio, at (403) 220-6277. Please complete the attached consent form to indicate your decision and return the form to me.

Thank you for considering this request. I am very excited about the possibility of learning more about your perspectives. Thank you in advance for your interest, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

_____

Jeremy Sanbrooks

EdD Candidate

Appendix G - Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Name of Researcher:	Jeremy Sanbrooks Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education p: (250) 869-9094	UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
	e: jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca	
Supervisor:	Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education	
Title of Project:	Children's Use of Social Media and Elementary Principals' Perceptions of and Leadership Practices Pertaining to This Usage	

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study

To fulfill the curricular outcomes, all students will participate in the lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness and the accompanying social media survey. However, only survey information from students with parent permission and student assent will be included in this study. Participation in the student focus groups is completely voluntary.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study will be twofold; the first part of this study will attempt to better understand how children use social media and the second part will aim to learn more about elementary principals' perceptions about and leadership practices with relation to student social media usage.

What Will My Child Be Asked To Do?

All students will partake in a lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness; but prior to giving the lesson, I will get the students to think about their pre-existing knowledge pertaining to social media by distributing a "social media survey". The only surveys that will be used in the study will be those for whom informed consent forms and assent forms were received. Before the participating students begin the survey, I will follow a script of points to ensure that I provide the information they will need to understand fully what is meant, in the terms of the study, by the term "social media". The social media lesson and survey will take about one hour of time and will take place during instructional time. At the end of the student survey, students will be asked if they would like to volunteer to be a part of a follow up focus group. As a follow up to the survey, all interested students (with parent permission) will partake in a focus group that will occur during lunch time (depending on student interest, there may need to be more than one focus group). The focus group will take place in a confidential place in the school setting and will last for about 30 minutes.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?

The surveys will be anonymized 48 hours after completion. Only the investigator, Jeremy Sanbrooks, his supervisor, and a professional transcriber will have access to the surveys and the recordings.

I grant permission for my child's survey information to be used for

research purposes: *Yes: ___ No: ___*

I grant permission for my child to participate in the focus group

and to be audio-recorded :   *Yes: ___ No: ___*

Are there Risks or Benefits if My Child Participates?

There will be minimal risk to student participants. The questions in both the student survey and the semi-structured focus group are very general (i.e., "which social media platform do you use most?" or "how do you use social media?"). If a student starts to discuss personal negative social media happenings or any topic of a sensitive nature during the focus group, I will quickly and politely redirect the participant back to the original question.

Please be advised that although I will take every precaution to maintain confidentiality of the data, the nature of focus groups prevents researchers from guaranteeing confidentiality. Additionally, due to the fact that the I am also a counsellor in [this district] and bound by a "Duty to Report," the potential for confidentiality to be breached is a possibility in the event that a student reports a plan to harm others or self, or if a student discloses abuse.

All students, regardless of their involvement in the study, will benefit from a curricular lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness. The purpose of the lesson is to encourage students to be critical and reflective thinkers about the ways in which they (or others) use social media. Students involved in

the focus group will be provided with the opportunity to take this learning one-step deeper. This research will be used to provide educators and other researchers real-life examples of the ways in which students use social media and ways in which elementary principals perceive this usage and find ways to encourage positive social media uses with students.

What Happens to the Information My Child Provides?

Although all students will participate in the social media lesson and the accompanying survey, only data from consenting parents and assenting students will be used in the study. Using the information from your child's survey for the purpose of research is completely voluntary. Even if you or your child initially give consent or assent for the survey information to be included in the study, you will have up until 48 hours after the survey to change your mind. At this point, the process of survey anonymization will have occurred. All student surveys will be given a number that will be not be linkable to the name of the student participant.

The audio-recording from the focus group, once collected, will be transcribed. Other than my supervisor and me, a professional transcriber will have access to the recordings. He or she will be required to complete a confidentiality agreement before transcription may begin. The recordings will never be shown in public. I will be editing the transcripts for speech ticks, grammar, repeated words, etc. for the only purpose of smooth reading (not for content). Due to the nature of focus groups and audio-recordings, I will not be able to guarantee that data withdrawal from the focus group is a possibility. Further, at any point, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your involvement with it.

Additionally, the data gathered in the study will be kept in strict confidence, and will be stored at a secure location, to which only I will have access. I will ensure the surveys are held in a locked cabinet and the audio recordings are held in password-protected computer with password-protected files. All data will be deleted or shredded five years after it is collected.

A final copy of the dissertation can be made available to you if requested.

Signatures

Parent signature on this form indicates that (a) you understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your child's participation in this research project, and (b) you agree to have your child participate in the research project.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Child's Name: (please print) _____

Parent/Guardian Name: (please print) _____

SOCIAL MEDIA, CHILDREN, AND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Name: (please print) _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Questions/Concerns

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Jeremy Sanbrooks
Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education
p: (250) 869-9094   e: jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca

or

Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio
Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education

If you have any concerns about the way your child has been treated as a participant, please contact the Research Ethics Analyst, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at (403) 220-6289/220-4283; email cfreb@ucalgary.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. The investigator has kept a copy of the consent form.

Appendix H - Student Assent Form

Name of Researcher:	Jeremy Sanbrooks
	Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education
	p: (250) 869-9094
	e: jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca
Supervisor:	Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio
	Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education
Title of Project:	Children's Use of Social Media and Elementary Principals' Perceptions of and Leadership Practices Pertaining to This Usage

This form is called an "assent form". Assent means you are okay with something. If I "assent" to my mom combing my hair, this means I am okay with my mom combing my hair. The word "consent" is similar, but it means that legally someone is okay with something. Only adults can give legal consent. But the opinions of kids are important, too, so that's why we ask kids if we have their "assent".

Before I ask you for your assent, I want to explain what you are assenting to. This is called "informed assent" – it mean you make an opinion when you understand the details of the thing you are giving assent to. If you read this whole form, and you still have questions, I want you to know that it is okay if you ask me more questions. Okay?

First off, you should know that The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study. This means that the people who are in charge of making sure that research isn't going to hurt anyone has agreed that this study will not hurt anyone.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study will have two parts; the first part of this study will try to understand how children use social media and the second part will try to learn more about elementary principals' thoughts about how kids use social media and about the things they do in the school to make sure that kids are using for good reasons.

What Will I Be Asked To Do?

There are two parts to this study: the survey (a piece of paper with questions on it) and the focus group (when a group of people talk about the same thing). When you give assent, it means you are the boss of your information. All kids in your class will have a lesson about social media and all kids will do a survey about social media. But ONLY surveys with parent consent and student assent will be used for the research. The lesson will take about one hour and happen during normal class time. We will talk about social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness. Survey questions will try to understand how children are using social media. Question examples include: "what types of social media are you using?", "how do you use social media?" At the end of the student survey, you will be asked if you would like to volunteer to be a part the social media focus group. The focus group will be discussing social media generally and it will not include a conversation about cyberbullying or cyber-meanness.

Only students with parent consent and student assent will be a part of the focus group. It will only be about 30 minutes long and it will happen during lunch time. We will sit and eat our lunches together and I will ask the group some more questions about if and how they are using social media. We will sit somewhere quiet in the school such as the library. The focus group will be audio-recorded and then later transcribed (this means our whole chat will be typed up). Focus groups are great for getting kids to open up about a topic – but, they are never fully confidential (this means they are never totally a secret). It is really important for all kids in a focus group to everything said confidential.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?

Only the investigator, Jeremy Sanbrooks, his supervisor, and a professional transcriber will have access to the surveys and the recordings.

I give permission to use my survey for research: *Yes: ___ No: ___*

I grant permission to be a part of the focus group

and to be audio-recorded: *Yes: ___ No: ___*

Are there Risks or Benefits if I Participate?

There will be little risk to student participants (a participant is someone who participates in something). The questions in both the student survey and the focus group are very general (ie. "which social media platform do you use most?"); so, there should be no reason for students to bring up negative happenings that occur on social media. If a student starts to talk about bad things that happen

on social media during the focus group, I will quickly and politely interrupt the student and ask them to answer the question that we were talking about. Again, everyone should know that although I will take every effort to keep things confidential, the nature of focus groups prevents researchers from promising confidentiality. Also, due to the fact that I am a counsellor in [this district] I must make a report if a student talks about a plan to hurt others or self, or if a student talks about being abused.

Even if you do not want to participate in the study, you will still get to be a part of our social media lesson. The purpose of the lesson is to encourage students to be thinkers about the ways in which they (or others) use social media. Students in the focus group will get an extra chance to talk about social media even more. The information that kids give in this study will help teachers, parents, and researchers get a better idea of how kids today use social media and about what their principals are doing to help kids make good social media choices.

What Happens to the Information I Provide?

Although all students will participate in the social media lesson and the survey, only information from consenting parents and assenting students will be used in the study. Using the information from your survey for the purpose of research is totally your choice. Even if you first give assent for the survey information to be included in the study, you will have up until 48 hours (this is two days!) after the survey to change your mind. At this point, I will remove all names from the surveys, so I will no longer know who said what.

The audio-recording from the focus group will be transcribed (again, this means the chat will be typed up). Other than me and my research supervisor, a professional transcriber (somebody whose job it is to write up audio-recordings) will be able to hear the recordings. He or she will have to promise to not tell anyone anything that is said in the recording. The recordings will never be shown to parents, teachers, or anyone else. Due to the nature of focus groups and audio-recordings, I will not be able to guarantee that data withdrawal from the focus group is a possibility. This means, that after the focus group happens, I won't be able to take back or delete what you said.

Additionally, the information from the study will be kept in secret places. The surveys will be locked up in a cabinet and the recordings will be password-protected. All information will be deleted or shredded five years after it is collected.

Again, it is okay if you decide you do not want to have your survey as a part of the study or if you do not want to be in the focus group. Nobody will be upset with you. ☺

Signatures

Your signature on this form indicates that you 1) assent to volunteer to participate in this study.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Child's Name: (please print) _____

Child's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Name: (please print) _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Questions/Concerns

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Jeremy Sanbrooks
Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education
p: (250) 869-9094   e: jeremy.sanbrooks1@ucalgary.ca

or

Dr. Salvatore Mendaglio
Faculty of Graduate Studies, Education

If you have any concerns about the way you have been treated as a participant, please contact the Research Ethics Analyst, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at (403) 220-6289/220-4283; email cfreb@ucalgary.ca. A copy of this assent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. The investigator has kept a copy of the assent form.

Appendix I - Student Survey 1

Social Media Survey Questions for Grade four or five Students

For the purpose of this survey, social media is made up of the following commonalities: 1) Web 2.0 Internet-based applications, 2) user-generated content, 3) the user profile, and 4) the ability to facilitate the development of social networks.

1. What types of social media do you use?
    o   Facebook
    o   Instagram
    o   Snapchat
    o   YouTube
    o   Musical.ly (TikTok)
    o   WhatsApp
    o   Tumblr
    o   Twitter
    o   Skype
    o   Reddit
    o   Pinterest
    o   Others
    o   _____
2. Which social media do you use the most (please only check **two**)?
    o   Facebook
    o   Instagram
    o   Snapchat
    o   YouTube
    o   Musical.ly (TikTok)
    o   WhatsApp
    o   Tumblr
    o   Twitter
    o   Skype
    o   Reddit
    o   Pinterest
    o   Other? _____

Name: _____

3. How much time do you spend on social media per school day?
    o   None
    o   Less than 1 hour
    o   Between 1-2 hours
    o   Between 2-3 hours
    o   More than 3 hours
4. How much time do you spend on social media on a Saturday or Sunday?
    o   None
    o   Less than 1 hour
    o   Between 1-2 hours
    o   Between 2-3 hours
    o   More than 3 hours
5. What device do you mostly use to access your social media? (please pick one)
    o   Cell phone
    o   Tablet (iPad)
    o   Computer
    o   MP3 player (iPod)
    o   Video game device (PS4, Xbox, etc.)
    o   Other? _____
6. How do you use social media? Can you give an example or two?

7.   If you use social media, why do you use it?

8. Does your teacher ever use social media in your classroom (YouTube, GoogleDocs, etc)? If yes, do you think this helps you with your learning?

9. Do you ever learn about social media at school? If yes, what do you learn about?

10. Do you think your principal understands how children are using social media or do you think he or she would be surprised? Please explain.

11. Are you a:
    o   Boy
    o   Girl
    o   I identify as: _____
12. How old are you?
    o   8
    o   9
    o   10
    o   11
    o   12
13. Do you live in an urban neighbourhood (the city) or a rural neighbourhood (outside of the city)?
    o   Urban neighbourhood
    o   Rural neighbourhood
14. What is your ethnicity
    o   European
    o   African-Canadian
    o   Asian
    o   Indigenous
    o   Other
    o   Prefer not to disclose

Appendix I - Student Survey 2

Social Media Survey Questions for Grade four or five Students

For the purpose of this survey, social media is made up of the following commonalities: 1) Web 2.0 Internet-based applications, 2) user-generated content, 3) the user profile, and 4) the ability to facilitate the development of social networks.

1. What types of social media do you use?
   o Facebook
   o Instagram
   o Snapchat
   o YouTube
   o Musical.ly (TikTok)
   o WhatsApp
   o Tumblr
   o Twitter
   o Skype
   o Reddit
   o Pinterest
   o Others
   o _____
2. Which social media do you use the most (please only check **two**)?
   o Facebook
   o Instagram
   o Snapchat
   o YouTube
   o Musical.ly (TikTok)
   o WhatsApp
   o Tumblr
   o Twitter
   o Skype
   o Reddit
   o Pinterest
   o Other? _____

Name: _____

3. How much time do you spend on social media per school day?
   - None
   - Less than 1 hour
   - Between 1-2 hours
   - Between 2-3 hours
   - More than 3 hours

4. How much time do you spend on social media on a Saturday or Sunday?
   - None
   - Less than 1 hour
   - Between 1-2 hours
   - Between 2-3 hours
   - More than 3 hours

5. What device do you mostly use to access your social media? (please pick one)
   - Cell phone
   - Tablet (iPad)
   - Computer
   - MP3 player (iPod)
   - Video game device (PS4, Xbox, etc.)
   - Other? _____

6. How do you use social media? Can you give an example or two?

7. If you use social media, why do you use it?

8. Does your teacher ever use social media in your classroom (YouTube, Google Docs, etc)? If yes, do you think this helps you with your learning?

9. Do you ever learn about social media at school? If yes, what do you learn about?

10. Do you think your principal understands how children are using social media or do you think he or she would be surprised? Please explain.

Appendix I - Student Survey 3

Social Media Survey Questions for Grade four or five Students

For the purpose of this survey, social media is made up of the following commonalities: 1) Web 2.0 Internet-based applications, 2) user-generated content, 3) the user profile, and 4) the ability to facilitate the development of social networks.

1. What types of social media do you use?
    o   Facebook
    o   Instagram
    o   Snapchat
    o   YouTube
    o   Musical.ly (TikTok)
    o   WhatsApp
    o   Tumblr
    o   Twitter
    o   Skype
    o   Reddit
    o   Pinterest
    o   Others
    o   _____

2. Which social media do you use the most (please only check **two**)?
    o   Facebook
    o   Instagram
    o   Snapchat
    o   YouTube
    o   Musical.ly (TikTok)
    o   WhatsApp
    o   Tumblr
    o   Twitter
    o   Skype
    o   Reddit
    o   Pinterest
    o   Other? _____
    o

Name: _____

3. How much time do you spend on social media per school day?
    o   None
    o   Less than 1 hour
    o   Between 1-2 hours
    o   Between 2-3 hours
    o   More than 3 hours
4. How much time do you spend on social media on a Saturday or Sunday?
    o   None
    o   Less than 1 hour
    o   Between 1-2 hours
    o   Between 2-3 hours
    o   More than 3 hours
5. What device do you mostly use to access your social media? (please pick one)
    o   Cell phone
    o   Tablet (iPad)
    o   Computer
    o   MP3 player (iPod)
    o   Video game device (PS4, Xbox, etc.)
    o   Other? _____

6. 6. What types of things do you upload on to social media (for example: selfies, game play, quotes, funny things, pictures of friends, what you're currently doing)?

7.   If you use social media, why do you use it?

8. How does your teacher use social media in your classroom? What types of things can people learn from social media?

9. Do you ever learn about social media at school? If yes, does your teacher ever talk about things that you should do or should not do online?

10. Do you think your principal understands how children are using social media or do you think he or she would be surprised? Please explain.

11. Are you a:
    o   Boy
    o   Girl
    o   I identify as: _____
12. How old are you?
    o   8
    o   9
    o   10
    o   11
    o   12
13. Do you live in an urban neighbourhood (the city) or a rural neighbourhood (outside of the city)?
    o   Urban neighbourhood
    o   Rural neighbourhood

Appendix I

Student Survey 4

Social Media Survey Questions for Grade four or five Students

For the purpose of this survey, social media is made up of the following commonalities: 1) Web 2.0 Internet-based applications, 2) user-generated content, 3) the user profile, and 4) the ability to facilitate the development of social networks.

1. What types of social media do you use?
   o Facebook
   o Instagram
   o Snapchat
   o YouTube
   o Musical.ly (TikTok)
   o WhatsApp
   o Tumblr
   o Twitter
   o Skype
   o Reddit
   o Pinterest
   o Others
   o _____

2. Which social media do you use the most (please only check **two**)?
   o Facebook
   o Instagram
   o Snapchat
   o YouTube
   o Musical.ly (TikTok)
   o WhatsApp
   o Tumblr
   o Twitter
   o Skype
   o Reddit
   o Pinterest
   o Other? _____

Name: _____

3. How much time do you spend on social media per school day?
   o None
   o Less than 1 hour
   o Between 1-2 hours
   o Between 2-3 hours
   o More than 3 hours
4. How much time do you spend on social media on a Saturday or Sunday?
   o None
   o Less than 1 hour
   o Between 1-2 hours
   o Between 2-3 hours
   o More than 3 hours
5. What device do you mostly use to access your social media? (please pick one)
   o Cell phone
   o Tablet (iPad)
   o Computer
   o MP3 player (iPod)
   o Video game device (PS4, Xbox, etc.)
   o Other? _____

6. 6. What types of things do you upload on to social media (for example: selfies, game play, quotes, funny things, pictures of friends, what you're currently doing)?

7. If you use social media, why do you use it?

8. How does your teacher use social media in your classroom? What types of things can people learn from social media?

9. Do you ever learn about social media at school? If yes, does your teacher ever talk about things that you should do or should not do online?

10. Do you think your principal understands how children are using social media or do you think he or she would be surprised? Please explain.

Appendix J - Student Focus Group Interview Guide

School 1

Student Focus Group – School 1

Pre-focus group Script:

- I want you to know that if anyone says anything today about a plan to hurt themselves or others, or if you tell me that someone else is seriously hurting or threatening you, I do need to report it to Principal A.
- I would like to keep the things that we talk about today confidential (meaning what we talk about in here stays in here), but I can't promise you that everyone will keep things a secret. So just make sure you don't say anything that would be really embarrassing if someone else found out.
- I may need to interrupt because we only have 30 minutes together.

Social Media Question Guide

1. Principal – many of you think that your principal wouldn't know how kids use social media… is that just because it's Principal A, or do you think it would be the same with all adults his age?

2. What types of things would surprise adults with how kids use social media?

3. Do you have any rules about social media in your house? If yes, what are they?

4. Lots of you said you have learned about cyberbullying. What have you learned about cyberbullying? Do you think you should be learning about social media more at school? If yes, what would you like to learn about?

5. Some of you said social media helps with things. What kind of things does social media help with?

6. Many of you said you use social media at school to help with learning, especially with YouTube and Google. Do you ever interact with each other on your Google documents or slides?

----

7. Some of you said you use social media to chat with friends… Are these real life friends or friends that you met online?

8. Some new types of social media came about this that I am unfamiliar with… Can you tell me about discord? Mixer?

Appendix J - Student Focus Group Interview Guide

School 2

Pre-focus group Script:

- I want you to know that if anyone says anything today about a plan to hurt themselves or others, or if you tell me that someone else is seriously hurting or threatening you, I do need to report it to Principal B.
- I would like to keep the things that we talk about today confidential (meaning what we talk about in here stays in here), but I can't promise you that everyone will keep things a secret. So just make sure you don't say anything that would be really embarrassing if someone else found out.
- I may need to interrupt because we only have 30 minutes together.

----

1. I noticed your group really uses YouTube.
   a. Who has cable at home?
   b. Have you ever read the comments on a YouTube video?
   c. Have you ever added a comment to a YouTube video?
   d. What channels are you watching?

2. Principal – many of you think that your principal wouldn't know how kids use social media… is that just because it's Principal B, or do you think it would be the same with all adults her age?

3. What types of things would surprise adults with how kids use social media?

4. Do you have any rules about social media in your house? If yes, what are they?

5. Some of you mentioned there are assemblies about online stuff like social media. Tell me more.

6. Some of you mentioned Google Hangouts. What do you know about Google Hangouts?

7. Some of you said you use social media to chat with friends… Are these real life friends or friends that you met online?

Appendix K - Principal Interview Guide

Opening script: To start, I want you to know the definition of "social media" that we gave the students yesterday. We let told them that social media was anything that 1)had a user profile, 2) had the ability for social networking, and 3) consisted of user-generated content.

Social Media Questions for Principals

1. What types of social media do you think your grade 4/5 students regularly use?
   - Facebook
   - Instagram
   - Snapchat
   - YouTube
   - Musical.ly (TikTok)
   - WhatsApp
   - Tumblr

   - Twitter
   - Skype
   - Reddit
   - Pinterest
   - Others?

   _____
   __

2. Which social media platforms are you familiar with?
   - Facebook
   - Instagram
   - Snapchat
   - YouTube
   - Musical.ly (TikTok)
   - WhatsApp
   - Tumblr
   - Twitter
   - Skype
   - Reddit
   - Pinterest
   - Other?

   _____

3. How much time do you think the average grade 4/5 student spends on social media per school day?
   o None
   o Less than 1 hour
   o Between 1-2 hours
   o Between 2-3 hours
   o More than 3 hours
4. How much time do you think the average grade 4/5 student spends on social media on the weekend?
   o None
   o Less than 1 hour
   o Between 1-2 hours
   o Between 2-3 hours
   o More than 3 hours
5. What device do you think your grade 4/5 students mostly use to access your social media? (please pick one)
   o Cell phone
   o Tablet (iPad)
   o Computer
   o MP3 player (iPod)
   o Video game device (PS4, Xbox, etc.)
   o Other? _____
6. How do you think kids use social media?

7. Why do you think kids are using social media?

8. Do grade 4/5 students at your school learn about social media at all? If yes, what types of things do they learn? Who do they learn about it from?

9. Do you think this teaching is the responsibility of the elementary school?

10. Have you ever had to deal with any social media related problems (ie. cyberbullying, privacy concerns, sexting, etc.) with grade 4/5 students? If yes, what are some examples of problems you have been involved with? How did you choose to respond to these problems?

11. Do you know if there are any district policies pertaining to student social media use?

12. Do you feel like you and your administrator colleagues are knowledgeable about how grade 4/5 students are engaging with social media?

13. Do you feel like you and your administrator colleagues have been adequately trained to deal with social media problems? If yes, what did this training look like? If no, what type of training would be helpful for you?

Appendix L - Principal Recruitment Email

Dear Elementary Principals and Vice-Principals of [this district],

As a part of UofC's EdD program, I will be conducting research in our district on kids' usage of social media and elementary principals' perceptions of and leadership practices pertaining to this usage. Pre-existing literature is clear in two areas: (a) the age of accessing technology and social media is decreasing, and (b) social media is increasingly affecting our jobs as educators. It is important to mention that The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study.

The attached letter explains the specific details of the study, but essentially it would require one of your grade four or five teachers volunteering to have their class participate in the study. The first part of the study would include a curricular-embedded student survey (I will go teach a lesson on social media, cyber-safety, and cyber-kindness). The second part would include a one-time, student focus group for all students who have parent consent and student assent. And the third part of the study would include an interview with you (the principal or vice-principal) that would take about 30 to 45 minutes.

There is absolutely no pressure or expectation to participate. Please take a look at the attachment and let me know if this is something you and your community would be interested in participating in.

Thank you,

Jeremy Sanbrooks

Appendix M - Student Presentation Poster

Appendix N - Lesson Plan: Social Media, Cyber-Kindness, and Cyber-Safety

Grade: Adaptable for G. 4-5
Curriculum connection: Career Education
Competency connections: Communication and Social Responsibility

Rationale
Students are starting to use social media at younger and younger ages. Rather than outright ban all forms of social media, we need to be educating out students how to use social media safely and kindly. The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to a general definition of social media, and then to have them think about their experiences with it (if any). The story, *Nerdy Bird Tweets*, is about a bird who takes an unflattering picture of a friend and posts it on social media. At the beginning of the story, Nerdy Bird values getting "likes" more than he values his friendship with his real friend, Vulture. By the end of the story, Nerdy Bird realizes that having one real friend is worth more than a 1,000 likes. The purpose of this book is to get children to think about what they should do before posting a picture… and to think about what happens when something is posted online. It also provokes thinking around the value of a real-life friend vs. an online "friend." The movie clip, "Social Media" from *Brainchild* is about two groups of students who have to give feedback to a pretend singing audition (where the singer is actually an actress who intentionally sings terribly). One group is told that their feedback will be given to the "singer" and the other group is told their information will be anonymous. Unsurprisingly, the anonymous group is gives cruel feedback to the singer. The purpose in showing this clip is to get students thinking about the different ways that people can act when they are anonymous. Finally, the class will close the lesson by co-creating a "Guide to Safely and Kindly Using Social Media". Rather than give students a set of rules to follow, students will co-create their own social media principles to follow so that they are better prepared to navigate the online world in a safe and kind manner.

Social Media in BC's Revised Curriculum
 	
Core Competency connection
    Communication
        • "I recognize that there are different points-of-view and I can disagree respectfully."
    Personal Awareness and Responsibility
        • "I can participate in activities that support my well-being, and tell/show how they help me."
        • Social Responsibility

- • "I can advocate for others."
- • "I am kind to others, can work or play co-operatively, and can build relationships with people of my choosing."

Curricular connection
  Career Education G. four and five
- • "Students are expected to recognize the intersection of their personal and public digital identities and the potential for both positive and negative consequences."

Materials Needed
The picture book, *Nerdy Bird Tweets* by Aaron Reynolds
A small clip from the series *Brainchild,* episode titled "Social Media" – clip length 15:00 to 23:00
Brainstorm sheet: What do all kids need to know to be safe and kind when they are using social media?
White board + markers

Social Media Lesson Plan

Student Survey: *15 minutes*
4. Open with question, "what is social media?"
5. Tell the students, before we say anything else, I'd love to tap into your prior knowledge about social media. Before anyone starts the survey, I am going to pre-read all of the questions for you so that you understand what each question is asking you.
6. Distribute survey. Tell students to draw a picture on the back if they finish early.

Nerdy Bird Tweets: *20 minutes*
3. *Prior to reading the story*, ask students to make some predictions based on the cover and title of the story and to keep things in the back of their minds for discussion afterwards
4. Read the story as a class
  b) During the read-aloud possible questions to ask students:
- • What does this book tell us about real-life friends vs. online friends?
- • What does this book tell us about posting pictures of people?
- • Can you think of something that Nerdy Bird could have done to spread kindness to Vulture instead of spreading meanness to him?

Brainchild – Social Media: *15 minutes*
4. Opening question: do you think people act the same or different online?
5. Show video clip (15:00 to 23:00) – *8 minutes*
6. Discussion on anonymous vs. being known … prompt questions:
  a. "if people are usually meaner when they don't know their audience, is it a smart idea to have people we don't know on our "friends" list?"

Co-constructing a Class Guide to Cyber Safety: *15 minutes*
3. Have the students get into small groups and brainstorm 2 to 3 ideas of things they think younger students should know about staying safe with social media.
4. Engage in a class discussion. Compile a list of the most important things kids need to know when using social media.

Close
4. Thank the students for learning together today.
5. Remind them that I will only use the surveys of the students who have given me their permission (and their parents have given me permission, too).

6. Remind them about the upcoming focus groups for the kids who have expressed interest (and have parent permission).

Adaptations
  • Some students may need assistance understanding (reading) the questions of the survey
  • Some students may need to sit in a chair instead of the carpet (or ground) for the read-aloud
  • If there are any hearing impairments, the captions can be turned on in the video
  • To alleviate any unnecessary dysregulation or peer conflict, students will have a choice to brainstorm cyber-safety and cyber-kindness tips on their own (instead of being in a group)

Appendix O - Changes Made to Student Surveys

Change #	Question from Survey 1	Question from Survey 3	Rationale for Change
1	How do you use social media? Can you give an example or two?	What types of things do you upload on to social media (for example: selfies, game play, quotes, funny things, pictures of friends, what you're currently doing)?	I felt I needed to be more specific with the question. Answers in the first question included things like "while I am sitting on the couch."
2	Does your teacher ever use social media in your classroom (YouTube, GoogleDocs, etc)? If yes, do you think this helps you with your learning?	How does your teacher use social media in your classroom? What types of things can people learn from social media?	The first question was too specific. With the first question, student responses only included examples of how they used YouTube or Google Docs. The second question opened up different social media platforms that are being used in the classroom (ie. Freshgrade) that would have otherwise been missed.
3	Do you ever learn about social media at school? If yes, what do you learn about?	Do you ever learn about social media at school? If yes, does your teacher ever talk about things that you should do or should not do online?	With the first question, many students responded with "yes" or "no" answers. With the second question, I was able to get a little bit more insight and commentary from the students.
4	What is your ethnicity o European o African-Canadian o Asian o Indigenous o Other o Prefer not to disclose	I eliminated the question altogether.	Students did not understand the question. 80% of students selected "other" despite being Caucasian (they did not understand that Caucasian = white).

SOCIAL MEDIA, CHILDREN, AND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Appendix P - Long Table Approach
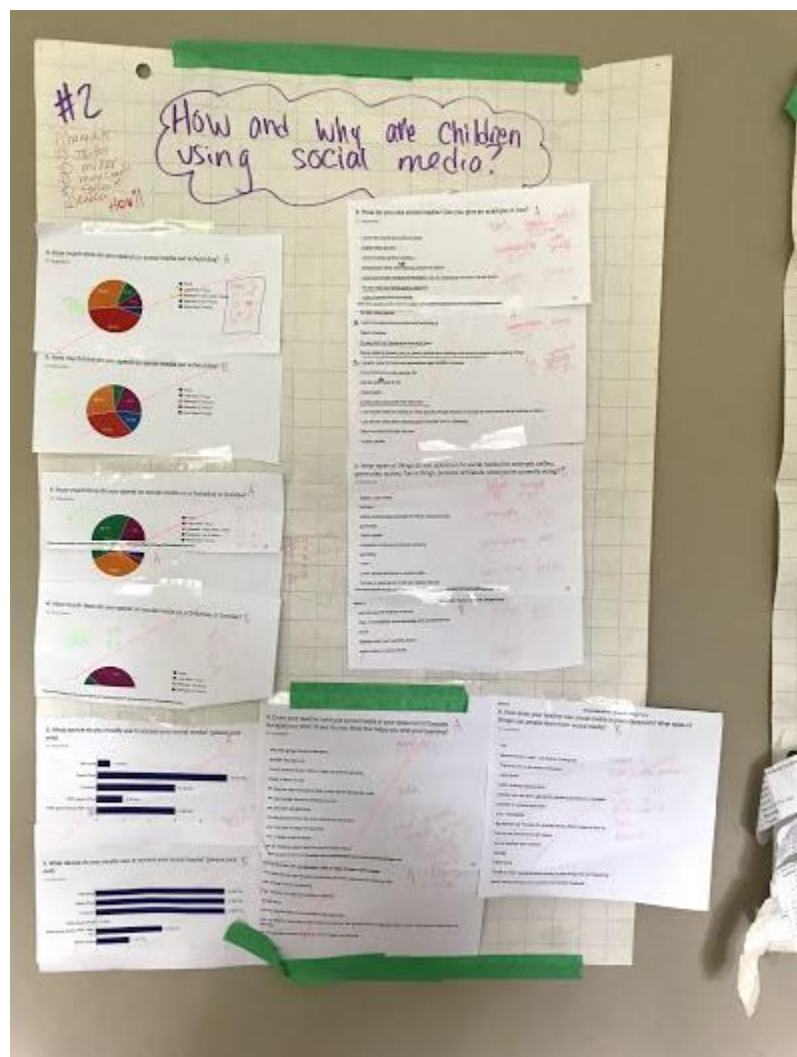
Appendix P - Long Table Approach
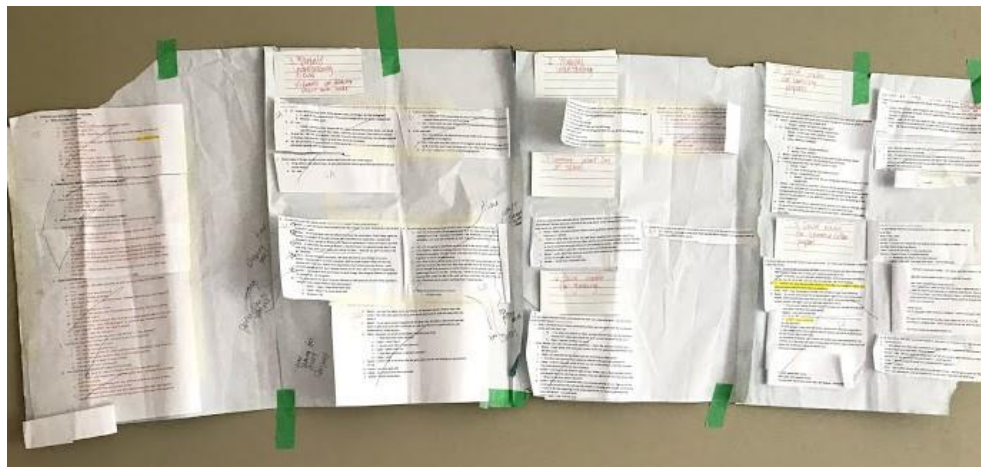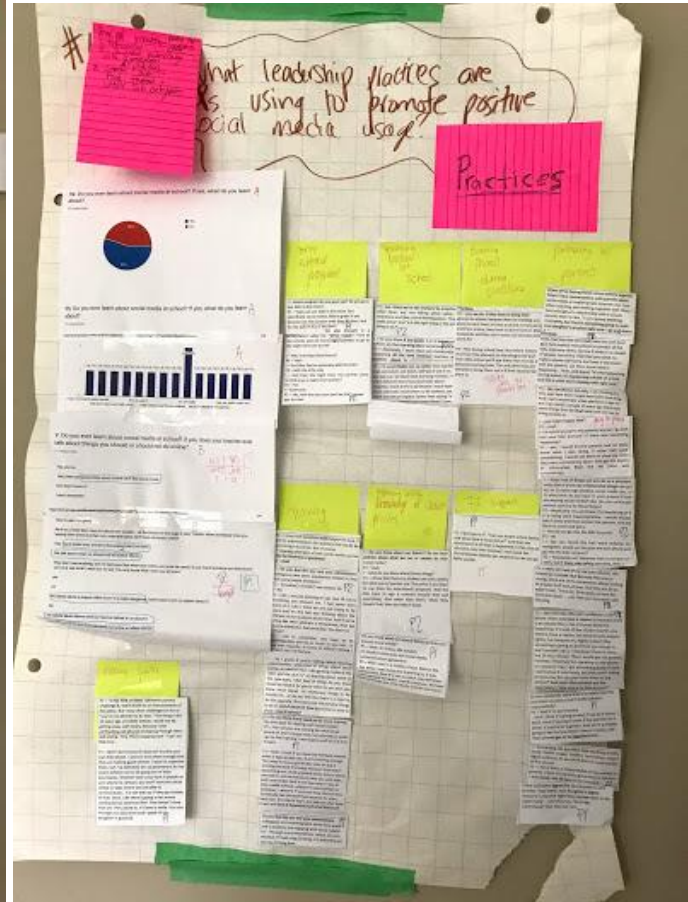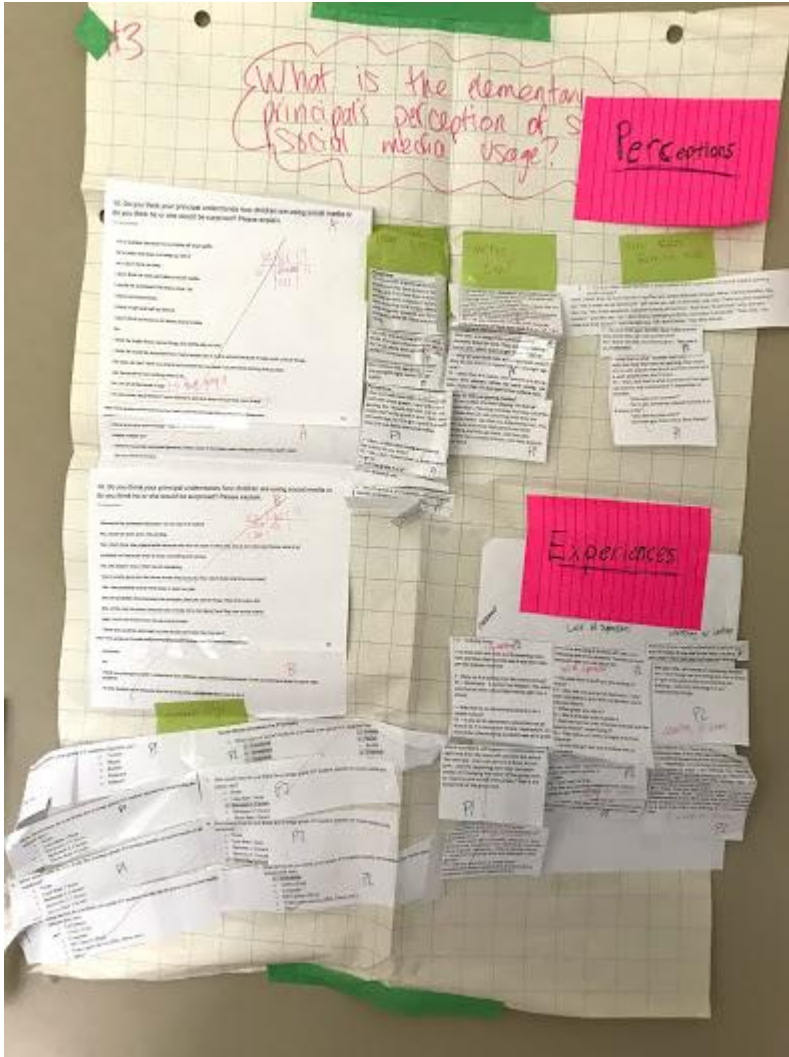
Appendix Q - Miles et al.(2011) Codebook

Code	Type of Code
1. Applications	Descriptive
2. Applications: Google Hangouts	Descriptive
3. Applications: Gsuite	Descriptive
4. Applications: TikTok	Descriptive
5. Clueless principal: cyber-meanness	Descriptive
6. Clueless principal: don't show	Descriptive
7. Clueless principal: lying	Descriptive
8. Clueless principal: randomness	In vivo
9. Deleting	Process
10. Family rules: parents' knowledge	Descriptive
11. Family rules: parents on SM	Descriptive
12. General info: device	Descriptive
13. General info: time	Descriptive
14. Learning about SM at school	Process
15. Online friends	Descriptive
16. Perceptions: babysitting tool	In vivo
17. Perceptions: children's use	Descriptive
18. Perceptions: principal not very knowledgeable	Descriptive
19. Principal action: collaborating with tech department	Process
20. Principal action: contacting SM company	Process
21. Principal Action: creating a home-school partnership	Process
22. Principal action: creating rules around phones	Process
23. Principal action: evolution of practice	Descriptive
24. Principal action: follow child's account	Descriptive
25. Principal action: following student account	Process
26. Principal action: hiring outside agencies	Process
27. Principal action: know district policy	Process
28. Principal action: teaching a mindset	Process
29. Problems: cyber-meanness	Descriptive
30. Problems: gaming	Descriptive
31. Problems: inappropriate	Descriptive

32. Problems: interfering with learning	Descriptive
33. Problems: texting	Descriptive
34. Rules: content	Descriptive
35. Rules: DL	Descriptive
36. Rules: gaming	Descriptive
37. Rules: no face	Descriptive
38. Rules: online friends	Descriptive
39. Rules: parent follow-through	Descriptive
40. Rules: posting	Descriptive
41. Rules: time	Descriptive
42. SM for communication	Descriptive
43. SM for communication: complimenting	Process
44. SM for communication: defending	Process
45. SM for communication: doing good	Descriptive
46. SM for communication: posting photos or videos	Process
47. SM for communication: reporting	Descriptive
48. SM for gaming	Descriptive
49. SM for gaming: Animal Jam	Descriptive
50. SM for gaming: Mixer	Descriptive
51. SM for gaming: streaming gameplay	Descriptive
52. SM for learning : FreshGrade	Descriptive
53. SM for learning: collaboration	Descriptive
54. YouTube: accounts	Descriptive
55. YouTube: channels	Descriptive
56. YouTube: comments	Descriptive
57. YouTube: craft videos	Descriptive
58. YouTube: life hacks	Descriptive

Appendix R - Coding Map for Data Analysis

Appendix S – Pattern Coding and Category Formation
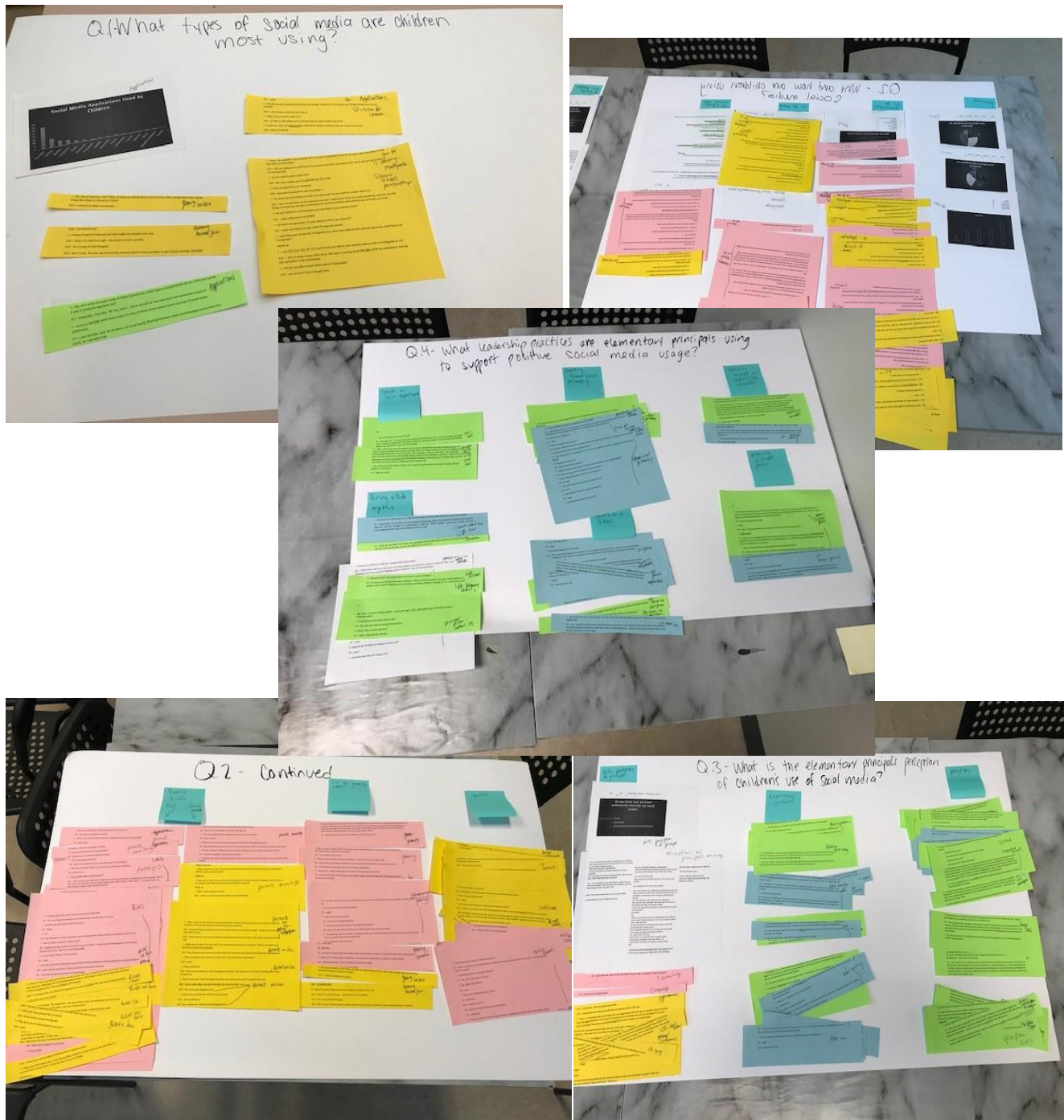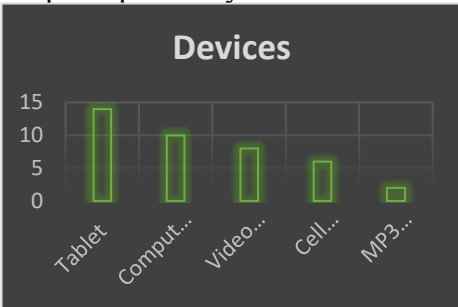
Appendix T - Interpretation Outline Tool/ Analytic Category Tool

Research Question	Finding	Why	So What? Now what?	Analytic Category
1 - What types of social media are children most using?	Finding 1.1. YouTube and TikTok are the social media platforms most used by children in this study.	**Evidence:** • Evidenced by Student Surveys – 94% for YouTube and 36% for TikTok • YouTube, especially dominated the conversation in the focus groups… All students were active users of YouTube in FG2. TikTok was brought up by students in FG 1 and 2, as well. • Principals spoke to both platforms. • In my personal experience, I have had many incidents (good and bad) with both platforms. **Why not?** - I didn't include gaming media as options in the Student Surveys… Would *Roblox* numbers have exceeded YouTube and TikTok? **Connections to literature:** - Lenhart (2015) – 13 year olds used Facebook and Snapchat less than older teenagers. If we know that kids are using social media (Steeves, 2014), and we know they aren't using the same platforms as teens (Lenhart, 2015), then what are they using? My study would suggest YouTube, TikTok, and gaming platforms. - Steeves (2014) says one third of children in g.4 to g.6 have FB accounts. Almost all of the kids in my study reported to using a form of social media… but definitely not Facebook as a platform.	Prior to this study, there was no literature indicating what platforms children, specifically, were using. The best indication we had was from Steeves (2014) study which suggested that a third of grade 4 to 6 students had Facebook accounts. Fast-forward five years later, we have had to broaden our definition of social media to include many types of video gaming media. With this broadened definition of social media, it is safe to assume that almost every grade four or five child is engaging with some form of social media.	**Category 1 - Children as social media users.**

| 2 - How and why are children using social media? | Finding 2.1. Children in this study report they spend more time on social media on weekends than weekdays. | •

   •
• Should mention that 14% of students were spending more than 3 hours on social media on weekdays
• Both principals expressed concern for the amount of time students were spending on social media
Connections to literature:
- Rideout (2015) claims that preteens and teens are spending about 2 hours on social media per day. My findings would be mostly consistent with this. On average, kids in this study are spending between 1 to 2 hours per school day and then 2+ hours on weekends. | Children are spending more time on social media on weekends than weekdays.

As discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4, social media problems that happen at home are spilling into the school setting.

This is reason for schools to be discussing healthy social media usage – not just for how to use social media when at school, but also for how to use social media when at home.

Also interesting to note, 13% of children in this study are spending more than three hours a day on social media on weekdays.

The female students in this study reported to | **Category 1 - Children as social media users.** |

Evidence

Girls/Weekday

None	
< 1	8
B.W 1-2	6
B.W. 2-3	
>3	3

Boys/Weekday

None	2
< 1	4
B.W 1-2	5
B.W. 2-3	3
>3	2

Girls/Weekend

None	
< 1	2
B.W 1-2	4
B.W. 2-3	4
>3	7

Boys/Weekend

None	1
< 1	2
B.W 1-2	6
B.W. 2-3	4
>3	3

Rough calculations:

Legend for calculation

None	0
< 1	0.5
B.W 1-2	1.5
B.W. 2-3	2.5
>3	3.5

Girl weekday	23.5 hrs total / 17 =
	24 hrs total/ 16 =
Boy weekday	1.5
Girl weekend	41.5 hrs total/ 17 = 2
Boy weekend	30. 5 hrs total/ 16 =

using social media at slightly higher rates than boys. The difference was not significant. But it was interesting to note that girls spent slightly less time on social media on weekdays than boys, yet more time on social media on weekends.

It could be a stretch, but does this speak, at all, to girls' self-control on school nights?

		Looking at these numbers from a whole-wee
		
		Girls 1.4 x 5 7
		                2.4 x 2 4.8
		
		                                   1
		Week total 11.8 or w
		
		Boys 1.5 x 5 7.5
		                1.9 x 2 3.8
		
		                                     1
		Week total 11.3 or w
		
		Girls are spending, on average, about 30 mir
		
		Why not?
		Connections to literature:
		  - Teen girls report to using social media at slightly higher rates than teen boys (Perrin, 2015; Rideout 2015)
		My study would be consistent with these findings		

	Finding 2.2. The tablet is the device most commonly used by children in this study to access social media.	**Evidence:**
		As per reported by the Student Survey
		
		Devices
		
		15
		10
		5
		0
		
		Tablet Comput... Video... Cell... MP3...
		
		  • This was also guessed by P1
		Why not?
		Connections to literature:
		  - 67% of teens claimed to own a cell phone in Rideout's (2015) study
		  - 88% of teens claimed to own a cell phone in Lenhart's (2015) study
		  • Although I didn't ask children directly if they owned their own cell phones, I would assume, by these numbers listed in the figure above that cell phone ownership with the children in this study was not as
			The tablet is the most commonly used device, by children, to access their social media accounts.
			
			many parents continue to not buy cell phones for children. This makes me wonder if parents realize that tablets can do most things as a cell phone?
				Category 1 - Children as social media users.

		high as Rideout and Lenhart's studies.		
	Finding 2.3. Children in this study are active users of YouTube who interact in and with the "comments" section and upload videos.	**Evidence:** - In focus group 2, 8/8 read the comments - 5/8 added comments to videos - 4/8 uploaded videos or were planning to upload in the immediate future - There were children in each focus group who mentioned having their own YouTube channel **Why not?** **Connections to literature:** - Escobar-Viera et al. (2018) claim passive social media usage with adults was associated with increased depression, whereas active SMU was associated with lower depression. (p. 440) - Aalbers et al. (2019) found that "participants who spent more time passively using social media also experienced higher mean levels of depressed mood, loneliness, hopelessness, and feeling inferior." - Blease (2015) contends that individuals are more likely to suffer from depression when greater amounts of time are spent reading updates from a wide pool of friends (ie. passive social media usage) (p. 9) - Li (2016) says "overall, the study showcases social media engagement, especially active usage, as antecedent to psychological empowerment." P. 57 -	According to many, depression rates are highest with passive social media use. The children in this study report to using YouTube more than any other platform. This usage is also active in nature, meaning that children are interacting whilst on YouTube. How do schools encourage more active usage?	**Category 2 - Active vs. passive social media usage and children.**
	Finding 2.4. Children use social media for	**Evidence:** • Children in both studies decided to include gaming media (ie. *Fortnite* and *Roblox*) as forms of social media… As per the Obar and Wildman (2014) definition.	First off, the children in this study wanted to include gaming platforms as social media	**Category 1 - Children as social media users.**

| | gaming purposes. | • Many children from the surveys and focus groups discussed playing online games where communication with others was involved (examples include *Fortnite* and *Roblox*)
• Children also discussed using gaming social media platforms, such as Mixer, Twitch, and Discord. These platforms allow for livestreaming and communication amongst the "gamer" community.
• The principals expressed concerns for how much time kids were spending on video games, especially P1. He also had concerns about how this was affecting children's perspective of friendship.
P1 expressed that young students are too competitive with gameplay and that these gaming issues were spilling into the school setting.
Why not?
Connections to literature:
Need literature about gaming and children | platforms, because:
1) they have a user profile, 2) they have the ability to network with other users, and 3) they include user-generated content.

Perhaps future social media research should be inclusive of gaming media that incorporates those three attributes?

There's an interesting interconnection between children gaming and interacting with each other and children using social media gaming platforms, such as Twitch, Discord, and Mixer. One enhances the other.

Principal expressed lack of empathy with gaming – how can schools change this? | |
| | Finding 2.5. Children | **Evidence:** | Now that we know that most children interact | **Category 1 - Children as** |

	use social media to communicate with real and online friends.	• Children in the surveys mentioned using social media to communicate with their friends. • Children in FG1 discussed using social media to invite a friend over, invite them to play a game online, or to collaborate over homework. • Children in both FGs discussed using social media to connect with real-life friends and online friends. **Why not?** - It would be interesting to look at how many children communicated with people they did not know on social media platforms like TikTok or Instagram in comparison to gaming media platforms like *Roblox* or *Fortnite* or even compared to gaming social media platforms like Twitch or Discord… I would suspect this number to be much less. Perhaps a more interesting question would be, "have you ever added an online friend from a video game to a social media platform?" **Connections to literature:** - Literature about online friends and kids or teens? - Students are building their learning communities and supporting each other on Facebook via Facebook messages, status updates, posts to a Facebook study group, and by posting on a friend's wall (Wohn et al., 2013)	with "online friends," I am curious about what an online friendship looks like for a child?	**social media users.**
	Finding 2.6. Children use social media at school to collaborate, view videos, and communic	**Evidence:** • Students in the FGs discussed using Google Docs and Slides to collaborate with their peers, both at school and at home. Students in Class 1 also discussed using the "share" button to turn assignments in to their teacher. • Children discussed using YouTube both at school (Directed Draws,	Some social media on select platforms are clearly benefiting learning. How do we leverage more of the "good parts" of social media for schools and learning?	**Category 4 – Elementary principals' reactive and proactive approaches to promoting positive social media usage.**

	ate learning to parents.	math strategy videos, history videos) • Freshgrade, a platform used by teachers to communicate student learning, was also used by the students in the study. **Why not?** **Connections to literature:** - One teacher in Cassidy et al. (2012b) study said "I think there is a fear of Facebook and using it in schools… I think that rather than being afraid of it we should be using it more because it's engaging students" (p. 527) - Powers and Green (2016) assert that social media platforms leverage students' ability to develop 21st century literacies such as collaboratively producing information real time for global audiences. - According to Jonson et al. (2016), 79% of teachers agree that networked technologies are making it easier for their students to learn (p. 3).		
	Finding 2.7. Children report their social media usage is guided by family rules around social media.	**Evidence:** • The students and principals expressed that many families had rules pertaining to social media. • The principals felt as if many families struggled to follow through with these rules. • Children expressed the following family rules: do now show face, limit the amount of time on social media, limit the type of applications being used, have parents monitor social media accounts, do not watch inappropriate content, ask for permission before downloading new applications, and set accounts to private. **Why not?** **Connections to literature:**	Kids say family rules guide their usage but principals question the follow-through of these rules.	**Category 1 - Children as social media users.**

		- Need literature about family rules around social media/technology		
3 - What is the elementary principal's perception of children's use of social media?	Finding 3.1. Principals in this study assumed their grade four and five students are using social media.	**Evidence:** • P1 felt that all of his male students were engaged with gaming media and that about 20% of grade four and five students were using social media. • P2 said that she knew her students were using platforms like Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok. • Accurately, the principals felt that their students, on average, were spending between 1 and 2 hours on social media per weekday, and over 3 hours per weekend day. • The principals assumed that the devices the students were most using to access their social media accounts were either tablets or their personal cell phones. **Why not?** - Because P1 did not classify gaming platforms like *Roblox* or *Fortnite* as social media platforms, he said only about 20% of his students were using social media that was separate from gaming. **Connections to literature:** - Steeves (2014) claims that a third of grade 4 to 6 students have Facebook accounts		**Category 1 - Children as social media users.**
	Finding 3.2. Principals felt that parents used social media and technology to occupy their children.	**Evidence:** • When asked why kids are using social media or gaming media, both principals expressed they felt it was being used as a form of "babysitting" for some families. • P2 explained how nowadays, when kids are young, parents give their phones to their children as a form of entertainment. Essentially what P2 was saying that kids are accessing technology younger today, and by the time they are in grade four or	Technoference disrupts the parent-child attachment.	**Possibly category 1 or omit from analytic categories**

		five, children are constantly consuming technology. **Why not?** **Connections to literature:**		
	Finding 3.3. Elementary principals identified social media problems from home impact the school environment and social media problems at school interfere with student learning.	**Evidence:** • Principals expressed several problems they have encountered at school in relation to young children using social media. • The problems can be organized into problems that happen at home that impact the school environment and problems that happen at school that interfere with learning • **Why not?** **Connections to literature:** - Social media problems that happen at home that impact the school setting: Powers and Green (2016) – principals' concerns about social media misbehaviours spilling into school setting Canadian Association of Principals (2014) - The study identified the six biggest concerns of school principals today; one of these concerns was in the realm of technology, in particular, concerns about "the fallout from pernicious and frequent use of social media among students, and, in some cases, parents" (p. 11). The same study also says "Cyberbullying and community gossip are damaging school climates and many administrators are struggling to respond effectively." Young et al.'s (2017) study conclude that "most administrators viewed cyberbullying as a major challenge due to the widespread adoption of technologies" (p. 481) and "as schools increasingly shoulder responsibility for cyberbullying, it is vital for schools to know which combinations of technology and antibullying curricula and policies are	Social media issues committed by children are affecting schools and principals. This can lead to negative school climates and disruptions to learning.	**Category 3 – Social media problems for principals.**

		effective at primary prevention of cyberbullying" (p. 481).
		
		Hinduja and Patchin (2012a) found students who experienced cyberbullying perceived a more negative school climate than those who had not experienced cyberbullying
		  - Social media problems that happen at school that interfere with learning
		     ○ Lederer (2012) – social media is distracting for learners
		     ○ Need some more relevant research to support this		

4 - What leadership practices are elementary principals using to support positive student social media usage?	Finding 4.1. Principals encourage teaching values-based mindsets and explicitly teaching about social media.	***In looking at the principals' actions as proactive and reactive, Cassidy et al. (2012a) claim "it is important for all concerned parties to find ways to cultivate positive online behaviours rather than merely trying to curtail the negative ones." - p. 416
		
		Also start the section by discussing Brown and Jacobsen's (2016) call for principals to possess facets of technology leadership in today's digital age.
		
		This section could also start with a reminder of Demski's (2012) attributes of a technology leader.
		
		Evidence:
		  • Both principals made reference to teaching about social media explicitly and about teaching kids about character and value, with the hopes of these values transcending the real-life world and into their online world.
		  • In my personal experience, I have seen little explicit social media education for elementary students.
		Why not?
		  • The principals did not give rich description of what this social
				Category 4 – Elementary principals' reactive and proactive approaches to promoting positive social media usage.

		media curriculum or conversations look like. P1 also said that his school did not teach about social media explicitly… but he later went on to say that they did teach their things like cyber-safety. **Connections to literature:** - Ribble et al. (2004) – educating students on "digital citizenship" - Kaya and Bicen (2016) discuss how cyber-kindness can increase student self-confidence - Explicit conversations about cyber-kindness (Cassidy et al. 2012, 2013) - Vivian Robinson's (2011) urge for principals to have Open-to-Learning conversations with stakeholders.		
	Finding 4.2. Principals hire outside agencies as a strategy to promote positive social media usage at home and at school.	**Evidence:** • P1 hired a local non-profit, called "Courage for Youth," whose mission is "to resource and equip youth and those who work with youth to help youth successfully navigate their most challenging years," (Courage for Youth, 2019) to help facilitate a program, called "Scream," that is tailored towards helping children build "trustworthy character." • P2 brought in a presentation called the 'White Hatter' – White Hatter's website says that the grade four and five curriculum speaks to cyberbullying, safety, etiquette, and privacy. **Why not?** **Connections to literature:**		**Category 4 – Elementary principals' reactive and proactive approaches to promoting positive social media usage.**
	Finding 4.3. Principals inform themselves of district policy	**Evidence:** • Knowing the district's policy around social media was a leadership practice that both principals engaged in. • They were both able to refer to the social media policy and give a rough description of the policy.		**Category 4 – Elementary principals' reactive and proactive approaches to promoting**

	pertaining to social media.	**Why not?** • Neither principal could speak at length about the policy … they both just knew that the district had policies in relation to social media and could vaguely (but accurately) state some information about the actual policy. **Connections to literature:** - Shear (2015) explains four cases where school districts' social media policies ended up with districts losing lawsuits. - Principals should strengthen student policy regarding social media offences (Horowitz & Bollinger, 2014)		**positive social media usage.**
	Finding 4.4. Principals work closely with parents to resolve social media issues.	**Evidence:** • There was much data that spoke to principals collaborating with families when it came to social media issues. • This has always been my main "go-to" when I have encountered similar problems. **Why not?** **Connections to literature:**		**Category 4 – Elementary principals' reactive and proactive approaches to promoting positive social media usage.**
	Finding 4.5. Principals collaborate with the technology department.	**Evidence:** - P1 described a time when he called upon the district technology department to help find the time when and the laptop in which an offence was committed. With this collaboration, P1 was able to identify a student who was making poor choices on social media. **Why not?** **Connections to literature:**		**Category 4 – Elementary principals' reactive and proactive approaches to promoting positive social media usage.**
	Finding 4.6. Principals check students' social media	**Evidence:** • P1 had an experience when he was working at a middle school where he had a student make a fictitious account and write defamatory comments about him. He went online and checked the student's		**Category 4 – Elementary principals' reactive and proactive approaches to promoting**

	accounts after an issue arises.	public account to apprise himself of the situation. • P2 had a grade 3 student posting odd and slightly inappropriate videos on to her YouTube channel. The student invited her principal to "follow" her channel. • The principals agreed that they would never check out the student's account from the student's device, but that they would check online to see if the student's account was public. • I engage in the same practice when I hear there are problems happening online. **Why not?** **Connections to literature:** - Shear (2015) explains that when a school has a reasonable suspicion that a student has broken the law or school rules, it has the right to search a student's personal belongings on school grounds. Two cases where school districts have been successfully sued for what was deemed as "unconstitutional searches" of students' social media. - Shear (2015) also describes a situation where students created a disparaging, fake Myspace account for their vice-principal. An appeals court sided with the students and dismissed the defamation claim that the vice-principal had made.		**positive social media usage.**
	Finding 4.7. Principals ban cell phones during instructional times.	**Evidence:** • Both principals made reference to no phones being allowed in the classroom, unless the student had specific permission from their teacher. • P2 described that students commonly used their cell phones before or after school. P1 said his	This appears to be counterintuitive amongst other studies.	**Category 4 – Elementary principals' reactive and proactive approaches to promoting positive social media usage.**

		rule was that phones were not allowed at school at all. • With the elementary schools that I have worked at, cell phones have always been banned from the school unless a student had specific permission by their teacher. **Why not?** **Connections to literature:** - The New York City Department of Education (New York City Department of Education, 2007) banned cell phones in schools during the early onset of phones coming to schools. This resulted in a hefty legal case where parents challenged the district on the basis of "the school board had overreached its statutory authority and acted arbitrarily and capriciously and that parents had been denied their constitutional right to communicate with their children" (Kiedrowski et al., 2009, p. 44) - Get more literature that discusses the effects of banning cell phones in schools		