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The Role of Social Media Technology Tools in Higher Education Instruction

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

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MSc, Central Connecticut State University, 2004

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Although instructors at a Western Caribbean university use technology in the instructional process, they rarely use social media tools for teaching and learning. This exploratory qualitative case study addressed faculty members' perceived role of social media technology tools in higher education instruction at the local university. The conceptual frameworks that guided this study were the theory of planned behavior and the technology acceptance model. Ten faculty members at the local university were selected through a purposeful sampling process and were interviewed. Interview transcripts were organized using an iterative coding process and were analyzed for recurring themes. Trustworthiness was established through peer review, member checking, peer debriefing, and triangulation. The themes that emerged from the interviews revealed factors that encouraged the use of social media tools such as freedom in learning, growth in inferential skills, ease of communication, or access to a repository of online lessons. In addition, factors that discouraged the use of social media were also discovered, such as unreliability of the tools, hindrance to cognitive growth, or the increased number of cyber bullies. The resulting project consisted of a white paper that will disseminate the findings from this study to stakeholders with the goal of initiating a collaborative process focused on the use of social media tools in instruction. Recommendations from this project study may help to implement and integrate social media tools in instruction. The project contributes to social change through faculty members' stronger understanding of both those factors that encourage the use of social media tools and the barriers that prevent their effective use in instruction.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

The local problem that prompted the need for this study emerged from a conversation with the dean of student affairs at a local university that will be called Western Caribbean University (WCU) in July 2011. WCU's dean of student affairs noted that staff members and faculty did not satisfactorily use social media tools in instruction, despite the revolutionary nature of social media in (a) promoting professional development (Bosman, 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011), (b) broadening the reach of the institution (Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011), (c) increasing student success (Dillion et al., 2007; Watson, 2008), and (d) collaborating and participating for students' educational growth (McNaughtet et al., 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011). Social media tools are not used in instruction at WCU despite the abundance of social media tools available to both staff and students (Watson, 2008, p. 3). Some students at WCU use the social media tools available to enhance their learning, while others use these tools only for recreational purposes, such as socializing and communicating with friends. At WCU, students use a vast amount of social media tools for leisure (Watson, 2008, p. 2). For example, students use Facebook to post pictures and communicate with family and friends; Twitter to follow friends, celebrities, and family members; Instagram to post pictures; and YouTube to download videos. Students are already using social media tools for noneducational purposes; instructors can find ways that social media tools can be used for instructional purposes. Scholars have noted that social media tools are used in higher education institutions in England, the United States, and Europe (Bosman, 2011; Dillion et al., 2007; Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011; Watson, 2008). Therefore,

WCU's faculty members may model the practices of these educators who have successfully used social media tools in instruction and find ways to use social media tools effectively in teaching and learning at their institution.

Between 2002 and 2008, the ministry of education in this Western Caribbean region overcame two cataclysmic failures in attempting to integrate technology in schools across the island (Watson, 2008). In 2002, the ITALIC (Improving Teaching and Learning in the "Western Caribbean University") project was the first expensive failed attempt to integrate technology into institutions across the Western Caribbean region. According to Watson (2008), the total expenditure of the ITALIC project at the end of March 2012 was estimated at $12 million (p. 1). A second attempt to re-establish technology at WCU occurred in 2008. This project was also a catastrophic failure, with disastrous financial consequences for the government, which spent millions of dollars on it (Watson, 2008).

After the culmination of both projects, the records of the ministry of education for this Western Caribbean region show that from 2002 to 2008, the basic annual expenditure for a student was CI$1,157. At that time, the United Kingdom spent only CI$ 97 for technology (Watson, 2008, p. 2). Both projects were evaluated to assess the reasons for failures. The problems found related to (a) unreliable Internet access in schools, (b) slow response-time of outsourced maintenance, (c) inadequate skills among teachers, (d) and poor linkage of educational resources to curriculum (Watson, 2008, p. 2). At the end of 2008, the Ministry of Education revamped the education system and provided numerous technological tools such as multimedia projectors, smart boards, projectors, and mimeos for use in institutions across this Western Caribbean region (Watson, 2008, p. 2). The

ministry of education used new strategies such as (a) workshops that provide training for faculty, (b) reliable Internet services, (c) technicians for support, (d) and new technological tools to encourage more staff to use technology in instruction (Watson, 2008, p. 1). These new strategies led to the successful implementation of technology in schools in this Western Caribbean region. This success in technology integration created opportunities for all teachers and students to use technology in teaching and learning.

Currently, technology is widely used by the faculty members and students at higher education institutions in this Western Caribbean region. According to the Survey of ICT and Education in the Caribbean Volume II: Country Reports (2010), the ratio of students to computers is 4:1, which is comparable to the student-computer ratio in countries where instructors in higher education use social media (e.g., Canada—6:1, United States—8:1, and United Kingdom—9:1 (p. 2). At WCU, many students view social media technology as an important tool that enhances their learning experiences, while other students typically do not use it for learning. Faculty members have expressed doubt that students will use social media tools to enhance their learning experiences (Watson, 2008, p. 3). Redecker, Ala-Mutka, and Punie, (2011) stated that faculty members may attend workshops on social media tools for instruction and give clear instructions to students with regard to the use of any social media tools for instruction (p. 153). Currently, there are no professional workshops at WCU that help faculty members identify strategies and provide students with guidance for using social media as a learning tool.

The purpose of the study was to identify ways in which faculty members might more effectively integrate social media tools in instruction at WCU. I examined the kinds

of social media tools used by faculty members to enhance learning in the classroom, as well as instructional strategies that faculty attempted to use or intended to use in classroom instruction. Additionally, I investigated the concerns that faculty members might have if social media tools were implemented in instruction and highlighted current solutions presented by scholars worldwide.

Definition of the Problem

The problem resides in the minimal role that social media tools currently play in enhancing education at WCU. Three of the mandates from the ministry of education, training, and employment in this Western Caribbean region highlight the need for technology to be used in the educational arena (Survey of ICT and Education in the Caribbean Volume II: Country Reports, 2010, p. 1). The first mandate stipulates that "all teachers may utilize technology where appropriate in their planning and instruction across all subject areas, and provide opportunities for students to use technology to demonstrate learning" (Survey of ICT and Education in the Caribbean Volume II: Country Reports, 2010, p. 1).The second mandate states that faculty need to "facilitate student engagement with technology as a tool to demonstrate learning or express themselves" (Survey of ICT and Education in the Caribbean Volume II: Country Reports, 2010, p. 1). Finally, the third mandate stated that "teachers should use various technological tools to give students the opportunity to express themselves using technology" (Survey of ICT and Education in the Caribbean Volume II: Country Reports, 2010, p. 1). These three stipulations clearly indicate that it is important for teachers to explore strategies for the effective use of all forms of technology in higher education.

The ministry of education, training, employment, youth, and sports & culture (MOE) in this Western Caribbean region offered the opportunity for teachers and students to have wide access to information technology. According to the Survey of ICT and Education in the Caribbean Volume II: Country Reports, (2010), MOE has made a tremendous effort to improve teaching, administration, participation, and learning through the use of technology (p. 2). For instance, MOE has taken action so that permanent faculty members are given laptop computers (Survey of ICT and Education in the Caribbean Volume II: Country Report, n.d., p. 26). In this Western Caribbean region, MOE has also provided faculty members with a wide variety of technological tools used for educational purposes, including multimedia projectors, iPods, Smart boards, desktop computers, Mimeos, laptop computers, and more. Despite the abundance of technological tools, social media have remained unexplored as instructional technology. As social media is strictly based on web technology, it can (a) help to create interaction and collaboration; (b) enrich the learning experiences of students through personalization, customization, and networking experiences; and (c) develop a learner-centred education (Ivala & Gachago, 2012, p. 153). Faculty have to accept that social media holds high promise for enhancing teaching and learning (Ivala & Gachago, 2012, p. 153). Faculty members at WCU need to embrace social media tools in teaching and learning for the benefits that they hold to broaden and expand the teaching industry in this Western Caribbean region.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

A Survey of ICT ascertained the issues local universities in the Caribbean faced in implementing ICT in their institutions (The Survey of ICT, Integration Policy, 2010, p. 11). Caribbean countries included in this survey were the U.S. Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, Jamaica, Grenada, Dominica, British Virgin Islands, Barbados, Anguilla, Antigua, Aruba, Barbuda, and the Cayman Islands (The Survey of ICT, Integration Policy, 2010, p. 11). This survey discovered challenges related to (a) deployment and operations of networks and (b) computer communications in Caribbean countries. These challenges included three major areas: (a) procurement of large amounts of ICT hardware, (b) high cost of ICT programs and software, and (c) illegal copying of software (The Survey of ICT, Integration Policy, 2010, p. 11). Institutional problems specific to WCU include (a) a limited number of ICT personnel for technology maintenance, (b) time consumption in planning ICT-related lessons, and (c) fear of constant changes in software (The Survey of ICT, Integration Policy, 2010, p. 11). Faculty-related issues include (a) lack of compensation for staff, (b) a limited number of trained personnel in ICT, (c) constant migration of talented and educated Caribbean natives, (d) and the limited scope of private-sector support (The Survey of ICT, Integration Policy, 2010, p. 11). Generally, these problems are hindrances to staff members who desire to use ICT in instruction. In the presence of these challenges, many faculty members do not see the benefits of using social media tools in the instructional process.

At the local level, many other Caribbean countries envy this Western Caribbean country's high standard of living (Roberts, 1995, p. 239). Students at WCU enjoy a high standard of living; therefore, social media tools are readily available to them. If they cannot afford these social media tools, technology is readily accessible to them at the university (Watson, 2008, p. 3). Therefore, teachers can use the available social media tools to help students use social media tools in a productive manner, rather than only for fraternizing.

Social media tools can also create opportunities for students to take responsibility for their learning. Social media provide tools that are easy to use, interactive, inexpensive, collaborative, and unregulated (Argarwal, 2007, p. 40). In this environment, students can freely share their opinions; share in discussions; communicate ideas, thoughts, and beliefs; and become active agents in their own learning experiences. Therefore, students can take responsibility for their learning and become engaged in problem solving, brainstorming, explaining, formulating questions, discussing issues, sharing ideas and information, and developing higher level thinking skills (Agarwal, 2011, Albors-Garrigos & Ramos Carrasco, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011).

Banking and tourism are two major sectors in this Western Caribbean region that already use social media tools. First, the Western Caribbean country where the WCU is located is the world's fifth largest banking area (Roberts, 1995, p. 50). Many banks such as Scotia, Butterfield, and Fidelity have already begun to use social media technology as a tool for engagement with customers, as well as for marketing products and services. For example, bloggers are constantly using social network sites to find contacts, information, and experts; ask questions; and explore their options in banking (Scott, 2012, p. 50). In

addition, many public relations personnel from various banks are reaching out to people, answering questions, and positioning themselves as willing to communicate in social media spaces (Scott, 2012, p. 1). Therefore, social media tools are important to the business community. Students who graduate from WCU need to be equipped to use social media technology tools, therefore, it becomes even more important for the faculty at WCU to teach, model and use social media technological tools in classroom instruction.

Secondly, organizations in this Western Caribbean's tourism industry, along with other local business sectors, also use social media tools to market their brands, goods, and services. According to a 2013 guide for new residents of this Western Caribbean country, social media tools have influenced the marketing industry in this region where WCU is located. The article further notes that the tourism industry uses social media tools to target 80% of potential visitors to this Western Caribbean region, who are mostly from the United States. Social media tools helped the business owners in this Western Caribbean region to gain access to a global audience. In 2010, the department of tourism began to use social media as a strategy to gain advantage in the constantly changing landscape of the world's business markets. This Western Caribbean territory "needed to develop a presence primarily on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube at the outset, three of the world's largest social networks" (Scott, 2012, p. 2). Social media technology has reached wide areas and far regions of the world. Therefore, the tourism industry is incorporating social media technology in media outreach, trade relations, advertising, and mobile communications (Scott, 2012, p. 2). In the Western Caribbean where WCU is located, the tourism industry has embarked upon several programs involving the use of

social media tools, including video streaming on YouTube, branding products on Pinterest and Google, and giving rewards on Twitter and Facebook (Scott, 2012, p. 2). This industry has launched e-business units with responsibilities for developing protocols and guidelines geared toward acceptable use of social media in the organization, with partners, and among other agencies. Organizations in the tourism industry and business sector are using social media tools in numerous ways; therefore, higher education institutions may develop strategies for teaching students how to use these social media tools so that they can function in the business and tourism sectors.

Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature

At the international level, some faculty members fearfully embrace the use of social media tools in higher education instruction, but others totally reject it, due to overwhelming fear and misunderstandings (Brooks, 2009, p. 58). None of these responses can be labeled as acceptable because neither of these two groups of faculty have a vision that clearly shows how social media tools can complement given instructional goals (Brooks, 2009, p. 58). Therefore, the lack of integration of social media tools in higher education is not specific to faculty members at WCU.

Faculty's mixed attitude toward social media. Worldwide, faculty members have mixed attitudes toward the use of social media tools for education because they cannot see the possibilities of using social media tools as instructional tools (Moran, Seaman, & Tinti-Kane, 2011, p. 14). Faculty members have noted that the reason for a mixed attitude is their inability to see the relevance of social media tools at the undergraduate level (Moran, Seaman, & Tinti-Kane, 2011, p. 93). However, faculty members need to realize that despite their inhibitions concerning using social media tools

in instruction, there are numerous positive uses of these tools. These positive uses include fast diffusion of information, accessibility, and easy communication (Zailskaite-Jakste**,** 2012, p. 177). Furthermore, there are endless possibilities of using Facebook for one-to-few communications on a separate basis, Twitter for few-to-few communications in groups, blogs for one-to-many communications on a group basis, and discussion forums for many-to-many communications (Zailskaite-Jakste, 2012, p. 177).

Investigation of social media tools can help faculty members to identify easy and interesting strategies to enhance the learning experiences of their students. Teachers may be keen to get students engaged and interested in learning but may not realize that social media tools gain the interest of students in many ways that surpass faculty merely lecturing to a group of students in a classroom (Hovorka & Rees, 2009, p. 60). If faculty members at WCU are able to envision positive uses of social media tools, then they will be more inclined to use them in teaching and learning.

Changes in classroom instructional process. A contrast between older methods of teaching and new and exciting methods of using social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram in education exists (Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011, p. 4). According to Bosman and Zagenczyk (2011), traditional methods of teaching include written forms of communication, lectures, and even computers, whereas contemporary modes of instruction include the use of social media tools for instructional purposes (p. 4). The educational arena has lately experienced a shift in paradigm, and educators need to take risks and be brave in using newer approaches to teaching that involve the use of social media tools (Levinson, 2010, p. 9). If social media tools are introduced into regular courses, they can engage the interest of students and enhance their educational

experiences while simultaneously teaching students general skills for the workplace, along with methods of creativity, convergence, and communication (Hovorka & Rees, 2009, p. 60).

Types of social media tools used in higher education. Research shows that there are different types of social media tools used in learning. Each social media tool has various functions and characteristics. The social media tools used by many educators, researchers, and scholars to enhance students' learning experiences include blogs, wikis, podcasts, Facebook, social bookmarking, social news, and media-file-sharing systems (Agarwal, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011; Dillion et al., 2007; Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011).

Wikis. In a higher education context, students contribute to wikis and edit others' contributions. Faculty use wikis in instruction (Agarwal, 2011, p. 43). Wikis are excellent information resources, as they require limited knowledge of text formatting (Agarwal, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011; Dillion et al., 2007; Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011). A history of changes is maintained on a wiki, and both students and instructors can go back and review previous versions (Agarwal, 2011, p. 43).

Social bookmarking. Social bookmarking is another type of social media tool used to enhance the learning experiences of students (Bi et al., 2009; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011; Churches et al., 2010; Li & Ma, 2011; Purchase & Letch, 2011). This social media tool is an excellent way to recall and categorize online resources because it allows students and faculty members to save website links in one location and access them later online (Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011, p. 5). Students and faculty may return to

bookmarked websites and find material relevant to their lessons (Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011, p. 5). Many scholars share the view that social bookmarking is an excellent tool used by faculty to enhance the learning experiences of their students (Agarwal, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011; Dillion et al., 2007; Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011). Collaboration is developed with this social media tool as faculty and students can harness a vast amount of Internet resources useful to their studies (Churches et al., p. 33). Another popular bookmarking tool is *social tagging*, otherwise known as *folksonomy* (Li & Ma 2011, p. 248), where users create groups of tags that show their viewpoints on the resource tagged (Bi et al., 2009, p. 248). These resources are easily searched and shared among groups of people who have common interests.

Blogs. A blog is another social media venue that is useful for instruction (Dillion et al., 2007; Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011). Blogs are compilations of original articles that are organized in reversed chronological order (Agarwal, 2011, p. 41). In the educational arena, blog posts are popular social media tools. Students in higher education use social media tools such as blog posts to express themselves, share information, discuss topics, and interact with other students by creating links to other postings or blogs and adding comments to posts (Agarwal, p. 41). Blogs enhance the learning experiences of students in university settings (Purchase & Letch, 2011, p. 204).

Twitter. Twitter is an application that can be used to send microblogs and instant messages (Alkhas, 2011; Bradley, 2009; Wiid et al., 2013). Twitter allows users to (a) communicate trends in the market, (b) share photos, (c) provide questions and answers, and (d) share videos and links (Wiid et al., 2013, p. 969). Many people use Twitter for personal and/or business communication (Alkhas, 2011; Wiid et al., 2013). Twitter is

very popular worldwide and presently has approximately 119 million users, giving it second place among the largest social media sites worldwide (Bradley, 2009; Wiid et al., 2013). At the university level, faculty members can create *Tweets*, which students can follow to receive updates on class assignments and announcements for tests, as well as for discussion purposes (Alkhas, 2011; Wiid et al., 2013).

YouTube. According to Wiid et al., (2013) YouTube is a service that enables users to share or download videos (p. 870). Many people use YouTube for both personal and commercial reasons. Sometimes, YouTube videos are posted on various websites but the original videos are hosted on a YouTube server. In fact, many lecturers and students can use YouTube as a tool for (a) collaboration, (b) communication, (c) learning, and (d) sharing ideas and other information (Wiid et al., 2013). According to Rueben (2008), institutions of higher education have been creating videos for over 20 years for the recruitment of new students. Now, lecturers are using YouTube to upload videos for their classes in order to share relevant information for lessons.

Applications of social media tools in instruction. Social media technological sites such as blogs offer the opportunity for students to become involved in meaningful learning experiences (Hovorka & Rees, 2009, p. 60). In education, blogs are also useful tools for class portals, e-portfolios, collaborative spaces, student online filing cabinets, and websites for institutions (Richardson, 2010, p. 20). In the blogging environment, students built relationships with their mentors, peers, and professors (Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011, p 10). In using blogs, people are allowed to interact, share their opinions on a topic, and enter discussions with peers through links with other blogs (Agarwal, 2011, p. 42). Microblogging sites such as Twitter have enabled lecturers and

students to share information relating to class lessons and to post data for class projects or assignments (Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011, p. 6). The application of these social media tools can help in building students' critical and analytical skills for research and writing class papers (Agarwal, 2011; Albors-Garrigos & Ramos Carrasco, 2011; Bani-Salameh & Jeffery, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011).

Instructors also use social media tools such as Skype to enhance and supplement the learning experiences of their students. Skype has been used for many purposes, such as the following: (a) enabling faculty to communicate over long distances, (b) analyzing projects, (c) teaching classes, and (d) collaborating on projects (Agarwal, 2011; Albors-Garrigos & Ramos Carrasco, 2011; Bani-Salameh & Jeffery, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011). Skype has also brought field trips and guest speakers to students' classrooms (Albors-Garrigos & Ramos Carrasco, 2011, p. 64). Additionally, Skype has enabled students with special needs to share classroom lectures and experiments (Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011, p. 9).

Other sites such as ePals have enabled students to communicate with people from different cultures and learn about their way of life (Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011, p. 10). On ePals, students can provide illustrations for class by posting videos showing science experiments, dance techniques, and cooking strategies (Bani-Salameh & Jeffery, 2011, p. 21). In addition, ePals has enabled instructors to post videos of class experiments conducted at other sites, and students who are absent from classes can refer to taped online lessons (Agarwal, 2011, p. 57).

Scribid, Pixton, SecondLife, Ning, and LinkedIn are other social media sites used for instructional purposes. Many scholars have described how to use Scribid, Pixton,

SecondLife, Ning, and LinkedIn during lectures for purposes of communication, research, student collaboration, and instructor or expert interaction. Scribd may be used to collaborate on projects, as students can write essays without focusing on editing (Bani-Salameh & Jeffery, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011). Students have used Pixton to collaborate on cartoon descriptions for class projects (Agarwal, 2011, p. 57). SecondLife has also promoted collaboration amongst students; many lecturers have hosted class discussions on this social media tool (Agarwal, 2011, Albors-Garrigos & Ramos Carrasco, Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011; .

Scholars have demonstrated how lecturers have used Ning in marketing classes to create a social network based on services and products, as well as how students have used the site to connect with peers for feedback on their projects (Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011, p. 13). LinkedIn is a professional social media tool that has enabled lecturers to make connections with guest speakers for classroom presentations (Agarwal, 2011; Albors-Garrigos & Ramos Carrasco; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011). As faculty worldwide use a wide variety of social media tools in higher education instruction, it is evident that faculty at WCU have numerous ways in which they can use these tools to enhance teaching and learning.

Social media tools to enhance learning experiences. In the last 5-10 years, people have developed a strong affinity for social media tools (Argarwal, 2007, p. 57). This affinity toward social media tools has created a tremendous change in the interaction between people and computers, with social media tools becoming more receptive and dynamic in the learning process (Argarwal, 2007, p. 57). Social media tools have created opportunities for learning and collaboration (Sigala, 2011, p. 129) and have gained the

interest of students whose faculty members have been willing to establish a newer style of learning (Tay & Allen, 2011, p. 153). Scholars have also found that if teachers show students how to use social media tools in learning and model ways in which social media tools enhance learning, then students will realize that they can use social media to learn from each other and "socialize" with peers (Agarwal, 2011; Albors-Garrigos & Ramos Carrasco, 2011; , Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011). Students can also share and organize ideas relevant to learning through active engagement in discussions on social media sites (Tay & Allen, 2011, p. 153). For example, learners use Facebook for texting and sending emails. Twitter, MySpace, and Skype may be used to (a) exchange notes, (b) receive updates on assignments, (c) obtain assistance with assignments, (d) communicate with peers about group projects, and (e) submit assignments (Agarwal, 2007, p. 57). Similarly, students can use social media sites on mobile tools (iPods, notebooks, iPhones, tablets, and other smart phones) to take pictures of the board, write notes in class, and research topics for projects, presentations, and discussions (Agarwal, 2007, p. 57).

Use of social media tools for assessment. Assessment is a concern for educators because many of them do not know how to use social media tools to assess students' work or how to assess work that was completed using social media tools (Agarwal, 2011, p. 45). Current research shows that undergraduate students can be stimulated early in their academic lives to use peer review as an assessment tool (Agarwal, 2011, p. 45). For example, peer review assessment generates a large amount of feedback, reflection, evaluation, and useful comments that enhance students' learning (Ifenthaler & Pirnay-Dummer, 2011, p. 86). It is important that faculty at WCU realize the vast unlocked

potential that social media tools hold and use the technology that is readily available to transform the educational arena at WCU.

Other social media tools have also been used in assessing students' work. Blog posts have been used by both instructors and students due to the following benefits: (a) public exposure, (b) opportunities to receive comments from others, (c) 24/7 access to information, (d) universal availability, and (e) simple, quasi-familiar interfaces (Agarwal, 2011; Albors-Garrigos & Ramos Carrasco, 2011; Bani-Salameh & Jeffery, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011). Whenever students' work is publically displayed, students (a) put more effort into their work; (b) try to produce work that impresses peers, family, and friends; (c) invite others to participate in their learning experiences; (d) look for good practice in their peers' work; (e) monitor each other's work for unfair practices; (f) learn to write for public and professional audiences; and (g) write coherent arguments supported by evidence (Agarwal, 2011; Albors-Garrigos & Ramos Carrasco, 2011; Bani-Salameh & Jeffery, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011).

In conclusion, social media technology tools offer a host of opportunities for faculty members, especially in a context where students in higher education are already using a variety of these tools. Social media is an emerging and evolving field; therefore, it is imperative that educators understand tools used in social media and the vast opportunities they offer to faculty in higher education (Moran et al., 2011, p. 4). In adapting to social media technology, faculty members grow in their use of technological tools that are evolving in the arena of higher education. It is my hope that the findings of this research will encourage educators at WCU to use or increase their usage of social media tools in instruction. First, social media tools provide benefits related to learning,

such as opportunities for students to develop independent skills, engage in collaborative learning, solve problems, build teams, and develop good relationships with instructors and other students (Draskovic et al., 2013; Foroughi, 2011). Second, social media provides benefits related to students' social needs, such as (a) increased understanding of materials in courses, (b) communal relationships, (c) increased employability, and (d) students' ownership of their work (Draskovic et al., 2013; Foroughi, 2011). Finally, collaboration on a cross-institutional basis, outside communal support, and increased enrollment and retention are potential benefits of social media use in higher education (Draskovic et al., 2013; Foroughi, 2011).

Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions are used as a guide in this study.

Social media: "Technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders" (Bryer & Zavatarro, 2011, p. 327). "These technologies include blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms (including Facebook), and virtual worlds" (Bryer & Zavatarro, 2011, p. 327). Social media is also defined as an "array of digital tools such as instant messaging, text messaging, blogs, videos, and social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace that are inexpensive and easy to use" (Kanter & Fine, 2010, p. 5). Social media is also defined as tools that "enable people to create their own stories, videos, and photos and to manipulate them and share them widely at almost no cost" (Kanter & Fine, 2010, p. 5).

Technology: **"**Consists of two primary components: a physical component which comprises of items such as products, tooling, equipment, blueprints, techniques, and

processes; and the informational component which consists of know-how in management, marketing, production, quality control, reliability, skilled labor and functional areas" (Kumar et al., 1981, p. 54).

Instructional technology (IT): "Includes practical procedures for using existing media to deliver instruction, and also to deliver portions of the instruction that supplement the communications of an instructor" (Gagne, 2010, p. 7). IT also "means the media borne of communications revolutions which can be used for instructional purposes, alongside the teacher, textbook and blackboard" (Gagne, 2010, p. 11).

Constructivism: "A learning theory based on the notion that people are 'active' knowledge seekers powered innate curiosity" (Ayas, 2006, p.18).

*Social constructivism***:** "A learning theory based on the notion that people are 'active knowledge seekers powered by processes and products'" (Wahab et al., 2012, p. 102).

Technology integration: "The use of computing devices such as desktop computers, laptops, handheld computers, software, or Internet in schools for instructional purposes" (Hew & Brush, 2007, p. 225).

Significance

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the understanding of the limited use of social media tools as instructional tools at WCU. This study has implications for both faculty and students of WCU, and potentially for faculty in similar-size institutions around the world. The instructional use of social media tools is a relatively new field of study, yet it has been the focus of many studies. Extensive work is still needed on the role of social media technology at WCU to identify the appropriate

use, potential advantages, and consequences of using social media tools in higher education.

There are challenges to integrating social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Wiki at WCU because of the vast amount of time needed to plan for instruction using social media tools, the costs involved in maintaining technological tools, and students' misuse and abuse of social media networks (Clarke, 2011, p. 171). Despite these challenges, there are compelling reasons for faculty and staff to integrate social media into instruction (Adamson, 2012; Seaman & Tinti-Kane, 2011, p 4). In addition, the results of the study may be significant because they can help faculty members at WCU to identify strategies that other faculty and staff effectively use in instruction while avoiding or reducing the negative consequences that can result from improper use of social media technology in higher education (Chen & Bryer , 2012, p. 171).

The findings of this study may help administrators to take informed measures to encourage faculty to integrate more social media tools into their teaching. It has been noted that "all faculty members in higher education use social media for personal benefits of leisure, because the technologies are user-friendly" (Chen & Bryer , 2012, p. 171). The challenge lies in faculty and staff using social media tools for instructional purposes. If faculty and staff begin to use social media tools in instruction by engaging in authentic and meaningful activities, this collaborative relationship can generate a collective bond between faculty and students, translating social interaction into the acquisition of knowledge (Tu & Blocher, 2010, p. 135). Social media can simplify the process of

communication, discussion, and collaboration among higher education institutions (Adamson, 2012; Seaman & Tinti-Kane, 2011).

Scholars have found that graduates who enter the workforce are sometimes deficient in technological skills (e.g. Inan, Lowther, Strahl & Ross, 2008, p. 197). This study is significant because it may enable the staff and faculty members at this Western Caribbean university to equip students with the technological skills they need to communicate at the university level and in the workplace.

Research Questions

Many scholars have investigated the use of social media as an instructional tool in higher education (Agarwal, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011; Dillion et al., 2007; Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011). Educators support the use of social media tools for instructional purposes, enhancing learning, and motivating students (Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011; Kelm, 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011). More research is needed to examine how students learn, communicate, and socialize over the Internet as more students are exposed to this technology at younger ages (Pysz, 2008, p. 20). Studies have shown that college students spend a tremendous amount of time on the Internet (Dillion et al., 2007; Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011); therefore, more lecturers in higher education need to use social media as a learning tool (Pysz, 2008, p. 20). It is important that researchers continue to study this trend to gauge the impact of continuous Internet use by college students (Pysz, 2008, p. 20).

In alignment with the local problem and the findings from the literature, the following research questions were the focus of this study:

- How do the faculty members at a WCU perceive the overall effectiveness of social media tools in instruction?
- What kind of social media applications do faculty members at WCU consider as *effective* tools to enhance student learning in their classrooms?
- What kinds of *instructional strategies* do faculty members at WCU perceive as being useful to integrate social media tools in classrooms?
- What concerns do faculty members have regarding the use of social media tools for teaching?

Review of Literature

In the process of conducting this literature review, I accessed a variety of web-based resources related to the role of social media tools in higher education instruction. I used the resources of Walden's Library, such as Thoreau, Google Scholar, and journal articles from Yahoo websites. Thoreau offered opportunities to conduct multiple database searches as well as advanced searches for peer-reviewed articles on the role of social media tools in higher education. Meanwhile, Google Scholar and Yahoo websites enabled me to scan multiple websites for peer-reviewed data related to instructional technological tools. In my research, I used terms such as (a) *social media use*, (b) *social media in higher education*, (c) *role of social media in higher education*, (d) *Web 2.0 technologies*, and (e) *use of technology in education*. Typically, this process involved cycles of search, including (a) search for all terms relating to social media technology, (b) exclusion of terms that did not yield any significant new results, and (c) repetition of this process to find new papers published on the topic. Many related studies contained bibliographies/references that offered numerous peer-reviewed articles on social media

technology. The selected sources offered numerous suggestions from their reference lists that were instrumental in helping me to expand my literature review, thus achieving saturation. It was more challenging to find local sources that described the use of social media tools in this Western Caribbean university, as there was no evidence of prior studies being done on the role of social media tools in this region. The only data found were (a) The Survey of ICT, Integration Policy (2010), (b) an article written by Roberts (1997), and (c) the Survey of ICT and Education in the Caribbean Volume II: Country Reports (2010). ERIC, SAGE, and Education Research Complete also offered multiple books, journal articles, and related research studies that guided me in the process of harnessing information for this study.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

From a theoretical perspective, a blend of social media technological tools and learning strategies in higher education results in an excellent application of the ideas or concepts found in the theory of planned behavior (TPB) and technology acceptance model (TAM). Many qualitative researchers have used these two theoretical concepts to support the study of social media tools. Since 1980, researchers and scholars have used TPB as a framework that predicts acceptance, particularly with the usage of Web 2.0 technologies for learning (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980; Armitage & Connor, 2001, 2007; Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Mathieson, 1991; Teo, 2012). In addition, since 1997, many scholars and researchers have used the TAM as a theoretical model that predicts acceptance (e.g., Davis et al. 1989; Hofstede, 2001; Mazman Usluel, 2010; McCoy & Galletta, 2007; Su Luan & Sing, 2008; Teo, 2012; Teo, Straub et al., 1997; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Wiid, Cant, & Nell, 2013).

The theory of planned behavior. This theoretical model was proposed by Ajzen in 1991, as an extended part of the theory of reasoned action (Teo, 2012, p. 5). Researchers have extensively used this theory for the prediction of behaviors and intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Armitage & Connor, 2001, 2007; Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Mathieson, 1991; Teo, 2012). Over the past 20 years, researchers have used TPB to predict behavioral intentions influenced by attitude toward the behavior along with subjective norms (Ajzen, 1991; Teo, 2012). Behavioral intentions show the magnitude of effort exerted by people to try to perform a particular behavior (Ajzen, 1991, Teo, 2012). Furthermore, perceived control of behavior can also influence intention because it influences the decision of the individual via the pattern of behavior (Teo, 2012, p. 5).

In analyzing TPB, Teo (2012) noted that behavioral intention is the most prominent indicator of behavior (p. 6). Studies have proven that TPB explains between 27% and 39% of the variance of intention and behavior (Armitage & Conner, 2001; Teo, 2012). Intention is said to be a better indicator of behavior among the constructs of behavior (Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Teo, 2012). The definition for *attitude toward behavior* is the negative or positive feelings that one has about carrying out the behavior (Teo, 2012; Wiid, Cant, & Nell, 2013). TPB can be applied to examine the negative or positive feelings that faculty and staff have toward using social media (Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Teo, 2012). In TPB, attitude is ascertained by the examination of the individual's belief pertaining to the consequences derived from that individual's behavior as an assessment of the attractiveness of these consequences (Ajzen

& Fishbein, 1980; Armitage & Connor, 2007; Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Mathieson, 1991; Teo, 2012).

In TPB, *subjective norms* (SN) refer to whether people who are close to the individual believe that performing a certain behavior is worthwhile (Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Teo, 2012). The opinion of any given person is graded by the notion that persons need to comply with the wishes of a referent (Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Teo, 2012). For example, a teacher at WCU may feel the need to use social media technological tools because of a directive given by administrators at that institution. Figure 1 shows a diagram of TPB.

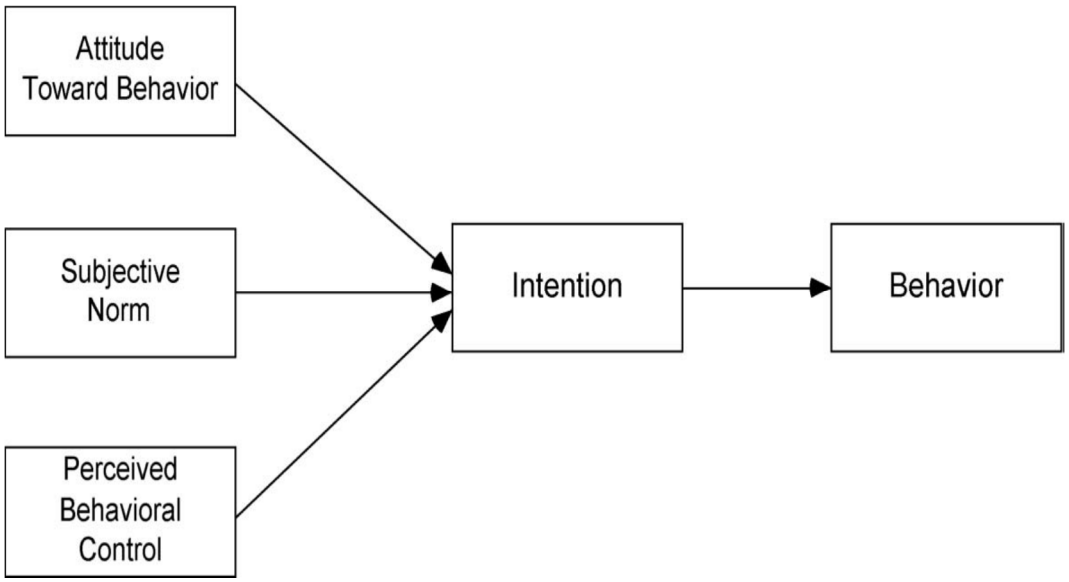

Figure 1. Theory of planned behavior. From "Behaviour and Human Decision Processes," by I. Ajzen, 1991, *Organ 50,* 179-211.

The technology acceptance model. TAM is the first research framework to include psychological issues that affect the acceptance of technology (Davis et al., 1989; Hofstede, 2001; Mazman Usluel, 2010; McCoy & Galletta, 2007; Su Luan & Sing, 2008;

Teo, 2012; Teo, Straub et al., 1997; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Wiid, Cant, & Nell, 2013). This model has the capability of describing user behavior over a vast range of user populations as well as end-user computing technologies, while at the same time maintaining user caution (Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013;Teo, 2012). TAM describes a casual relationship between attitude toward computers (Figure 2), perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEU), and behavioral intention to use a given technological tool (BIU; Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Teo, 2012). BIU is an important aspect of TAM because it helps to predict whether an actual system will be used (Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Teo, 2012). Scholars have found evidence of that there is a close relationship between actual usage and behavioral intention (Davis et al., 1989; Hofstede, 2001; Mazman Usluel, 2010; McCoy & Galletta, 2007; Su Luan & Sing, 2008; Teo, 2012; Teo, Straub et al., 1997; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Wiid, Cant, & Nell, 2013). TAM proposes that behavioral intention is affected by the individual's attitude toward usage (ATU), along with indirect and direct effects of PE and PEU (Figure 2).

In TAM research, PU describes the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system increases his/her productivity (Teo, 2012; Wiid, Cant, & Nell, 2013). Also, in TAM research, PEU is the opposite of PU, as it describes the degree to which an individual believes that using a system is basically effort free (Teo, 2012; Wiid, Cant, & Nell, 2013). According to TAM research, PEU and PU both affect ATU, but it is PEU that directly impacts PU (Teo, 2012; Wiid, Cant, & Nell, 2013). Similarly, TAM research shows that PEU has a huge impact on PU, and in contrast PU does not have an impact on PEU (Teo, 2012; Wiid, Cant, & Nell, 2013). Figure 2 shows the concepts of TAM.

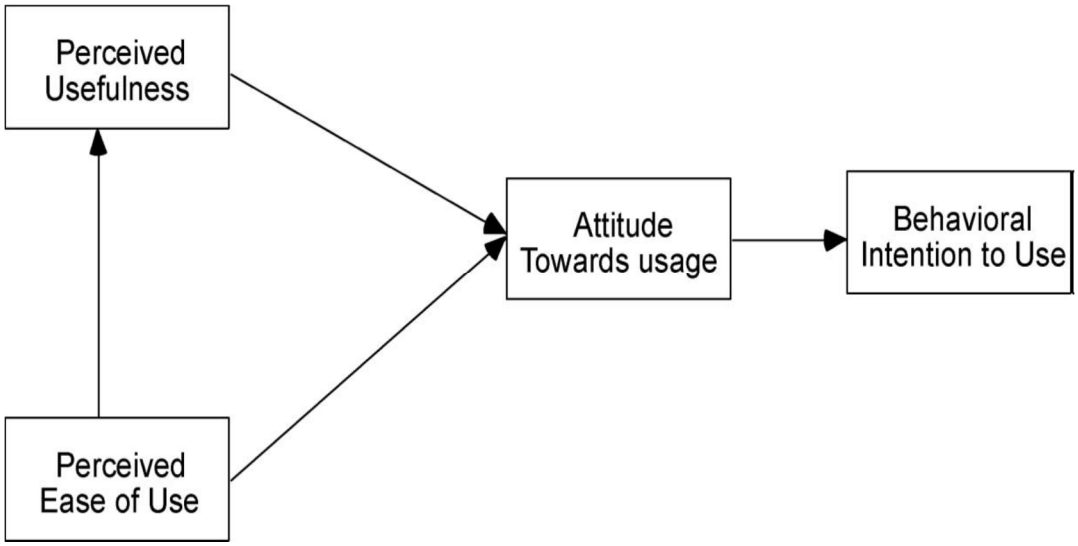

Figure 2. Technology acceptance model. From "Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology," by X. Davis et al., 1989, *MIS Quart*, 13 *(3)* 319-339. .

Critical Review of Literature

Many scholars and educational professionals believe that social media enhances the learning experiences of faculty; therefore, these scholars have accepted and used social media technology tools in instruction (Chen & Bryer, 2011; Dillion et al., 2007; Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011; Powell & Kalina, 2009). Worldwide research highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of using social media tools in learning (Tay & Allen, 2011, p. 158). The review will also describe challenges experienced in using social media tools, and the recommendations given to teachers in using social media for learning (Agarwal, 2011; Bosman & Zagenczyk, 2011; Chen & Bryer, 2011; Dillion et al., 2007; Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011).

Social media in higher education. Through qualitative research methods, Chen and Bryer (2011) explored the role of social media tools in higher education (p. 99). The

instruments used in their research were semi-structured interviews and surveys (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 99). The survey was completed voluntarily by a total of 57 faculty members from 28 universities in the United States (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 99). Eight interviews were conducted by telephone, and theoretical sampling method was used to ensure a fair mix of theoretical categories, such as types of social media tools used, and school location and ranking (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 99). Interviews were done at 5 universities and 1 college (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 99). The interview questions focused on the use of social media tools in classrooms, such as strategies that engaged and assessed students work, and measures used to diminish concerns about the use of social media tools (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 99). The findings of Chen and Bryer (2011) revealed that faculty members in higher education used social media tools for academic, professional, personal and research purposes (p. 99). Social media tools such as LinkedIn and Facebook were the most popular tools used. However, other social media tools used in teaching included Blogs, audio/video conferencing management systems (Blackboard), SecondLife, and Wikis (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 99). The findings also indicated that use of social media tools in higher education skyrocketed globally in the past 5-10 years (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 99). Research showed that statistics in July 2011 showed that, Face book surpassed 750 million users; Twitter had approximately 100 million members; YouTube had three billion views daily, and LinkedIn had nearly 100 million members (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 96).

Researchers such as Draskovic, Caic, and Kustrak (2013) also conducted research on the role of social media tools in higher education instruction (p. 334). This exploratory study utilized a qualitative research method, with in-depth, intensive interviews to find

the perspective of Croatian professors in using social media tools in instruction (p. 334). A sample size of ten lecturers/professors employed in varying universities in Croatia was used in this study (Draskovic, Caic & Kustrak, 2013, p. 334). The results of this study indicated that social media tools such as Facebook, Wikis and YouTube were favored by most lecturers (Draskovic, Caic & Kustrak, 2013, p. 336). According to Draskovic, Caic, and Kustrak (2013), both lecturers and students also tended to use other types of social media tools, including Instagram, LinkedIn and Wikipedia (p. 336). The findings indicated that in higher education, social media is important because these tools encourage (a) collaboration and facilitation of learning, (b) building independent learning skills, (c) team work building, (d) reflective learning and problem solving, (e) early and quick feedback from instructors, (f) overcoming isolation from far geographic distances, (g) building of good informal relationships between students and instructors (h) increase coursework engagement and (i) increased achievement, control and ownership of students' work (Draskovic, Caic & Kustrak, 2013, p. 336).

Through a case study, Selwyn, (2009), investigated the use of social media tools in higher education instruction (p. 159). According to Selwyn, (2009), social media tools such as MySpace and Facebook have been the subject of debate in higher education institutions (p. 159). Many educators in higher education debate the potential of social media tools to engage learners in their studies (Selwyn, 2009, p. 159). The study conducted by Selwyn, (2009) was an in-depth qualitative research of activities on the Facebook wall of 909 undergraduates at a university in the United Kingdom (159). The findings from this study indicated that students related to social media tools (a) by critiquing of learning events and experiences, (b) by exchanging of factual or logistical

information, (c) by assessing requirements, and (d) by giving moral support (Selwyn, 2009, p. 187).

Similarly, Agarwal, (2011) used a qualitative, case study method to describe different types of social media tools used in higher education instruction (p. 43). In his study, Agarwal, (2011) outlined several social media tools used by various educators, inclusive of blogs, Wikis, Twitter, social book marking, virtual worlds, and social news, in order to encourage, distribute, collaborate, communicate and learn (p. 46). Their sample size consisted of 18 students in a class, who were organized into 9 pairs (Agarwal, 2011, p. 46). In this study, two simultaneous evaluations were performed with specific rubrics: one by instructors and the other one by peers (Agarwal, 2011, p. 46). Findings indicated that the social media tools promoted (a) collective learning, (b) participation, (c) collaboration, and (d) communication (Agarwal, 2011, p. 48).

On the other hand, Dunn (2013) also conducted a qualitative study with an experimental group of 28 undergraduate students who used Facebook to share their views, resources and thoughts for six weeks (p. 1). From the group, 16 students provided feedback, by posting status updates with comments from peers. The findings indicated that 81% of the students and instructors used Facebook to raise issues, ask questions related to the course. A total of 75% found social media tools helpful, and 7-18% found social media tools to be of little help (Dunn, 2013, p. 1).

From these findings on the use of social media tools in higher education instruction, it is evident that social media technology tools are now making inroads into the educational arena, as continuous professional development are being done in higher education institutions to equip staff and faculty with the skills and updates needed to keep

abreast with the new and current social media technological tools. Many business and national organizations recognize that there are still colleges and universities who have not yet adapted to using social media tools, therefore, they are now working with institutions to target, leverage and link social media strategies to influence students in higher education (Martin & Samuels, 2012, p. 12). These international and business organizations understand that social media is a new arena for many faculty and staff members, and that they need to train staff with special skills, and practical experience, in order to maximize the impact of social media higher education institutions (Martin & Samuels, 2012, p. 12).

Advantages of using social media technological tools in learning. There are several advantages in using social media tools in higher education instruction. Scholars such as Odom, Jarvis, Sandlin and Peek (2013) used a mixed method approach to describe participants in their current use of particular social media tools (p. 44). The sample consisted of 92 students, enrolled in two undergraduate leadership courses at Texas A & M University (Odom, Jarvis, Sandlin & Peek, 2013, p. 44). The instrument used in this study consisted of two parts (a) a quantitative section which addressed the perception of students comfort level with social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs and Wiggio, and (b) a qualitative section where students described the perceived advantages and disadvantages of using social media tools in the classroom (Odom, Jarvis, Sandlin & Peek, 2013, p. 44). The qualitative findings indicated numerous advantages of using social media tools in higher education instruction, including (a) increase in efficiency and quality of communication, (b) increased rate at which information was provided or shared, (c) easier contact with lecturer and classmates, (d) keep abreast with

assignment deadlines, (e) enjoyable networking tool, (f) ease of collaboration, (g) group scheduling is easier, (h) easy and effective communication, (i) easier group scheduling, (j) peer group solved problems, (k) stronger and deeper connections with peers, and (l) more engagement in coursework (Odom, Jarvis, Sandlin & Peek, 2013, p. 44).

Similarly, Tulaboev and Oxley (2012) conducted qualitative, case study to understand the factors that influenced the effectiveness and acceptability of Web 2.0 applications for students in higher education (p. 23). The setting for the study was the University Tecknolgi PETRONAS, and out of fifteen students enrolled in the class, only five students volunteered to participate in the study. The data was collected in a six-week period, using instruments such as (a) group and individual meetings, (b) observations, (c) individual research journal, (d) and social networking group activities. The findings indicated that social media tools advantageous because (a) users connected with peers and friends easily, (b) students shared their findings and feelings in discussions, (c) the social media tools aided learning because it offered video and visual material, and (d) students had fun and were comfortable in learning.

In addition, Tulaboev and Oxley (2012) and other scholars agreed that social media tools encouraged (a) peer collaboration, (b) extended learning beyond geographical boundaries, (c) learning could be integrated into an international community, (d) students reach out to other students from different age ranges, cultural and social backgrounds, (e) students make linkages with experts, researchers and scholars in their field of study, and (f) students found additional methods of harnessing new information, and enhancing their learning skills (Agarwal, 2011; Brooks, 2007; Friedman & Friedman, 2013; Kelm, 2011; Mc Naught et al., 2011).

In conclusion, these findings emphasize the collaborative nature of social media in learning (Agarwal, 2011; Brooks, 2007; Friedman & Friedman, 2013; Kelm, 2011; Mc Naught et al., 2011). Social media offers opportunity for content to be developed in a collaborative manner, where communication and team networking occur (Agarwal, 2011, p. 44). Social media encourages one-on-one collaboration because students develop skills of cooperation in the creation of artifacts from social media (Mc Naught et al., 2011, p. 147). Collaboration is also enhanced when (a) students get the opportunity to participate in the process of peer revision, (McNaughtet et al., 2011, p. 147) (b) participate in meetings, discussions, mark-up and analyzing of data (Bosman, 2011, p. 8), or (c) when learners and teachers build learning communities (Redecker, Ala-Mutka & Punie, 2011, p. 7).

Disadvantages of using social media technological tools in instruction. There are several disadvantages to using social media tools in higher education instruction. McNaughtet et al., (2011) conducted a qualitative, case study, in which he studied the experiences of eight teachers in a Hong Kong University, who have used a wide range of social media tools in instruction (p. 138). The instruments used in this survey were semi-structured interviews (McNaughtet et al., 2011, p. 138). The results of these interviews led to a tentative strategy implemented by the eLearning Service (McNaughtet et al., 2011, p. 138). The data outlined in McNaughtet et al., (2011) research was also collected from 19 presentations in the 2007 Expo, which took place in 2008, and 33 presentations from 2009 (McNaughtet et al., 2011, p. 138). These presentations show challenges in using social media tools in higher education instruction in Hong Kong (McNaughtet et al., 2011, p. 138). The challenges identified in using social media tools were (a) time

consuming to maintain, (b) need for extra time and resources, (c) technical problems involved in using it, (d) cheating in online activities, e) heavier workload for both faculty and students, (f) some students prefer traditional methods of teaching, and (g) some students are unwilling to share information with their peers (McNaughtet et al., 2011, p. 138).

Similarly, Odom, Jarvis, Sandlin and Peek (2013) used mixed method studies, with a sample of 92 students, enrolled in two undergraduate leadership courses at Texas A & M University, to investigate the advantages disadvantages of using social media tools in higher education instruction (p. 41). The disadvantages found included (a) students thought social media tools were a distraction, (b) students wanted to separate social lives from education, (c) level of difficulty in keeping up with multiple social media tools, (d) some students and instructors were uncomfortable with social media sites, (e) use of social media tools takes away from the professional setting of a classroom, (f) misuse of social media tools, (g) non-participation of students, and (h) unfamiliarity with social media tools (Odom, Jarvis, Sandlin & Peek, 2013, p. 44).

Other scholars highlighted several negative factors that students encounter when using social media such as: lack of access at home, or physical and cognitive disabilities (Redecker, Ala-Mutka & Punie, 2011, p. 10). Other privacy issues related to the use of social media are: faculty's concerns about their professional identity, and students' lack of care with the information they post on social media sites (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 96). Teachers would have to change their roles, and become facilitators, mentors and guides, to enable learners to regulate learning for themselves (McNaught, Lam, Kwok, & Ho, 2011, p.10). Social media tools undergo constant software changes and upgrades and,

faculty members constantly spend time changing their lessons to become compatible with these changes (Clark, 2011, p. 180). Factors such as productivity and hectic workload were issues that prevented faculty from exploring new technological gadgets (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 96).

Overcoming challenges with using social media tools in instruction.

According to Estrada (2013), there are many obstacles to the adoption of social media technologies as instructional tools in higher education (p. 26). This study followed a qualitative research approach, with a sample of 20 members of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) (Estrada, 2013, p. 26). Semi-structured interviews were used to identify the perceptions of instructors in using social media tools for instructional purposes (Estrada, 2013, p. 26). The results of this study indicated seven main areas of concern to educators who use social media tools for instruction (Estrada, 2013, p. 26). Institutions that are considering the use of social media tools for instruction need to (a) understand the value of social media in learning, (b) gain expertise in moderating and designing social media learning environments, (c) control the generation of content, understand the perception of learners in terms of readiness to embrace social media in learning, (d) mitigate threats to software and data, (e) find financial, technical and human resources required to support social media as a learning solution, and (f) gain administrative support for the implementation of social media tools in institutions (Estrada, 2013, p. 26).

From their qualitative, case study survey, completed voluntarily by a total of 57 faculty members from 28 universities in the United States, Chen and Bryer (2011) recommended a few solutions to the challenges of using social media in higher education

(p. 96). First, faculty and administrative leaders need to use the tools of social media in the facilitation of discussions at the informal level, ensuring that instructions are explicit for all participants in the instructional process (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 96). Second, students' reflections on the use of social media can be assessed using formative assessment (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 96). Third, students need to be educated about the privacy and security issues that can occur if they post personal information online (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 96). Finally, social media is an optional tool in the instructional process, but it can be used inside as well as outside the classroom, to both assess and build participation (Chen & Bryer, 2011, p. 96).

Opportunities for students to use social media technological tools. De Vries, and Hennis (2013), researched how social media tools fostered self-organized participatory learning for disengaged learners (p. 39). They developed the reACT learning strategy from a series of interviews with instructors, who adopted innovative learning approaches (De Vries & Hennis, 2013, p. 39). The research comprised of two pilot studies each within six months. The two pilots examined (a) the advantages and difficulties that learners experienced during the process of using social media tools in their instructional process, and (b) the teachers' reactions and needs with regard to using social media tools in instruction (De Vries & Hennis, 2013). The total number of people involved in the project was 50 trainers and 300 learners (De Vries & Hennis, 2013). The instruments used in the research were (a) interviews with teachers, (b) surveys with students, and (c) regular interviews with the researching partners (De Vries & Hennis, 2013). In the study, social media tools were described as tools which were (a) interactive,

(b) web-based, (c) cheap and easy to use, (d) focused on collaboration, and (e) ease of communication (De Vries & Hennis, 2013).

In addition, Albors-Garrigos and Carrasco, (2011) conducted studies which demonstrated ways in which students can engage in social media in Computer-Supported Collaborated Learning (CSCL) (p. 57). This approach focused on social interaction via computers or Internet. In 2006, the (ISLS) International Society of Learning Sciences became the founder of the journal entitled, (IJCSCL) The International Journal of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning, to support their research (Albors-Garrigos & Carrasco, 2011, p. 67). Their findings indicated that students engaged with social media tools for instructional purposes by (a) browsing and searching the web and digital libraries, (b) building skills to visualize data, (c) consultation with mentors and peers for emotional and intellectual support, (d) explorations of solutions, (e) composition of artifacts, and (f) reviewing and replaying lessons for reflective purposes (Albors-Garrigos & Carrasco, 2011, p. 68). Social media tools enable learners to connect with real world context, and use knowledge learned to create applications that are new (Albors-Garrigos & Carrasco, 2011, p. 69). Social media is an important tool to the learner's development, because of its ability to create cohesiveness amongst groups, and increase learning at a collaborative level (Albors-Garrigos & Carrasco, 2011, p. 69).

Also, Foroughi, (2011), conducted a study which revealed how students use social media tools (p. 334). The findings from their studies indicated that students used social media tools for learning, and they benefit from (a) collaborative learning; increase of independent skills for learning, (b) growth in problem solving, (c) early and quick feedback from lecturers, (d) team work, (e) break down between geographical

boundaries, (f) reflective learning, integration learning of technology, and (g) development of professional relationships between staff and student (Foroughi, 2011, p. 334). Students also benefit from (a) improving their engagement in material from courses, (b) enhanced sense of achievement, (c) ownership and control of information and class work, and (d) increased communal relationships which enhance the employability status of students (Foroughi, 2011, p. 334).

In conclusion, scholars found that social media tools are used extensively in higher education for the purposes such as: (a) academic, (b) professional, and (c) personal benefits (Draskovic, Caic, & Kustrak, 2013; Selwyn, 2009). Similarly there are many implications for using social media tools in the instructional process, including: (a) research purposes, (b) collaboration, (c) facilitation of learning, (d) building independent learning skills,(e) critiquing of learning events and experiences, and (f) exchanging of factual or logistical information (Argawal, 2011; Chen & Bryer, 2011). Scholars noted that instructors experienced advantages in using social media tools in higher education instruction, including: (a) increase in efficiency in communication with students, and (b) enhancing students' learning skills (McNaughtet et al., 2011; Odom, Jarvis, Sandlin & Peek, 2013; Tulaboev & Oxley, 2012). On the other hand, researchers posited that educators also experienced disadvantages in using social media tools, including: (a) lack of privacy, (b) technical problems, and (c) heavier workload for instructors (Odom, Jarvis, Sandlin & Peek, 2013; Redecker, Ala-Mutka & Punie, 2011). Research has shown that instructors can overcome challenges in using social media tools for higher education instruction by mitigating data and software threats, as well as finding financial, technical and human resources required to support social media as a learning solution (Chen &

Bryer, 2013; Estrada, 2013). Furthermore, scholars indicate that students who are taught using social media tools are able to: (a) collaborate and engage in problem solving, (b) receive feedback; (c) engage in team work, and (d) overcome geographical boundaries (Albors-Garrigos & Carrasco, 2011; De Vries & Hennis, 2013; Foroughi, 2011).

Surmounting evidence from many different scholars indicated that social media tools are an integral part of higher education. Therefore, instructors at this Western Caribbean University need to change their instructional practices to include social media tools. Scholars believe that Blogs, audio/video conferencing management systems, SecondLife, Wikis, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, are effective social media tools for building participation, collaboration, and communication amongst students and instructors (Albors-Garrigos & Carrasco, 2011; De Vries & Hennis, 2013; Foroughi, 2011). Despite the multitude of concerns that faculty members have about the lack of privacy and misuse of social media tools, administrators at WCU can overcome these challenges by designing safe social media learning environments that protect both faculty and students from offensive conduct. It is my hope that this project will highlight the opportunities and barriers that need to be considered by the administration at WCU to encourage faculty to see social media tools as an attractive option for classroom instruction.

Implications

This project will have several implications for both students and staff at WCU. An implication of this project study is that emphasis will not only be placed solely on the general use of technology for educational purposes, but also on exploring the use of social media technology tools for instructional purposes. Despite the high standard of

living, and the large amount of money spent on technology implementation in schools across this Western Caribbean region, social media tools do not play a large role in instruction in the institutions of higher education. As a positive repercussion of the findings from this project, it is my hope that staff and faculty members will learn effective strategies of using social media technological tools in education and attempt to implement the strategies outlined by scholars and educators worldwide.

Educators worldwide use social media technological tools, as a connection between informal and formal learning and it enables faculty and students to bond in significant ways. The project study also highlights some of the concerns which faculty may have in using social media technology tools in formal lessons. Therefore, this case study provides strategies which faculty and staff can use to alleviate their concerns about social media technology tools in learning.

This study will contribute to positive social changes, by providing faculty and staff with a greater understanding of the barriers that prevent the use of social media tools, and enable faculty members to overcome these barriers. An important criterion for higher education institutions in the 21st century is to increase the number of faculty and staff who use social media technology as an instructional tool. Social media tools allow students to gain access to various educational forums in a novel and meaningful manner, beyond the context of the regular classroom setting.

Summary

Numerous educators are excited about the multifaceted role of social media tools in instruction (Chen & Bryer, 2010; Moran, Seaman, Tinti-Kane, 2011; O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011; Redecker, Ala-Mutka & Punie, 2010). Unfortunately, other faculty

members and staff are still reluctant to use social media tools in instruction. Faculty, administration and staff need to realize that social media tools hold many possibilities in engaging students in collaborative work. In fact, Steer (2012) says that social media tools can be used to "enhance formal learning" (p. 32). Social media tools can be used to cater to different learning styles, and create interest in leaning. Whilst there are advantages of using social media tools in instruction, there are disadvantages. The disadvantages (a) cyber-security issues, and (b) ethical problems, privacy concerns, time constraints, cost, expertise needed to monitor and upgrade the tools, and faculty's lack of interest in using social media tools instruction (Chen & Bryer, 2012, p. 96).

While it is important to know the advantages and disadvantages of using social media tools in education, the focus of this intrinsic qualitative case study is to investigate the role of social media tools in instruction. Therefore, the other two sections of this project study, will incorporate research design and approach, criteria and justification for selecting participants, justification and process of collecting data, data analysis methods, accuracy and credibility procedures and data presentation strategies.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

This section outlines the methods used to answer the qualitative research question and other guiding questions. Additionally, this section includes (a) a comprehensive outline of the research approach; (b) justification for the selection of participants, with an account of the number chosen; (c) the process for gaining access to participants; (d) methods of gaining participants' trust; and (e) procedures for protecting participants from harm. Subsequently, the process of collecting and analyzing data are described and justified. The data collection segment addresses how data were collected and recorded and describes my role as the researcher in the process of data collection. The data analysis section contains a discussion and description of how the data were analyzed, procedures that established credibility of research findings, and methods that were used in handling discrepant cases.

Research Design and Approach

To identify the role of social media tools in instruction at WCU, I used an exploratory qualitative case study. The case study method enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the specific issue as it related to the role of social media tools in instruction at WCU (Stake, 2005, p. 23). In the qualitative approach, truth emerges from the way people understand their world (Merriam, 2009; Merriam et al., 2007). Through interviews, I unearthed the experiences of instructors regarding the use of social media tools in the instructional process.

An exploratory case study was chosen to study the role of social media tools in higher education instruction because of its several strengths. In sequence and scope, the

case study is wide ranging. Also, case studies "typically focus on small groups or individuals within a group and document that group's or individual's experience in a specific setting" (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 15). Additionally, "gathering of information or data through multiple sources and perspectives is another key characteristic of the case study approach" (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 15).

One of the greatest weaknesses of the case study approach is that it includes a small sample that can result in either an overstatement or an understatement of the results of the study (Flyvberg, 2011, p. 44). Another criticism is that case studies can be lacking in rigor (Yin, 2009, p. 27). Although these vulnerabilities could exist, this case study provided an opportunity to explore faculty members' perception of the role of social media tools in instruction at WCU. The exploratory case study approach was beneficial in strengthening the understanding of this particular situation with an emphasis on interpretation (Stake, 1995, p. 10).

Besides the case study, several approaches were considered for this research, including (a) ethnography, (b) grounded theory, (c) narrative, and (d) phenomenology (Creswell, 2003). By a process of elimination, these approaches were assessed to determine their appropriateness for this study on the role of social media tools in higher education instruction. The narrative approach was eliminated as the preferred research method for this study because narrative studies use first-person narratives and have the aim of exploring an individual's life story and documenting it as a narrative. I chose case study because I did not seek to investigate the life experiences of the participants in relation to the role of social media at WCU (Creswell, 2003).

In addition, the phenomenological approach was eliminated as the preferred research method for this study because in phenomenology, the participants' views have to be analyzed to gain the essence of the experiences of human beings pertaining to a phenomenon. Further, this approach involves the prolonged study of a small number of participants to gain meaning from their experiences. I chose case study instead because I did not seek to explore a phenomenon or create a philosophy about the role of social media tools at WCU (Creswell, 2003).

Subsequently, grounded theory was eliminated as the preferred research method for this study because "it generates a theory of a process, action or interaction, shaped by the views of a large number of participants," whereas a case study uses a small number of participants to create narrative reports about the role of social media tools at WCU (Creswell, 2007, p. 63).

Finally, the ethnographic approach was eliminated as the preferred research method for this study because it involves (a) gaining the participants' views over a prolonged time period and (b) collecting observational data within participants' natural setting. In contrast, with a case study, I would be able to gain the views of the participants over a short period of time on the role of social media tools at WCU.

Population and Sample

In this exploratory qualitative study, the goal was not to generalize to the overall population in this Western Caribbean region, but to develop an in-depth understanding of the role of social media tools at WCU (Creswell, 2012, p. 139). The population included instructors from various departments at WCU.

This population included faculty from the English, mathematics, business, science, education, information technology, tourism, and humanities departments. The WCU population represents a diverse group of expatriate workers who work and live in this Western Caribbean region but were born in various countries around the world. Many instructors at WCU came from other Caribbean countries, Europe, England, United States, Nigeria, Canada, Africa, and other parts of the world. Therefore, the body of instructors at WCU included a mixture of people of different nationalities, races, cultures, and ethnic groups. This group of instructors brought a wealth of strategies and knowledge of use of technology in higher education instruction, but many had not used or attempted to use social media tools in instruction.

Due to the limited scope of the study, 10 faculty members at WCU were interviewed. Participants were selected using purposeful sampling, a nonrandom sampling method (Creswell, 2012; Lodico et al., 2010). This qualitative study included a sample of instructors coming from a broad range of ethnic groups and departments at WCU, with balanced gender representation. In addition, the selection criteria included diversity in ethnicity and departmental affiliation at WCU. In gender and ethnic diversity, the sample reflected the diversity that exists in the population at WCU, as allowed by the relatively small sample size of the study. Table 1 shows the demography of participants who took part in the study. There were six male and four female participants. The participants were from various departments (a) five from humanities and arts; (b) two from engineering; (c) 1 from chemistry; (d) 1 from physics; and (e) 1 from mathematics. In addition, there were eight Black participants and two White participants, representing

the eclectic population at WCU, where individuals originate from various Caribbean, European, and African countries.

Table 1

Demographics of Participants

Codes	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210
Department	H	E	P	H	H	H	M	C	H	E
Ethnicity	B	B	W	B	W	B	B	B	B	B
Gender	F	M	M	F	F	F	M	M	M	M

Note. Ethnicity: B = Black, W = White. Department: P = physics, H = humanities, E = engineering, M = maths, C = computer science, H = history.

Data collected also showed that few participants at WCU used social media tools such as Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, social bookmarking, wikis, or blogs for instructional purposes. Table 2 shows the participants' self-reported responses concerning the use of various social media tools. From the pool of 10 participants, one used Twitter, one used blogs, four used YouTube, and none used Facebook, social bookmarking, or wikis for instructional purposes at WCU. In addition, five participants did not use any type of social media tools in instruction, and the five remaining participants used only one form of social media tools in instruction.

Table 2

Participants' Self-Reported Responses on the Use of Social Media Tools

Participants' codes	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210
Twitter	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no
YouTube	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
Facebook	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Social bookmarking	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Wikis	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Blogs	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants

The Director of Research and Publications at WCU provided a list of emails for instructors from various departments at WCU. Ten participants were needed for this study. During the recruiting process, first I sent invitations to 20 prospective participants, which were twice as many participants as needed for the study. These invitations were sent to instructors at WCU via email. In the invitation, participants were asked to provide only demographic information about: (a) what instructional technologies they used in the classroom more often and (b) their department (Appendix C). A total of 11 participants indicated interest in participating in the study. Based on the information gathered from this demographic data, I chose 10 instructors from various departments at WCU who reflected the diversity of the population and had experience in using various types of technology in instruction. The recruiting process was successful. I recruited 11

participants; therefore there was no need to expand the invitation to include other faculty members at WCU.

A phone call was made to the 10 potential participants to confirm interview times and dates. I did not leave any phone messages with personal information or data related to the study to assure confidentiality of the participants. In addition, I did not involve the participants' family or friends in any aspect of the study. The interviews were conducted between December 15th, 2014 and January 20th, 2015, at convenient times indicated by each participant. The interviews were held in the conference room at WCU, or at the office of the participant. Participants at WCU were notified that there were no reimbursements for participation, and their involvement was voluntary. I assured all participants that during and after interviews I protected their rights by replacing their names with a participant code that ensured the confidentiality and privacy of data collected.

Methods of Establishing Researcher/Participant Working Relationships

I had an advantage in developing good relationships with the participants at WCU because I had a good understanding of the culture of the Western Caribbean region where WCU is located. In order to establish an excellent working relationship with the participants at WCU, I introduced myself to the administrators in charge of General Academic Research, and explained the nature of my study. I informed him of the purpose, process and design of the study, and that this study would not disturb the normal functioning of the institution (Lodico, Voegtle & Spaulding, 2011, p. 265).

Furthermore, I acquainted myself with the participants at WCU in order to develop a good relationship and a positive rapport with them. I communicated their rights

before, during and after the interview sessions. Each participant was encouraged to ask questions about their rights and the confidentiality of the study, as well as the purpose and design of the study (Creswell, 2012, p. 139). Many of the participants were expatriates, and instructors who had two-year contracts with WCU. Each year instructors are assessed for renewal of contracts. I clearly specified here and especially in my consent form that this research was not linked in any way to the participants' performance assessment and that this information would not be conveyed to the administrators to allow for use in performance evaluation. The participants were assured that information would be kept in strict confidence, so their fears were alleviated. None of the participants were reluctant to participate in the interview.

I tried to maintain excellent relationships with the participants and created a bond of credibility and trust. There was verbal communication to the participants on all known information related to the research study, which addressed informed consent procedures, including institutional review board approval and signature of the participant on the informed consent form included in Appendix B (Creswell, 2012). Participants were treated with sensitivity and respect and there is no attempt to coerce or influence their responses.

Ethical Protection of Participants

In accordance with Walden's policy, interviews began only after IRB approval on the November 7, 2014 (approval # 12-09-14-0294854). WCU does not have an IRB board, therefore, the Director of Research and Publications at WCU gave me verbal and written permission to conduct my research at WCU, as soon as I received Walden's IRB approval. In addition, I ensured that the President of WCU, along with the Director of

Research and Publication received a brief documentation regarding the research project, and proof that I had completed the National Institutes of Health web-based training course, "Protecting Human Resource Participants." This informed them that I was aware of the rights of the participants, and I used strategies taught in the "Protecting Human Resource Participants," course to protect the WCU's participants involved in the study. Each participant will was asked to carefully read and sign the consent form included in Appendix B, to indicate their willingness to participate in this study.

Another ethical consideration was verbal confirmation to WCU participants to protect confidentiality at the opening of interview sessions. Participants were reassured that their identities would be concealed from anyone not directly involved in the study. Before each interview session, the participant was assigned a numeric code that was used in (a) interview recording protocol, (b) audio recording, (c) transcriptions, and (d) reflective log. I kept a record of assigned codes on my personal computer, which was protected by a password known only to me. In this way, the names of the participants were protected and their real identities were kept confident. Several methods were used to ensure that confidentiality of the participants was maintained and data was stored carefully. These measures included (a) backing up transcripts and notes using a password protected flash drive, (b) using a password to lock my personal computer used to store data and, (c) filing and storing all notebooks and papers used to record interviews in a locked draw. No one, except myself, had access to my personal computer and the locked drawer where data was stored.

WCU's participants were also informed and reminded at interviews time, that they were not required to participate and could drop out at any phase of the investigation.

They were assured that administrators at WCU had no knowledge of names of participants and information that they provided for this study. Participants were not coerced in any manner or form into giving desired responses during interview sessions. The researcher assumed a neutral role during the interview proceedings that allowed participants to "own" the process. Every participant was treated equally, fairly, and with respect.

Data Collection Procedures and Instruments

WCU does not have an IRB. The Director of Research and Publications at WCU gave me verbal and written permission to conduct my research at their institution, as soon as I received Walden's IRB approval. Subsequently, after receiving approval from the International Review Board (IRB) from Walden University, I forwarded the approval to the Director of Research and Publication at WCU. After I received his acknowledgement of receipt; I invited participants to be part of my study.

As previously stated, I sent an invitation to 20 participants from various departments at WCU. This means that I sent invitations to twice as many prospective participants as was needed for the sample. In the invitation, participants were only asked to give demographic information (Appendix C). Interested participants indicated: (a) what instructional technologies they used in the classroom more often and (b) their department. A total of 11 participants indicated their interest in the study, however, only 10 participants who represented the diversity of WCU's population. Based on the information gathered from this demographic data, I identified 10 instructors from various departments at WCU who had experience in using various types of technology in instruction.

A total of 10 WCU participants agreed to be a part of the study, therefore, I contacted each participant via telephone to confirm time and date, I proceeded with interviews. Participants were notified that there were no reimbursements for participation, and their involvement was voluntary. I protected the rights of participants and replaced each name with numerical codes ranging from 201 to 210. This coding procedure ensured the confidentiality and privacy of data collected. Before the interview each participant was given a consent form to read and sign to indicate that they agreed to participate in the study. In addition, I informed each participant that the interview would be digitally recorded. Furthermore, I assured each participant that the answers given during the interview were confidential.

During the interview, I listened carefully to the participant's responses, recorded them and concealed this information from the administrative leaders at WCU, since participants needed to know that their responses would not be revealed to administrators at WCU. The interviews took place in a secure area such as the participant's office and others in WCU's conference room, where there was seclusion and privacy. Interviews were conducted after school, between 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. local time, when it was more convenient to faculty members at WCU. The interviews lasted for between 30 to 45 minutes.

Following the procedure suggested by Creswell (2012), an interview protocol, (Appendix D), was used to guide the interview process. The interview protocol was developed based on the research questions formulated for this study. The four research questions stated: (a) how the faculty members at a WCU perceive the overall effectiveness of social media tools in instruction (b) the kind of social media applications

do faculty members at WCU consider as effective tools to enhance student learning in their classrooms; (c) the kinds of instructional strategies do faculty members at WCU perceive as being useful to integrate social media tool in classrooms; and (d) the concerns do faculty members have regarding the use of social media tools for teaching. In summation, there were 11 questions in the interview protocol, two of the questions were based on the effectiveness of social media tools in instruction; three of the questions were based on the advantages of using social media tools; two of the questions were based on the accessibility and availability of using social media tools in instruction; and four of the questions were based on the concerns in using social media tools in instruction. In addition, my committee members who both hold doctoral degrees in the field verified my interview protocol questions.

According to Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2006), the qualitative tradition of using interview protocols required (a) a short script which explained the purpose or nature of the study to the participant, (b) places for recording background information and date of the interview, and (c) questions that were asked in the interview (p. 121). In this case, the interview protocol created a procedure for consistency and thoroughness (Creswell, 2009, p. 129). The interview protocol used for my study included a script that explained the purpose of the study, heading, interviewer's instructions, main and sub questions. Participants were thanked for their time and input at the conclusion of each interview. This document also included a section for recording (a) field notes, (b) additional probing questions used in the interview, and (c) dates and background information. A digital audio recording device was used to generate the verbatim interview transcripts.

I used the digital audio files to type in Microsoft Word the verbatim transcriptions of the interviews. A folder on my computer was used to store the data. The process of data collection and analysis in qualitative research was an inductive process, whereas, numerous bits of information were collected then combined to create a broader picture, or general description and conclusions (Creswell, 2009, p. 301).

Role of the Researcher

My role as a researcher in this context was to interview the teachers at WCU, in order to identify the role that social media tools played during instruction. Currently, the location of my work site is two blocks away from WCU. Therefore, this proximity offered quick access to in-depth knowledge of the site. I have never worked or held a supervisory role in the institution where this research was done. Also, I have never worked for a department that is tied to the participants' evaluations and promotion; therefore interviewees were not fearful of participating in the interview process. Similarly, I did not know the professors who were involved in this study; therefore my position did not create bias or coercion.

Before conducting interview sessions, I introduced myself to the participants and told them about my teaching background in an attempt to build good relationships, rapport, and credibility, and I also to encouraged openness and ease. As previously mentioned, during the data and analysis phases, I minimized personal bias by using the same interview protocol with all participants.

Data Analysis

After the interviews were conducted, I compared the verbatim transcripts to digitally recorded versions of the interviews to ensure that the transcripts were accurate. I

used "systematic," coding which is a customary practice in qualitative research (Hatch, 2002, pp. 147-210). The four steps involved in this process of systematic coding were: (a) find common elements also called codes, (b) reduce these codes by grouping similar codes in themes, (c) analyze the identified themes to reduce the overlaps, and (d) create major themes significant my your study.

Following this process, an iterative process was used to examine the interview transcripts typed as Microsoft Word documents. The final data in Microsoft Word files were collated from interview transcripts, field notes, research log and my reflective log. A total of 45 common codes were found in these transcripts. These transcripts were color coded and marked based on the codes found. A key was created as a footnote that labeled each code beside the color that was related to that code. I looked for an overall sense of the collected data and assessed the code labels for duplicates and inconsistencies (Creswell, 2012; Lodico et al., 2010). The data in Microsoft Word were read thoroughly multiple times providing additional opportunities to add, delete, change, or merge codes as I gained a stronger understanding of the collected data (Creswell, 2012). During this process, some codes were combined and the overall number of codes reduced. After I refined and reduced codes, I identified nine major themes that addressed my research questions.

Procedures to Ensure Trustworthiness of Research

Several strategies were developed in qualitative research to ensure trustworthiness. These strategies include: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Lodico et al., 2010). In my study, I ensured that the research results were credible. To ensure credibility, I (a) digitally recorded interviews so that transcripts were

supported by recorded versions, (b) performed member checks to allow participants to verify interview transcripts for accuracy and (c) conducted peer de-briefing and peer-review. Two researchers from the field of research and publications completed peer-reviews. Both peer-reviewers were lecturers at the university level. The first peer-reviewer had a Masters of Philosophy degree, and a Ph.D. in Philosophy. The second peer-reviewer had a Ph.D. degree in Research, Technology and Social Sciences. After typing the results from data collection, I emailed the results to the two peer-reviewers. These peer-reviewers each returned an evaluation of the work to me, noting problems or weaknesses, along with suggestions for improvement.

In addition, I used triangulation, a credibility check strategy. I examined documents such as syllabi, and university policies pertaining to use of social media tools, that verified and supported data collected from interviews. These persons assisted in checking to see if themes supported material collected in the interviews.

Dependability was addressed by ensuring that (a) interview protocol documents, notes from the research log and reflective log, and digital recorded files were available for inspection by Walden University's Center for Research Quality, and (b) my research data was also available for inspection. Also I targeted saturation (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 111). In this case, I immersed myself in the research, and completely surrounded myself with the subject matter (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 111). I knew when I arrived at this stage because in data collection new information were merely replicated by previously obtained data.

Transferability was ensured because I (a) gave detailed information about the interviews, context of the study and research being done, and (b) eliminated researcher's

bias from questions, probing during interviews, and collection of field notes and analysis of data.

Procedure for Dealing with Discrepant Cases

After the data collection process, majority of my time was spent looking for common categories and themes in the data. During this process, I did not find any discrepant or conflicting concepts. Since there were no discrepant data found in the data collection and analysis, there was no need to note it and label it as discrepant findings.

Research Findings

The research findings in this study focused on the role of social media tools at WCU. As part of the data analysis process, I synthesized results to examine the connection between the research questions and the interviewees' responses captured in verbatim responses. During the process of analysis and overview of field notes and interviewee's responses, 45 codes emerged. In addition, the following section contains the thematic descriptions and a detailed description of each of the nine themes along with sub-titles identified from the research findings. These nine themes focused on the effectiveness, benefits, training, availability, accessibility, concerns, institutional policies, and support provided at WCU in their use of social media tools. The interviewees shared as well as the positive reasons for using social media tools, as well as, negative views regarding the hindrances to the use of social media tools at WCU.

Theme Description

A total of nine broad themes emerged during the process of analysis of interviewee's responses and data collected from the interviews. Interviewees gave responses regarding the role social media tools at WCU. Table 3 shows the themes that

emerged from this data collection process, along with the research questions from the project study. The themes that emerged included: (a) the effectiveness, (b) benefits, (c) training, (d) availability, (e) accessibility, (f) concerns, (g) institutional policies, and (h) support provided in the use of social media tools.

Table 3

Themes Identified in Analysis of Data, Along With Research Questions

Themes	RQ1	RQ2	RQ3	RQ4
1. Effectiveness of social media tools in instruction	x			
2. Benefits of using social media tools	x			
3. Training in the use of social media tools			x	
4. Accessibility of social media tools		x		
5. Availability of using social media tools in instruction		x		
6. Concerns in using social media tools in instruction				x
7. Institutional policies regarding use of social media tools				x
Support staff for technology				x

Note. RQ = Research Question. RQ1: How do the faculty members at a WCU perceive the overall effectiveness of social media tools in instruction? RQ2: What kind of social media applications do faculty members at WCU consider as effective tools to enhance student learning in their classrooms? RQ3: What kinds of instructional strategies do faculty members at WCU perceive as being useful to integrate social media tool in classrooms? RQ4: What concerns do faculty members have regarding the use of social media tools for teaching?

Theme 1: Effectiveness of Social Media Tools in Instruction

On the Interview Protocol, first question asked how do faculty members at WCU judge the effectiveness of social media tools in instruction. The responses from interviewees provided answers to research question one and two of this project study. There were a variety of responses from faculty members at WCU regarding the

effectiveness of social media tools in instruction. Interviewees felt that social media tools were extremely effective instructional tools, merely with the younger generation. In contrast, other interviewees had mixed feelings towards the use of social media tools in instruction, and elaborated on the negative and positive effects of using social media tools in teaching. In addition, some interviewees believed that social media tools may be effective, but it depended on how these tools were used in the instructional process. Finally, other interviewees had reservations about the use of social media tools for instruction, while a few interviewees did not use social media tools for instructional purposes, but believed that that these tools were beneficial in the teaching process. The results indicated that social tools are: (a) effective teaching tools; (b) inhibitions of the older generation regarding the use of social media tools; (c) mixed views about the use of the tools; and (d) non-users of social media tools.

Social media tools as extremely effective teaching tools. Many interviewees felt that social media tools were extremely effective in higher education, but they differed in terms of the areas of effectiveness. Interviewees believed that social media is effective because it enables: (a) students to see the concepts taught as the lecturer perceived them; (b) students to learn the theory and relate it to real world; (c) lecturers to give instructions to students outside of the classroom setting. These interviewees provided illustrations of the effectiveness of social media tools in various courses.

Interviewee 203 mentioned that in Physics, “it was very difficult to impart concepts to students verbally, they needed visual reinforcements”. He noted that many students found it difficult to understand that a body possessing mass attracted any object possessing mass. Also, he gave an example in teaching a concept in Physics, “where one

has to impart to students the fact that a body possessing mass will attract any object possessing mass." In addition, he said that, "the attraction might not be obvious, and this might be difficult to demonstrate, other than dropping an object to the ground." However, he explained that, "on YouTube, there is a very interesting and clever video on an experiment by Henry Cavendish, where in his laboratory, using some delicate apparatus, shows that objects actually move towards each other, when allowed to do so." This interviewee posited that, "this cannot be effectively demonstrated in the classroom, but this brings across the concept to the students and they will never forget it."

In addition, Interviewee 204 said that, "the one that I use the most is YouTube because it has a lot of video clips and it supports the lesson, thus is effective for teaching and learning process." Also, he said that, "YouTube is my major example because I do not use Facebook, Instagram of Twitter in the classroom." In addition, he said that YouTube links were used to provide students with added auditory and visual stimulus, so that they could watch or hear videos and presentations about particular concepts being taught in class. Subsequently, Interviewee 204 stated that, students could individually or collectively critique the videos and presentations, and relates them to the topic taught by the lecturer. In this case, YouTube played a critical role in the student's understanding of the concepts taught in class.

On the other hand, interviewee 210 used programs such as EDUCRATE, where students followed lessons taught in class from their iPads, and students also recorded lecturers and later returned to the site to revise notes that were stored on this site. In addition, he noted that, "the main benefit is interaction…I have studied by distance already and what I find is that there is not enough interaction, but when it comes on to

social media students can meet friends, study, do assignments, and meet their teachers." Also, he noted that, "another benefit is that you can save your work and go back to it because it is saved on a social media site."

Despite the fact that Interviewees 203, 204, 210 found social media tools as effective for instructional purposes. Their consensus is that only a few faculty members at WCU use social media tools in instruction, and only faculty members who felt competent in the use of these tools actually embraced them in instruction.

Inhibitions of the older generation regarding the use of social media tools. Interviewees believed that social media tools were useful especially with the younger generation who were: (a) "techno savvy", (b) are far more comfortable with technology, and (c) enjoyed lecturers using social media tools that assist them in learning. However, some interviewees believed that the older generation of students at WCU has inhibitions regarding the use of social media tools for instructional purposes. Interviewees noted that, even if lecturers were inclined to incorporate these tools into lessons and perhaps use them, they have the added challenge of: (a) teaching the older students how to use social media tools; (b) lack of interest in learning to use these tools; (c) refusal to purchase technological tools; and (d) the overwhelming fears of older generation, with regards to the use of social media tools in instruction. Majority of the older students: (a) are far more comfortable with face-to-face encounters; (b) are hindered by the lack of skills necessary to maneuver the social media tools, and (c) are overwhelmed with the additional demand of learning essential concepts using social media devices.

Interviewee 201 shared two examples that indicate that older pupils do not like to use social media tools for instructional purposes. As a first example, this interviewee

stated: "I remember once, I assigned a task and asked everybody to email me the responses, but of course, I did not get it from anybody." Older students were too embarrassed to inform her that they could not accomplish the task, due to their lack of technological skills. As a second example Interviewee 201 stated: "I remembered just recently, I had a class with the civil servants, and for that class, I had a test on one website… I think it was a KIA quiz, and I asked them to do the quiz and email me the responses…Of course up till now, some people have not done that that yet." These older students were not "computer literate," therefore; they failed to complete the online quiz. These two examples provided proof that some of the mature learners will be lost if the lecturers used social media tools in instruction.

Interviewee 206 posited that, a few "adult learners are gravitating towards distance learning and opted to submit their assignments online." However, she noted that, "while there are a few adult learners who prefer to use social media tools as instructional tools, majority of the older students are far more comfortable with face to face encounters; and are hindered by the lack of skills necessary to maneuver the social media tools, and they feel overwhelmed with the additional demand of learning essential concepts through these devices."

This disparity between the older and younger generation creates a problem for the lecturer who has to find strategies to bridge the gap between finding ways to reach their younger and modern learners, while at the same time, not leaving behind the older, more mature learners who simply cannot keep abreast with shifts and changes in technology.

Mixed views on the effectiveness of social media tools. Some interviewees felt that social media tools can sometimes be effective in the instructional process, especially

for: (a) dissemination of information, and (b) access to information. On the other hand, social media tools can be extremely ineffective in a number of ways, such as: (a) students' interdependence or total reliance on these tools, and (b) distraction incurred by devices with access to social media tools.

Interviewee 208 mentioned the negative and positive effects of social media tools. Interviewee 208 strongly believed that, social media tools could have a positive effect on students' educational development; however, these tools also functioned in a negative way by thwarting the instructional process. On a positive note, interviewee 208 said that, "Positively you can use social media to disseminate information to students quickly…lecturers also let students use it to do research assignments." However, on a negative note, interviewee 208 stated that some students used social media tools such as: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in class for personal entertainment; and it distracted their peers from grasping key concepts in the lesson. In fact, this interviewee posited that, "other students use it in class and it becomes a distraction…we have also become very dependent on social media that if you doing work and your Internet go off, then you are stopped."

Another mixed review came from Interviewee 207, who posited that "I think depends on how one has used it…if it is used properly, it can be effective…if is not well utilized, it cannot be effective." For example he said that, "A number of professors put their work on different websites… some lecturers use Angel and blackboard, where they put their exam on these sites and students are allowed to write their exams…the timing is such that when time is up, it closes, so that the students cannot continue to work… if is well planned and well mastered then it can be very effective. In contrast, interviewee 207

noted that lecturers spent a vast amount of time preparing online quizzes, and students either ignored the deadlines and miss the test, or provide numerous excuses why they could not complete the test online. There is no way of ensuring that students complete online quizzes.

Similarly, another mixed review came from interviewee 202, who noted that the students "are putting everything they do out there on social media sites…we find it difficult to get them to go on those sites and do some work that is going to benefit their future…so I am reluctant to use social media to mix it with education." However, he believed that, "there are other ways in which you can do it, you can use other means like Angel, use an intranet, where you post information…you can use a Blog which is more personal…once is centered direct towards educational purposes."

Interviewees 201 also had mixed feelings about the use of social media tools in higher education instruction. This interviewee explained that positively, the "general benefits would be the multi-sensory approach, in that; it is not just the oral, but the visual, the tactile skills that come into play…also, because they love the technology." On the other hand, she said that, "it is almost as if they are addicted…I tell them they are addicts, because their fingers always have to be moving…even you say hour and a half for the class, try to put the phone down and focus…every minute they are texting, message comes in and they are texting…they are always on Twitter, always on Facebook, always on Myspace." This interviewee noted that this problem adds to the growing level of frustration experienced by lecturers who realize that students are not focused on grasping the concepts taught in classes.

Interviewee 202's mixed feelings emerged from students' lack of focus in classes. He said that, "The only negative aspect is that students are diverted from the real meaning why the instructor wants them on there." He also noted that, "If there is an incentive, like putting a percentage to the grade, so if they want that percentage, they would go there…I have tried to use social media tools, one semester, but it was an experiment… to see how it would work, but privacy issue was one of my concerns, for example you put something on there, and then somebody who it was not intended for, gain access to it, these things can come back to haunt you." He emphatically stated that, "Until we can deal with those issues, we have to be very careful how we access to social media tools." However, on a positive note, he said that social media tools can be used positively, because students have easy "access to technology, this is the area of technology where they can use any available technology at their disposal." This interviewee shared examples whereas: (a) the smart phone can be used to conveniently do work, and (b) assignments can be posted it on an instructor's Facebook page, and quickly dispersed to students. But in order for students to effectively use social media in this manner, he said that, students would need "restrictions, to prevent friends and associates from seeing their work."

These mixed views regarding the effectiveness of social media tools provided a lack of consensus amongst faculty members at WCU regarding the use of social media tools for instructional purposes. Due to the overwhelming frustrations created from a lack of privacy, some faculty members tend to maintain their former methods and styles of teaching, while only those who consider themselves "techno savvy" use social media tools. At WCU, faculty members have the option of deciding not to use these tools as part of their instructional practices.

Faculty prefers traditional methods rather than social media tools. Some faculty members did not use social media tools in instruction. Many instructors opted to use: (a) traditional methods that involved "chalk and talk;" and (b) technological gadgets, such as: CD's and DVD's, rather than social media tools.

Interviewee 205 preferred to use simple technological tools, rather than social media tools for instruction. In fact, this lecturer used technological such as: projectors, music tapes, DVD, films and parts of films, and recorded speeches which are historically authentic. She said that "I have used YouTube for courses in public speaking, literature and I have also used films and parts of films, recorded speeches which are historically authentic…and are particularly useful for the Public Speaking course, where we study great speakers and speeches." For example, she mentioned the Gettysburg Address delivered in a battle filled with open grave and rotten corpses." Similarly, this interviewee noted that she used: (a) DVD's of great performers in concerts to show the connections between great performers and speakers, and their use of verbal and non-verbal techniques; (b) movies for literature courses (older and newer versions) where students critique the film version verses to the movie version; (c) TED talks are very useful, acting as a catalyst for discussion in argumentative courses; and (d) YouTube for films, short stories from the Composition courses to teach themes and symbolism and inferences.

Ironically, interviewee 209 does not use social media tools in instruction, and preferred to use old fashioned methods of teaching, such as oral lecturers. However, this interviewee believed that these tools were essential instructional tools. As he stated, "it is even effective because as a lecturer/researcher, I got involved in course offered by the

World Bank where they have an institute where you can do courses, where government budget." He also mentioned that, "on the site, you have the information, record lecturers…people all around the world reflecting and commenting on various topics." In contrast, this interviewee posited that, "UWI has this course about the Rise of China, I wanted to get into this course, but unfortunately you have to go to Trinidad to take part in the course." This interviewee was unable to receive vacation time to pursue this course. If this course was offered online, then he would have been able to participate in it, and furthermore he could provide professional development for the staff members at WCU.

Interviewee 209 believed that faculty members at WCU ought to consider incorporating social media tools in instruction because the positive outweigh the negative issues. Unfortunately, for many of the faculty members, it is a slow process to entice them to use social media tools in instruction. Interviewee 201 said that, "maybe we are not using it enough in teaching and learning, but we are probably getting there." She also said, "I guess I will have to explore that to see how I can incorporate it in [my course]." The hope is that futuristically, they will find ways of incorporating these tools in classroom instruction.

Theme 2: Students Benefit from Using Social Media Tools

Questions 2, 3 and 7 in the Interview Protocol proposed the questions regarding the benefits of social media tools to the instructional process. The answers from interviewees provided data for the second research question in my study. Responses from all of the interviewees were varied, and answers revealed that social media tools were beneficial to students because of: (a) multi-sensory approach, (b) accessibility and freedom in learning, (c) changing abstract concepts to concrete ones, (d) adapting to

modern methods of learning, (e) building strong critical and inferential reading skills, (f) adding interest and excitement to learning experiences, (g) communicating with lecturers, (h) cutting down on work load, and (i) interacting with peers and lecturers. However, despite the numerous benefits mentioned in interviews, some faculty members either do not use social media tools, or is deterred by the overwhelming challenges that will be mentioned in the next section of this paper.

Social media as multi-sensory tools and freedom in learning. A few of the interviewees posited that social media tools were beneficial to the educational experiences because students enjoy: (a) multisensory approach to learning; and (b) freedom of learning. In addition, other interviewees noted that students needed to become disciplined in order to benefit from these experiences.

Interviewee 201 noted "general benefits would be the multi-sensory approach, in that; it is not just the oral, but the visual, the tactile skills that come into play." She mentioned that students enjoyed seeing and hearing, rather than constantly being exposed to the "chalk and talk", a Caribbean term which refers to a lecturer who only uses the classroom board and lecturing to communicate to his/her students. In addition, she believed that, social media tools can be beneficial if a lecturer incorporated videos, games and different things that brought interest and excitement to the learning process. In this case, this interviewee believed that, students benefit because lessons are more interesting, and there is a greater variety of tools used to enhance teaching, also they can relate to what is being taught.

Interviewees 207 added that students also enjoyed the freedom of learning in an atmosphere where they were not tense. Students enjoyed the lessons that incorporated

social media tools, and at the same time learnt important concepts taught in class. In fact, interviewee 207 noted that: “I think benefits are that they can work in the atmosphere of freedom, where they are not tense, and they can think freely…at home they have the freedom where they are not tensed.” She also said that, “the online environment opened another avenue of freedom, where shy students can “tweet” questions to lecturers, and follow discussions, whereas they would have felt intimidated to do these things in a lecture hall filled with numerous students.”

Interviewees 206 posited that students enjoy learning through the use of social media tools. She said: “I think that my students benefit because it is more interesting, greater variety, more relatable.” In fact, she noted that, “today’s young people/adults enjoy playing through technology, so if you are changing play to something educational, it definitely works.” In fact, this interviewee mentioned that, “we can also incorporate videos, games and different things that bring interest and excitement to the learning process.” Similarly, interviewee 209 said that, “young people love technology, so it fits into what they like…they can download lectures on their phone… if they are able to come to class, they can download lectures.” These interviewees believed that social media can be a very beneficial tool if students are focused and use social media for the right purpose.

Social media enables students to access information easily. Interviewees posited that social media tools enable students to access materials for learning even if they are not physically present at school. Students also can use social media tools to understand concepts that are difficult. Interviewee 202 believed that social media tools made learning accessible to students everywhere, anywhere and around the world. He

also noted that, many WCU students own the most recent smart phone technology, which they used to quickly access to WCU's Angel or Blackboard sites. This interviewee stated that, "lecturers posted power-points, tests, assignments, and blog discussions on these sites." In addition, "instructors posted assignments on Facebook, which was easily accessible to students,"

In addition, Interviewee 203 posited that, another benefit of using social media tools is that, "they make abstract concepts become concrete." This lecturer stated that, "I then able to carry on expounding confidently that the students are seeing the same mental picture that he has when he is expressing those facts about certain phenomena." For example, he noted that, "there was a young lady who came to me at the end of one Physics class, and told me that she had no idea of what I was talking about." He used videos on YouTube to explain the concepts to the student, and this student became the star pupil in the class, and went on to further her studies in Physics. The lecturer gained an enormous amount of satisfaction in the student's success, and felt quite humbled that the student became successful in that field of study.

Social media tools build inferential skills and enhance communication. In retrospect, interviewees believed that the benefits included: (a) the development of stronger inferential reading skills, and (b) increased confidence in interpreting and analyzing Literature material. The consensus from the Interviewees is that despite the benefits derived from using social media tools in instruction, only a minority of students from WCU used these tools for these educational purposes.

For example, Interviewee 205 noted that, "the benefits are stronger inferential reading responses, a clearer sense of importance of trusting their judgments that is

confidence building." Also, she said that, "They will watch a film based on a story, and then their reaction is accurate in terms of reading the symbolism but because it was not word to word exactly what the story said, they hesitated and distrust themselves and their reactions." Films can help students to trust their reactions and judgments, especially in comparing the film to the written version of the play. This helps to build critical reading skills and critical analysis.

Interviewees 201, 208, 209 and 210 noted that students benefit from social media tools whereas, they use them for: (a) researching assignments, (b) communicating and consulting with lecturers, (c) submitting assignments, (d) notes taking, (e) interacting with peers, and (f) completing tests and quizzes. For example, Interviewee 209 used Skype as a meeting area. Interviewee 208 was in Ghana for a conference, and used Skype to communicate with a masters student, so that she could complete corrections on her research paper before she did her oral defense. Interviewee 210 said that YouTube is one of the most popular social media sites used by some lecturers at WCU. Interviewee 205 mentioned that YouTube provided video clips of speeches given by great men in the world. For example, YouTube videos such as, "I Have a Dream," was used in the Public Speaking course, and students studied great speakers and speeches.

Ultimately, interviewees 201, 208, 209 and 210 mentioned that social media tools are beneficial to WCU's administration, whereas, they used social media tools for networking, and communicating vital information to students. WCU's administrators also use social media tools to post the schedules for exams, and the graduation and general announcement. For example, if there is an Honors Convocation, they would do a "Facebook Blast" or and "Eblast," where they placed announcements on Facebook,

WCU's website, Twitter, and Four Square, to reach the students right where they are. Therefore, students cannot say that they did not hear the announcement. This method protects WCU's administrators from legal issues, regarding students insisting that that did not receive the notices of important events.

Students use social media tools to enhance learning. Some interviewees noted that social media tools were used for: (a) research purposes, (b) collaboration, (c) revision, and (d) problem solving, and for instructional purposes. In addition, some interviewees believed that students used social media tools to: (a) do independent research; (b) recommended research; (c) access different internet sites in preparation for quizzes; (d) record and video lecturers during class session; (e) solve Mathematical problems, (f) access information, and (g) share information on the World Wide Web.

Interviewees 201 and 202 posited that some students used social media tools such as YouTube for research purposes. On a positive note, interviewees 201 and 202 sent students to conduct research on particular topics. Similarly, interviewee 201 indicated that a few mature students would easily find visual materials on different social media sites, and share these materials with their peers, thus enhancing their educational experiences. In addition, interviewee 207 stated that, "students used Google to listen to lectures from other instructors." For example, interviewee 205 mentioned that, "students who do independent or recommended research in Literature on these social media sites are able to think and write more analytically and critically." However, on a negative note, interviewee 202 noted that, majority of the class would come to class unprepared to share the findings gleaned from these social media sites. In addition, interviewee 207 stated that, "many times students do not understand the information found on these social media

sites, or they may find information that provide a biased critique of the author's work." Therefore, interviewees 205 and 210 stated that students' research on internet sites need to be followed up by discussions with their lecturers.

Similarly, Interviewee 204 asserted that a few students also used iPads to connect to social media sites for revision or reinforcement of key concepts taught in classes. In addition, he mentioned that some students used social media tools for online meetings to: (a) stay in touch with group members, (b) prepare for group presentation, and (c) discuss classwork. Students also used Facebook or Instagram to form online groups; and this is effective for meeting online and completing assignment, instead of having physically meetings. On the other hand, Interviewees 204 and 208 stated that, some students will not use social media tools for instructional purposes unless grades are attached to the activities done on these sites. For example, he mentioned that, "some lecturers attached grades to work done on social media tools; and this method forced students to use these tools for educational purposes such as: (a) conducting research, preparing power-point presentations, and (c) uploading videos that depict their understanding or perception of a topic."

Subsequently, Interviewee 208 is one of the few lecturers at WCU who allows students to use social media tools in presentation. He noted that, "during presentation sessions, if there is a need to do research, then students used their technological devices, to access sites such as YouTube." Interviewee 208 posited that, "students were also given time to use Facebook and YouTube to research particular concepts, in order to participate in class discussions." Similarly, this interviewee challenged students to see "who can use Bluetooth to download information to the lecturer's P.C." The lecturer used this strategy

to get students to do research for their class presentations; and also keep students engaged in the lesson.

In addition, Interviewees 205, 207, 208 and 210 believed that social media tools are beneficial to the learning process, but they present additional challenges to lectures who may want to use them for instructional purposes. In fact, Interviewees 201, 205, 208, and 210 believed that social media tools brought a high level of inattentiveness in classes. Finally, Interviewees 201 and 205 noted that lecturers are not using social media tools enough in teaching and learning, but attempts are being made by few faculty members who are knowledgeable in the use of social media tools, to assist other faculty members in using social media tools for instructional purposes.

Theme 3: General Benefits That Faculty Derive from Using Social Media Tools

Questions 2, 3 and 3 from the interview protocol provided answers to the general benefits that faculty members derive from using social media tools in instruction. Responses from interviewees provided answers third research question of this study. Some interviewees felt that social media tools offered more benefit to the students, than to the lecturers. Many lecturers at WCU do not use social media tools for instructional purposes, however, some lecturers still feel that these tools can be beneficial in the teaching and learning process. Responses from interviewees pointed out that faculty members benefit from using social media tools because they: (a) encourage students; (b) meet the needs of the students; (c) build a repository of information; (d) diversify the teaching experience; (e) collaborate amongst faculty members; (f) facilitate easy lesson planning; (g) provide personal benefits, and (h) create opportunities for professional

development. Despite the abundance of social media tools available to faculty members at WCU, some instructors prefer their older methods of teaching.

Social media increases collaboration. Some interviewees noted that social media tools are beneficial because they enabled faculty members to collaborate with students online: (a) to reinforce concepts taught in class, and (b) encourage students to make academic progress. In addition, social media tools encouraged collaboration amongst students: (a) to complete assignments, (b) do research, and (c) preparing for tests.

Interviewee 205 created a blog for faculty to use to guide students in online discussion. The purpose of this blog was to reinforce concepts taught in class, and to clarify misunderstanding that arose from lessons. Interviewee 205 said that "this was successful because the information garnered from blogs increased the confidence level of the students, and they used the information from these online discussions to guide them in completing classwork and assignments." Interviewees 201 and 205 noted that faculty members can use blogs, as a medium to help weaker students, and assist the students who have missed classes.

Similarly, interviewees 208 and 204, and 206 believed that social media tools encouraged collaboration between staff and students. In fact, interviewees 208 said that, "lecturers do not have to be confined to the old system where they have to plan location and time for consultation with students." In addition, "they do not have to meet physically; they can meet on social media sites." Interviewees 204, 206, and 208 said that, "this medium of communication, aids students in increasing their knowledge level in their subject, and helped to build trust and confidence between the lecturers and his/her

students." In addition, interviewee 206 believed that, "faculty members benefit from the use of social media tools, because they meet the students where they are, and ensured that they make the progress that the lecturer wanted them to make." Interviewee 206 noted that, "since it is common place for younger students, it gets them interested in the lesson." Students used social media tools to participate in class presentations.

Social media tools also enabled students to collaborate for class presentations and assignments and quizzes. Interviewee 208 shared an interesting experience from last semester, whereby he taught a heavy course entitled, *Energy Systems*. He tried to make the workload for this lesson lighter, by placing students in groups to do class presentations. He noted that, "some students worked in partnership to complete short dissertations in approximately 10 to 15 minutes." These presentations were graded and supervised by this lecturer. This interviewee stated that, "this was a great success because students took it very seriously, and they used their IPads to project their findings and shared it with the class."

Despite the positive role that social media tools play in increasing collaboration amongst students and faculty members, interviewer 208 noted that, "we have also become very dependent on social media that if you doing work and your internet go off, then you are stopped…so it has its pros and cons, but the pros outweigh the cons."

Social media tools changes lecturer's method of delivery. Social media tools help the lecturer to be creative in planning lessons. Interviewee 203 posited that Instructors can use these tools to create "three dimensional" images; instead of the two dimensional images usually drawn on the white board. In addition, he mentioned that instead of merely visualizing concepts, students could literally see them. Interviewees

201 and 203 noted that the incorporation of social media tools in instruction increased students' interpretation and understanding of concepts taught in classes. Interviewee 201 noted that when social media tools are used in lessons, "learning is generally verified by the questions which tend to follow when they understand the concepts taught, as opposed to not being with you, you will get silence." In addition, interviewee 201 posited that, the use of social media tools in lessons build the confidence of lecturers, because "if the student has already acquired the concept, then we can take the concept further with confidence, knowing that the students are with the lecturer."

Repository of education information on social media. Some interviewees posited that instructors used social media tools to: (a) communicate with other faculty members; (b) collaborate on tests and exams; (c) assist other faculty with lesson planning; (d) networking with shareholders; (e) keeping abreast with current news and social events; (f) providing professional development for other faculty members; (g) communicate important notices and schedule meetings; and (i) tracking student performance.

Interviewees posited that social media tools are beneficial to faculty members because they can find a vast amount of resources online to plan creative lessons. Interviewee 206 noted that social media "helps in the teacher in lesson preparation…there is quite a repository of power-points, instructional tools, teaching instructions on the internet, so the whole notion of not "remaking the wheel" saves time." This means that lecturers do not have to do extensive research to create power-points, display experiments and visual aids for students, because these are already available online. Therefore, this interviewee believed that, "lecturers do not have to "remake/reinvent the wheel" causing

the lecturers to save time in lesson preparation." Interviewees 206 and 201 shared the opinion that social media tools: (a) enable the instructor to reach the students readily; (b) provide a wealth of resources materials; and (c) present ideas for diversifying the classroom experience. In addition, interviewee 206 believed that, "social media tools create differentiation in teaching, so that lecturers can meet students on a number of different levels, depending on their style of learning." Similarly, interviewee 209 posited that YouTube is a "gold mine of information." Lecturers: (a) viewed top lectures teaching; (b) communicated with authors of textbooks used in courses, (c) reviewed books used during lectures; and (d) learned information vital to planning and teaching.

In addition, interviewees 206, 208, 209 and 210 mentioned that social media tools enabled instructors to become better educators. These interviewees posited that, since a lot of the learning experience is heavily dependent on technology, faculty members are able to: (a) move with the technological times; (b) make the information more realistic and pragmatic for students; and (c) provide more examples and illustrations during instruction. Interviewee 206 noted an example in Literature where students focused on the Medieval Era and Romantic Period. Interviewee 206 said that "On YouTube, there was an abundance of videos and movies that recaptured these eras, and showed pictures of events that students clearly understood." This interviewee noted that, "students did not have to imagine the types of costumes worn during these times; they were able to literally see it." In this case, social media tools made the learning experience significantly more realistic.

Social media tools add excitement to teaching. Social media tools benefitted instructors because they added excitement to the teaching process. Interviewee 206 and

209 added that social media tools are: (a) relatable to young people, (b) breaks the monotony of talk, and (c) is accessible to young people. In addition, Interviewee 206 posited that, "a student no longer enters a lecture hall and being bored to death by someone who is speaking constantly." Lecturers now have choices of adding blogs, YouTube, Myspace, Twitter and Facebook to their lessons to make lessons more interesting. For example, interviewee 206 mentioned that, "as it relates to the involvement of videos, it helps…in the course I teach the topic Arguments, the challenge is how do I show my students that an argument is not a quarrel or a fight between two persons." This interviewee used YouTube "to show students speeches being delivered by leaders of the free world, and academies, using this to show students that an argument is the presentation of their opinion and defense of that, not necessarily a fight or a quarrel." She said that, "when students see the enactment, it comes home to them readily." Therefore, social media technology helped faculty members to change concepts that were intangible to the tangible information which students grasped easily.

Incentives used to encourage staff to use of social media tools. Interviewee 202 stated that there are no financial benefits provided by government or the school to encourage instructors to use social media tools in instruction. In addition, Interviewee 205 said that, only iPads and iPhones are given to faculty members for classroom use. Interviewee 205 also noted that these iPads and iPhone are beneficial because instructors communicate easily with their students, and this replaces office hours. In fact, Interviewee 205 posited that faculty members are also given laptop computers and cell phones in order to maintain communication with school administrators, colleagues and students. In addition, Interviewee 209 stated that faculty members do not get time off

from work to participate in workshops that teaches them how to use social media tools in instruction.

Theme 4: Training in the Use of Social Media Tools

On the Interview Protocol, question 3 proposed the question regarding the kinds of activities or workshops available to train instructors at WCU in the use of social media tools for instruction. The responses given in the interviewees provided data that answered question 3 of this research project. Varied answers were given by the interviewees regarding the training available to staff in the use of social media tools. Various interviewees: (a) had no knowledge of the training offered in the institution, regarding technology, or social media tools; (b) noted that that currently WCU does not have any training or workshops based on the use of social media tools in instruction; (c) mentioned that annual workshops are done at WCU in the use of technology, but not in the use of social media tools; and (d) stated that faculty members, who are experts in the use of general technology, teach other faculty members how to use technological tools. However, interviewees noted that, training sessions does not focus on the use social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Myspace and Flickr as instructional tools.

Workshops on the use of technology. Interviewees 201, 203, 204, 205, 209 and 210, said that currently WCU does not have any training or workshops on the use of social media tools in instruction. However, these interviewees noted that WCU hosts training in the use of Grammarly and Turnitin. Interviewee 205 posited that a few faculty members teach instructors how to use Grammarly and Turnitin, which is WCU's learning platform. For example, she noted that, last semester, faculty members had a series of

workshop for lecturers in the Language Arts Department for Grammarly and Turnitin. In addition, interviewee 206 posited that, "some lecturers made it mandatory for students to submit their assignments via Turnitin." This interviewee described Turnitin as a website that, (a) offers students the option of checking their assignments for grammatical errors; (b) it allowed the instructor to evaluate whether the pieces submitted by students are original pieces; and (c) it also shows lecturers the percentage of their assignment that was plagiarized. This interviewee also mentioned that Grammarly is another website that (a) is used to check grammatical errors in students' work; and (b) students also received suggestions about how to improve their work.

In addition, Interviewee 202 noted that there were other workshops that trained faculty members to use iPhone, iPad, and other technology tools. This interviewee stated that, faculty members trained other lecturers in the use of iPad and different apps related to iPad, so that educators can use them for instructional purposes. Interviewee 201 mentioned that, WCU initiated an iPad Program a few years ago, whereby each student and faculty member was expected to have an iPad. This interviewee also noted that each faculty member was also given an iPad. WCU provided iPad tablets for students at a reduced cost, but many students did not purchase the iPads, and faculty members found it difficult to use them in classes. Therefore, the iPad program was discontinued.

Interviewees 201, 204 and 208 stated that WCU's administrators offered workshops in personal and professional development; and presenters have taught faculty members how to use various technological tools linked to content presentation. Interviewee 204 mentioned that these workshops taught lecturers how to use technology tools to help students to learn effectively. In addition, Interviewee 204 noted that, at

WCU, workshops are ongoing and they cover the use of technology, such as: Angel, Blackboard, iPad, Polycom, and T.E.D. Talks. Interviewee 201 described Angel as WCU's Learning Management System which allows faculty to: (a) do assessment; (b) post power-points for students; (c) convey instructions to students; (d) create discussion forums, and (e) participate in student teacher interactions. Interviewee 206 also said that (a) students post assignments on Angel; (b) get information from lecturers; (c) find resources for assignments or lessons; and (d) be advised of assignments.

Faculty members are also taught how to use Blackboard. Interviewee 201 described Blackboard as a technological software that enables instructors to effectively manage their classroom activities, such as: attendance, mark sheets and grades. In addition, interviewee 210 said that on Blackboard: (a) students register for courses; (b) lecturers post grades; (c) registrars post and update students' profiles and demographics; (d) administrators post students' grade point average, and (e) students view their grades and GPA. Lectures put their grades on during the semester, and students go on it to find out what grade they need to pass the course. Interviewee 206 also noted that on Blackboard, students could monitor their performance at any stage during the semester, and also check their attendance records.

In addition, training is done in the use of Polycom. Interviewee 210 noted that, Polycom linked lecturers to the remote site in the Sister Islands, where students can learn from lecturers. This interviewee emphasized that, "on Polycom, lecturers conduct long distance lectures, and it is very interactive." In addition, this interviewee explained that, students in the Sister Island saw the lecturers, asked questions, made comments, and lecturers looked at facial expression to ascertain if students understood the lessons.

Subsequently, this interviewee posited that there is also training in the use of T.E.D, which is similar to YouTube, where a lot of documentaries are done, and various controversial topics are discussed. This interviewee continued to say that, the difference between T.E.D. and YouTube is that T.E.D offers an audience and interaction between students and lecturers, while YouTube is a video that is recorded and downloaded. The interviewee also said that "faculty use T.E.D, to access documentaries and presentations that can be useful in the classroom."

Interviewee 205 mentioned that, "on an informal level, the people at the Help Desk and the ICT Department help with challenges that faculty and students encounter in the use of ICT tools in instruction." This interviewee "built a great relationship with these ICT personnel, and they are never made to feel like "techno dummies," due to a lack of knowledge of technology."

Interviewees 207 and 206 and 208 said that a few workshops are also coordinated by faulty members who are more "techno savvy" than others. Interviewee 207 noted that, "at the beginning of each semester, these faculty members train other staff in the use of technological tools." Interviewee 206 felt that, "this is good strategy because lecturers are being trained by someone who shares the same challenges, experiences, and difficulties as they do; but ultimately, these instructors have mastered the use of particular technological tools." In addition, interviewee 206 said that, "faculty members also shared information and teaching resources via email." The interviewee continued to state that, these educators also shared new sources found online, new ideas, and new methods of improving the use of technology in the classroom. Similarly, this interviewee posited that, "instructors are also encouraged to do more sophisticated training at a higher level,

but often times training are done internally." Interviewee 207 noted that, "other universities host conferences with different sessions on the use of technological tools." There are different speakers and faculty from various universities gain knowledge on the use of social media tools. WCU faculty members are encouraged to attend these workshops and share their knowledge with other members of staff.

Theme 5: Accessibility and Availability of Social Media Tools

Question 6 from the Interview Protocol provided answers to the question pertaining to the kind of social media tools readily available to WCU's students in the classroom. The responses from interviewees provided answers for research question 3 of the study. The responses were unanimous, in that, all the interviewees mentioned that students owned smart phones, iPhones, iPads, laptop computers and other technological devices, and they accessed free Wi-Fi at the university. Despite the abundance of these technology tools, only a minority of the student population used social media tools for instructional purposes.

Interviewee 202 stated that over the years, , "administrators have filtered sites such as: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and YouTube, to prevent students from using them for the wrong purposes." In addition, this interviewee argued that, "some faculty members are trying to get the administrators to unblock YouTube, so that they can make it accessible to students and faculty members." However, the reasons for blocking these social media sites include: (a) younger students misuse the tools; (b) the use of these tools increases the level of distraction in class; and (c) students quickly divert from looking at these tools for instructional purposes, and get drawn away by the other materials, which are not beneficial educationally.

For presentations, Interviewee 205 stated that WCU students have access to many technological tools, such as: projectors, tape recorders, DVD's of Shakespeare's plays, computers in the lab and library, and smart phones. In addition, this interviewee said that, many lecturers had to encourage students to use these tools for instructional purposes. This interviewee said that, "students will only use these technological tools for learning, if they realize that these tools can be used for legitimate forms of research and learning." Finally, Interviewee 205 noted that, "it is only at this point of realization that these tools can actually be used for instructional purposes, that students will use these tools at home and in class, so that their parents' hard earned money will not be wasted."

Interviewees 206 noted that, "lecturers usually have lap-tops and projectors and in some instances, some lecturers have Apple televisions and iPhones." This interviewee posited that, the more sophisticated models of cellular phones enable students to dictionary checks, thesaurus, or even to go online and do various activities. In addition, interviewee 207 stated that, there is also the Smartboard that enables lecturers to incorporate a greater variety of activities into the lesson.

Finally, Interviewee 207 mentioned that many professors do not use these social media tools because it is not a standard rule in the institution. Now that social media tools are blocked from students' view, some lecturers do not find it problematic. However, a few lecturers find it difficult to teach differentiated lesson without incorporating social media tools. But they cannot challenge the administrators because currently students use these tools inappropriately; therefore the pros outweigh the cons.

Theme 6: Concerns in Using Social Media Tools in Instruction

Question 6 from the Interview Protocol provided answers to the question pertaining to the any concerns which lecturers might have regarding the use of social media tools in teaching. The responses from interviewees also provided answers to research question 4 of the study. Interviewees noted that there were overwhelming concerns regarding the use of social media tools in instruction. These concerns include: (a) distraction and lack of focus; (b) lack of discipline; (c) lack of reliability; (d) hindrances to cognitive development; and (e) blurring of the lines of demarcation between students and faculty members.

Distraction and lack of focus in using social media tools. Interviewees noted that the major concerns in using social media tools include distraction and a loss of focus. These interviewees mentioned that students are easily distracted from lessons when they: (a) become absorbed in viewing videos from YouTube, and (b) view messages on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Subsequently, even if the lecturer uses these tools to enhance learning, students lose focus: (a) become distracted, (b) stray from the intended purpose of using the social media tools, (c) to play games, (d) chat with friends, and (e) view their favorite places when they should be engaged in learning.

Interviewee 203 witnessed an incident that demonstrated that social media tools can create high levels of distraction in a lesson. This interviewee said that, "in the Cascade Room, which is a dish lecturer room, with a typical traditional layout, I was at the back of the room, and 1 in 3 students did not have on their iPad, what the lecturer wanted them to have on it." Interviewee 205 noted that, "immature, young people and even older/mature students who are less motivated, get caught up in using these social

media tools for non-educational activities while they are in class." In addition, Interviewee 204 said that, social media tools are a source of distraction, especially for younger students who cannot remain self-disciplined and focused on the immediacy of the lesson without being distracted. In addition, Interviewee 201 mentioned that, "social media tools such as iPhones and iPads are such a distraction during lessons that if students were not allowed to use these tools in classes, then they would be more engaged in the instructional process."

Lack of discipline in using social media tools. Interviewees 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 202, 208 and 210 posited that a major concern in the use of social media tools is the lack of discipline. Interviewee 208 posited that, a student mentioned that she spends 18 hours on social media. This interviewee continued to say that, while students are busy surfing the World Wide Web, they do not complete assignments and their grades deteriorate. Also, interviewees 201, 206 and 208 said that students are not staying on task. In fact, interviewee 201 noted that, "the younger ones cannot remain o task for ten minutes before texting." Interviewees 201, 203, 205 and 202 said that in many cases, they are using the iPad, not for academic purposes, but for viewing videos, watching movies, or looking at pictures, instead of using social media for instructional purposes.

Therefore, the consensus is that students are not focused on their lessons because they are too engrossed with social media tools. Interviewee 210 noted that, the weaker students seem to be on the phone texting friends, doing "selfies", or exploring on favorite sites. In addition, this interviewee posited that students hide and use them in their laps, and lecturers waste a lot of time policing them, and this can be frustrating. Interviewee 205 said that, regardless of WCU's No Cell Phone Policy, lecturers still waste time

policing and reinforcing this rule, and this extraneous task is counter-productive and time wasting.

Social media tools can be unreliable. There is also the serious concern that technology tools that enable the social media tools to function are often times unreliable. Interviewee 206 and 209 supported the view that technology very often fails. For example, Interviewees 206 and 209 noted that students who had to meet deadlines by submitting their assignment via the internet encountered technological setbacks such as: (a) the Internet went down few minutes before submission of an assignment; (b) the website had technical issues; and (c) the software malfunctioned. Therefore, Interviewee 206 concluded that "the internet is not 100 percent reliable." In addition, interviewee 209 noted that, "students also complained about not having the knowledge to effectively manipulate the system, so there isn't always time within the school system to train the students or even train the instructors adequately in how to use technological tools."

Social media tools hinder cognitive development. Interviewees 208 and 205 thought that social media tools hinder cognitive development and critical thinking skills. For example, interview 208 said that, instead of students thinking about a problem, they google the question and get the answer directly from social media sites. Therefore, interviewee 208 stated that some students do not like to think and relate the questions to the concepts or theories taught in class. In addition, this interviewee noticed that, sometimes, students plagiarize, in that, they copy and paste the answer from the media without analyzing the information, and synthesizing ideas to come to conclusions. Also interviewee 208 said that, lecturers do not know if the students have learned anything

from the lessons taught, since they simply copy their answers, instead of using these social media to enhance their understanding of the concepts taught in classes.

Interviewee 205 explained that for a student to understand a concept, that concept needs to "sink into their minds." This interviewee continued to say that if students copy and paste from Internet, it is a different experience from someone who has read, studied, and developed critical thinking skills. Also, this interviewee continued to say that, in the future, they cannot apply these concepts to real world situations and if they have a challenging question, they simply Google it, without being challenged to think. Interviewee 208 explained that in the past, students were challenged to learn multiplication table, and if they were asked to solve a mathematical equation, then they would use prior knowledge to solve these problems. This interviewee continued to say that now students simple use the calculators on their iPad and iPhone, therefore a student in university cannot calculate a simple mathematical problem, they have to use social media tools. In fact interviewee 208 believed that, "social media tools are disastrous to the process of learning."

Social media tools blur the lines of demarcation. Another problem for staff is mentioned by Interviewee 208 is that there is no line of demarcation between work and school. This interviewee stated that the lines of demarcation between work and school have become so blurred because lecturers find themselves checking emails, text messages and social media sites at home, in order to keep abreast with students' progress. This interviewee continued to say that, "these activities take away from their family time." Interviewee 205 mentioned that lecturers are not paid for this "home time services to students."

In addition, Interviewee 205 noted that students who used social media tools do not understand privacy and security issues. This interviewee continued to say that, students put their personal information on these social media sites and they do not know the implications of their actions. For example, Interviewee 208 noted that anyone can view the information on these sites, anywhere in the world. This interviewee continued say that, "there is a lack of privacy, which is the price we pay for enjoying social media." In addition, Interviewee 208 noted that, some students put pornographic information their social media sites, such as Facebook and Instagram. This interviewee continued to say that these students do not realize that their future employers may view their social media pages, in order to check their background and level of integrity.

There are other concerns interviewees perceived as hindrances to the instructional progress in the classroom. Interviewee 201 mentioned the price prohibitions that prevent and deter some students form purchasing these technological tools. Interviewee 201 continued to say that the high prices of these technological tools prevent students from completing their assignments or research at home. In addition, Interviewee 208 noted that there are health risks in using social media tools, because students who spend hours viewing computer screens can develop brain and the eyes problems. This interviewee believed that students are unaware of the physical harms that the excessive use of social media tools can do to their bodies. Interviewee 208 said that even when students become aware of the harmful effects of excessive use of social media tools, they continue to use them, much to their detriment. These interviewees believe that these concerns need to be effectively managed in order to encourage more instructors to use social media tools for instructional purposes.

Major incidents that deter the use of social media tools. Question 9 from the Interview Protocol provided answers to the question of any negative experiences which lecturers found or students reported in their use of social media tools in learning. These responses provided answers for research question 4. Interviewees 201 and 203 do not use social media tools in instruction, therefore could not relate any major negative incidents in using these tools.

Interviewees 205, 206 and 207, 208, 209 and 210 have not had any experiences of abuse of social media tools. On the other hand, Interviewee 202 mentioned that students used their iPads to view pornography, which is illegal on the campus of WCU. This interviewee noted that, the ICT personal tried to filter these sites so that they are not accessible to students. However, Interviewee 202 continued to say that, students have their personal devices that are connected to the internet, and it was difficult to control what students view on their personal devices. Interviewee 203 also mentioned that students in classes complained about the frequent disturbances of cell phones ringing in class and interrupting the learning process. Both Interviewees 203 and 204 noted that some students even leave the classroom to take phone calls, thus missing important parts of the lesson. In fact, Interviewee 203 noted that, students lie about their actions, and say that they are taking emergency calls, while actually merely socializing with their friends.

In addition, Interviewee 208 noted that cyber bullying takes place in some cases. For example, this interviewee reported incidents of cyber bullying, “where some students complained that other students who used social media tools attacked them, and were abusive to them.” Another serious incident that Interviewee 204 reported was that “some students recorded portions of the lesson, and this recording did not give a true

picture/reflection of the lecturer's presentation." In fact this interviewee noted that, "in the past, these recordings were used against lecturers." Finally, this interviewee further explained that "students recorded lessons and placed them on social media sites, supposedly for their friends who were absent from the lessons, but many times they record parts of the lessons, which do not give a true reflection of the strategies used by the lecturer to teach the concept to the class." These factors discouraged lecturers from encouraging students to bring social media tools into their lessons, especially cell phones.

Theme 7: Institutional Policies Regarding the Use of Social Media Tools

Question 10 from the Interview Protocol provided answers to the question of the policies at WCU that deals with the abuse of social media tools or prevention of breech of privacy in using social media tools in instruction. The responses from interviewees provided answers for research question 4. All interviewees mentioned that WCU had a "No Cell Policy," "Code of Conduct," and "ICT Rules." Most policies were outlined and reinforced by individual faculty members.

Cell phone policies at WCU. Interviewees 204, 206, 207, 209 and 210 were not aware of any policies that dealt with the abuse or prevention of breach of use of social media tools. However, Interviewees 201, 202, 203, and 206 mentioned the "No Cell Phone Policy" at WCU that deals with breach of privacy in using social media tools. Interviewee 205 said that, despite this "No Cell Phone Policy " students flout this rule everyday regardless of the faculties' attempts to stop them. In fact, this interviewee stated that, students are always texting and looking at their phones during lessons. Interviewee 203 mentioned that, often times, notices are posted in classrooms to indicate that students need to "turn off cell phones while in class", but this rule requires constant reinforcement

due to the vast number of students who do not follow the rule. Furthermore, this interviewee stated that, WCU's regulations now contain a clause to reinforce the rule against cell phone use. This rule can be found in the WCU's Code of Conduct, under the clause entitled "Student Behavior." In addition, interviewee 203 noted that, despite faculty members' efforts to reinforce these rules in their classroom, a vast number of students disregard this rule, and still bring their phones to classes.

WCU's code of conduct. Interviewees 202, 204 and 203 are not aware of any policy at WCU that deals with abuse of social media tools. However, 202 and 204 said that WCU has a Code of Conduct which outlines how students need to behave on campus. Interviewee 202 said that, "the Code of Conduct also states that students should not use the internet resources at WCU to access prohibited websites on campus." This interviewee also stated that, "if students violate the rules then they would be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Conduct." However, Interviewee 204 mentioned that, "the Code of Conduct does not explicitly rule against abuse of social media tools, thus it is up to the lecturers to reinforce the rules against the misuse of social media at a classroom level."

WCU's hierarchy of discipline. Interviewee 205 said that she "had no experience regarding breach or misuse of social media tools, therefore, I never enquired to find out if such policies existed." Also, Interviewee 205 mentioned that if she encountered instances where students abused social media tools, then she would first report this incident to the Chair Person of the Department. Furthermore, this interviewee said that, "the chair would follow-up with the disciplinary committee, then perhaps the President would get involved to resolve the matter if it was necessary."

Interviewee 206 posited that "at the classroom level, if students misused social media tools, the student would be asked to leave the room, but this decision is the instructor's choice." In addition, this interviewee noted that, "if the students misuse the technology, they would be asked to leave the classroom, and then they would miss out on the lesson." Finally, this interviewees also noted that, in the case of plagiarism, whereby students copy and paste information from the World Wide Web, instead of writing their own essays, the penalty is that they receive zero percent, so they lose their grade altogether. However, Interviewee 210 noted that, lecturers warn students that if they plagiarize, then there might be greater risk of legal complications. In fact, this interviewee said that, "there is a zero tolerance to plagiarism, or using the media for anything other than it is being intended for."

WCU's ICT policies. Interviewee 208 mentioned that WCU has an ICT policy which states that, "students are not allowed to view porn or any obscene material on the internet sites on WCU campus." In fact, he was instrumental in creating this rule; however, this rule was never reinforced in the institution. For example, this lecturer went into a classroom and encountered students who are viewing obscene materials on their screens.

Interviewees 202 and 208 mentioned that previous ICT manager tried to manage these issues by blocking students from these sites. However, the current ICT Manager normally has a warning sign before you sign on to WCU's internet. Interviewee 208 said that, this warning sign stated that, "you are responsible for everything you do using the school system, therefore, students and faculty have a responsibility to mindful of what they view on internet sites." Interviewee further 208 said that, "there are policies in place

that hold staff and students accountable for what they view on internet sites, but people would not even know about them or even know where to find them." In fact Interviewee 208 continued to say that, "if situations occur where students breech these rules, then the administrators would find the policy that deals with that situation." Ultimately, WCU has policies regarding the use of computers, but none are specific to the use of social media tools."

Interviewee 206 noted that, "there is no documentation on the use of social media tools in WCU's policies." Furthermore, this interviewee noted that, "rules are usually discussed and reinforced by the instructor, so that students know where the instructor stands regarding these issues, and if this is breeched, then the penalty comes in." He said that it is an oral contract rather than a written one. Similarly, Interviewee 207 stated that, "whenever a student or staff member opens the WCU's web page, on the campus technological devices, ICT Department have a paragraph that states that using this computer needs to be in conformity with the policies of the Cayman Islands." This indicates that there are policies governing the use of the internet, but none of these policies are specific to the use of social media tools.

Theme 8: Support Staff for Those Who Use Social Media Tools in Instruction

Question 11 from the Interview Protocol provided answers to the question of the role of the department that offers support for students and staff who might encounter negative issues in using social media tools in instruction. The responses from interviewees provided answers for research question 4. Some interviewees said that the helpdesk and ICT personnel offer support for ICT tools. Other interviewees mentioned the Grievance Committee, Dean of Academic Affairs, Department Chair and the

Disciplinary Committee offer support for students and staff who might encounter negative issues in using social media tools in instruction.

Help desk and ICT personnel assist with technological issues. Interviewees 204, 205, 208 and 209 were not aware of any department at WCU that offer support for students and staff who might encounter negative issues in using social media tools in instruction. Interviewees 201, 203, 206, 207 and 208 said that the Helpdesk does not necessarily offer support for the use of social media tools, but they offer assistance with iPads and laptops. In addition, interviewee 206 noted that, "the Helpdesk is available to the instructors, where they troubleshoot, instruct, advise, train, and are readily available to assist, whether it is in the classroom, offer individual help, or train group students." This interviewee stated that, the ICT personnel simply block social media sites in the public domain. For example, the social media sites are blocked on the computers in the library, to force students to use them for educational purposes. Similarly, Interviewee 206 said that, "the ICT department guides, trains, and assists with providing passwords and ID's." In addition, this interviewee said that, "the Helpdesk gives assistance to students even at late hours of the night, and early in the morning." In contrast this interviewee noted that, "the disadvantage is that there is a high turnover of staff, because they employ persons who are young, and once these persons have acquired sufficient training and experience, they usually move on, therefore, WCU employs another set who are on training."

The disciplinary committee's acts against abusers of social media. Interviewees 202, 205, 208 and 210 spoke of the Grievance Committee, Dean of Academic Affairs, Department Chair and the Disciplinary Committee offer support for

students and staff who might encounter negative issues in using the internet or the Web 2.0 technologies in instruction.

Interviewee 205 noted that, “there is a Grievance Committee who will hear the complaints against students who violate Codes of Conduct and then they have to report to the matter to the Disciplinary Committee.” Furthermore this interviewee posited that, “the Disciplinary Committee will hear the students’ side of the matter, and then arrive at a conclusion and actions to be taken based on WCU’s Code of Conduct.” In addition, the interviewee said that, “the Disciplinary Committee will deal with any other student misconduct, for example: drugs, pornography and smoking.” In these cases, the interviewee noted that, “the committee would meet and they would decide on what action to take based on WCU’s Code of Conduct.”

In addition, Interviewees 202, 208 and 210 outlined the steps taken by lectures who caught students using the school’s resources to access unauthorized websites in class. First, the lecturer would report the matter to the Dean of Discipline, and then the Dean of Discipline would take the matter to the Disciplinary Committee, who would then take action against that student, in accordance with WCU’s Code of Conduct. Secondly, this interviewee noted that, the privilege to use computers on WCU’s campus would be revoked, and they would no longer have access to the websites because they abused the system. Also, Interviewee 208 said that if the offence was very grievous then the President of WCU would take disciplinary actions against students who display gross misconduct on WCU’s campus.

Conclusion

Several themes that explained the role of social media tools at WCU emerged from the findings of this study. The first theme revealed that interviewees felt that social media tools were extremely effective in higher education, but they differed in terms of the areas of effectiveness. Sub-themes in this theme described: (a) the inhibitions of the older generation who the use of social media tools; (b) inhibitions of the older generation regarding the use of social media tools; (c) mixed views on the effectiveness of social media tools; and (d) faculty preference for traditional rather than social media tools.

Theme 2 revealed that students benefited from using social media tools. Sub-themes in Theme 2 described: (a) social media as multi-sensory tools and freedom in learning; (b) social media as multi-sensory tools and freedom in learning. (c) social media tools enable students to access information easily; (c) social media tools enhances communication; (d) social media tools enable students to access information easily; and (e) students use social media tools to enhance learning. Theme 3 revealed the general benefits that faculty derive from using social media tools. Sub-themes from this theme revealed that: (a) social media increases collaboration; (b) social media tools change method of delivery; (c) repository of education information from social media tools; (d) social media tools adds excitement to teaching; (e) incentives to encourage use of social media tools; and (f) workshops on the use of technology.

Next, Theme 4 revealed that there is training in the use of social media tools. The sub-theme described workshops available for faculty in the use of social media technological tools. Theme 5 revealed the accessibility and availability of social media tools for instructional purposes. There were no sub-themes highlighted in theme 5.

Theme 6 revealed the concerns in using social media tools in instruction. The sub-themes described in this theme are: (a) distraction and lack of focus in using social media tools; (b) lack of discipline in using social media tools; (c) social media tools can be unreliable; (d) social media tools hinder cognitive development; (e) social media tools blurs the lines of demarcation; and (f) major incidents that deter the use of social media tools. Theme 7 revealed the institutional policies regarding the use of social media tools. Its sub-themes described: (a) cell phone policies at WCU; (b) WCU's hierarchy of discipline (c) WCU's Code of Conduct; and (d) WCU's ICT Policies. Finally, Theme 8 revealed the availability of support staff for who use social media tools in instruction. The sub-themes described that: (a) Help Desk and ICT Personnel assist with Technological Issues; and (b) the disciplinary committee's acts against abusers of social media.

The case study is an appropriate research method because it allowed the researcher to study a bounded system. The participants of this study were instructors at WCU. The interviews and document analysis gave detailed information about the role that social media tools play in instruction at WCU. Credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability were measures used to ensure trustworthiness of findings. The findings were presented in a detailed, narrative format that is typical of qualitative case studies. Section three will outline the details of the project. In this section, there will be implications for social change, because the hope is that faculty and staff will be encouraged to model and use social media tools to enhance teaching and learning in the higher education institutions at WCU.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The purpose of this position paper is to provide stakeholders with information regarding the role of social media technological tools at WCU. In addition, this project and the results of this research will provide a platform whereby administrators, faculty members, ICT personnel, general staff, and stakeholders can collaborate on, identify, and plan specific strategies that can be used to increase the use of social media technological tools in instruction at WCU. The insights gained from this research can also provide faculty members with knowledge of the hindrances and negative perceptions of faculty members regarding the role of social media tools in their instructional practices. In addition, the white paper will act as a catalyst that will encourage faculty members to collaborate on finding current solutions to existing problems regarding the role of social media technological tools in instruction at WCU.

The results from this study will be disseminated in a manner that may motivate administrators to become proactive in their drive to encourage faculty members to use social media tools in teaching and learning. The dean of research and publication at WCU has asked me to present the findings to faculty members at one of their professional development sessions. This will be one of the opportunities for this white paper to act as a facilitator for changes in instructional practices at WCU. If changes in current instructional practices and policies are to be implemented, a collaborative approach is required, in which all stakeholders are actively involved in the change process.

Rationale

The findings from the research study were taken into consideration in the development of this project. The interviews conducted at WCU provided insight into both the positive and negative experiences of faculty members at WCU regarding the use of social media tools for teaching and learning. In the interviews, faculty members at WCU mentioned that as instructional tools, social media tools (a) encourage students; (b) meet the needs of students; (c) build a repository of information; (d) diversify the teaching experience; (e) facilitate collaboration among faculty members; (f) facilitate easy lesson planning; (g) provide personal benefits; and (h) create opportunities for professional development.

However, negative factors were also unearthed from the research findings, including (a) a lack of established institutional policies regarding the use of social media tools in instruction; (b) an adherence to traditional teaching practices; and (c) students' abuse of social media tools. These factors have hindered faculty members' ability to readily embrace social media tools for the purpose of teaching and learning. Therefore, this project will propose a collaborative approach to deal with these underlying issues and will highlight positive experiences in the hope of encouraging faculty members to increase the use of these tools in instruction. Ultimately, the goal of this white paper is not only to communicate the findings of this research, but also to promote changes in the (a) pedagogical practices, (b) current curriculum, and (c) policies of this institution related to the use of social media tools to support and enhance student learning.

Review of Literature

The purpose of this project is to provide stakeholders with information regarding the role of social media technological tools at WCU and to explore the principles of change management in this local higher education institution. Saturation of this literature review research was attained by using several databases that were retrieved from Walden University's Library, inclusive of Education Research Complete, ERIC, and ProQuest, among others. I used Thoreau to search multiple databases using key words such as *white paper*, *position paper*, *purpose of white paper*, *use of white paper*, *what is white paper*, and *how white paper is used in higher education*.

White Papers

History of white paper. The term *white paper* is a branch of the term *white book*, which refers to a national government's official publication. Willerton (2005) noted that a renowned historical white paper is the "British White Paper of 1922 that is known also as the Churchill White Paper that addressed political conflict in Palestine" (p. 3). According to Willerton, despite the fact that "white papers have their origin in governmental policies, they are now frequently used to introduce technological innovations and products" (p. 3).

In 1970, white papers were known as "marketing requirement documents because they were used as internal corporate documents that revealed strategy and tactical plans" (Stelzner, 2007, p. 11). However, a transition took place in the 1980s, whereby white papers were perceived as technical documents that explained processes in excruciating details" (Stelzner, 2007, p. 11). However, it is said that "businesses started to see the lead

generation potential of white papers and held them out as lures to attract sales prospects" (Stelzner, 2007, p. 11).

In the mid-1990s, the white paper's marketing value was "catching on" in the technology world (Stelzner, 2007, p. 11). The white paper became shorter because business readers focused on challenges in the business world and "less on the inner operations of the solutions" (Stelzner, 2007, p. 11). Along with the change in the typical user of the white paper, there were changes in distribution methods. Today, the modes of white paper delivery are electronic distribution channels, portals, and white paper outlets, which were nonexistent 10 years ago. In addition, many industries outside of technology are now using white papers.

Definition of a white paper. According to Bly (2006), a *white paper* "is a promotional piece in the guise of an informational article or report." In addition, Hazlett (2007) noted that "the white paper is similar to a brochure, that is, to sell or help to sell a product or service, but reads like an article or other important piece of authoritative, objective information" (p. 13). Further, Hazlett posited that white papers are "informational documents that are designed to look like special reports, opinion papers, or other important information" (p. 106). Srikanth (2002) agreed that position papers are marketing tools. Similarly, Stelzner (2007) described a white paper as a business or technical benefits document that states a challenge faced by readers and then presents a solid case for why a specific approach to solving a particular problem is preferred (p. 3).

Authors have expressed contrasting views of the white paper either as a source of information or as a document for problem solving. For example, Bly (2006) noted that white papers are not used by the reader "for theory or for intellectual stimulation, rather,

they meet a specific need or desire for information." Furthermore, Bly stated, "the number one thing your readers want in a white paper is practical information" (p. 33). On the other hand, Gordon (2001) noted that white papers are persuasive essays that are "fact driven, and contain useful information, expert opinions and ironclad logic" (p. 2). Similarly, Stelzner (2007) noted that a white paper is a "persuasive document that describes problems and how to solve them" (p. 2). Stelzner posited that a white paper "usually proposes a solution to a problem, but can also introduce a new concept or describe how to perform technical tasks" (p. 3).

It is noticeable that no scholarly research has been done on the use of white papers in higher education settings. However, the white paper can be used in educational settings because it advocates a particular position as the best way to go forward and indicates that a specific solution is the best remedy for the problem of interest (Stolley, 2010). In fact, the white paper concisely encapsulates information derived from research.

How to write a white paper. According to Stelzner (2007), most people do not read a white paper from cover to cover; therefore, it is critical that before writing a white paper, the author conduct a needs assessment. In addition, Kantor (2009) posited that a white paper has to include background information in order to show the audience how the particular problem was identified. Similarly, Stelzner suggested that authors of white papers (a) address the problem, needs, and challenges, rather than the solutions; (b) avoid direct selling; (c) focus on the benefits rather than the features; (d) provide information that is useful to the reader; and (e) avoid humor (p. 13). Additionally, Stelzner noted that white papers perform varying functions; they may (a) offer a solution to a particular problem; (b) introduce a new concept; or (c) describe how to conduct technical tasks.

Also, Graham (2001) posited that a white paper has to: (a) predominantly educate; (b) highlight the benefits to the reader; and (c) guide the reader to a recommended decision. Furthermore, white papers range from 6 to12 pages in length; however, some of them can exceed 50 pages (Stelzner, 2007). Content wise, white papers consist mostly of text, augmented with illustrations, charts and diagrams (Stelzner, 2007). In a similar manner, Sakumuro and Stolley (2010) noted that, the white paper has to emphasize the concern of the reader, rather than the interest of the author of the white paper. Finally, Kantor (2009) said that, the concluding summary of the white paper is based on the assumption that the reader has read the entire paper; therefore, it needs to close with important "take away messages" (p. 71).

Presenting a white paper. According to Stelzner (2007), an effective white paper makes its way across to the desks of leaders of organizations in a manner in which no other document has ever done before. White papers are able to "fly under the radar" and infiltrate the defenses of many organizations' anti-marketing networks, because they are in demand; and decision-makers bring these white papers into the organizations (Stelzner, 2007). He continued to state that, if the white paper is well-written, then "it will not only reach their target, but also influence them" (Stelzner, 2007, p. 14).

White papers can be disseminated via hard copies, or digital formats (Stelzner, 2007). Also, Kantor (2009) noted that the dissemination process has to be aligned to the purpose of the white paper, so that it can achieve its intended purpose, and reach the target audience. Considering the increasing impact of social media, white papers are currently being disseminated via Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn. In order to uphold its

integrity, the white paper needs to include references and it has to go through a peer-review process.

Purpose of a white paper. According to Stelzner (2007), "white paper helps people to make decisions which range from closing a deal to initiating contact with a specific group of people" (p. 4). In a business context, the choice to use white paper is derived from the need to sell services and goods. In the past white papers were attractive to audiences such as: government, business and engineering and other key decision makers (Stelzner, 2007, p. 4). However, white papers have worked their way across various organizations unlike any other documents. In fact, in the educational arena, there are several white papers published by Educause (http://www.educause.edu/), a publication that promotes the use of technology and research-informed strategies in teaching. One of the outstanding characteristics of the white paper is that it influences people and it leads to decision-making. In addition, Stelzner noted that the "educational value of a white paper can be used not only to inform potential customers, but also to train new customers (p. 14)."

In the educational arena, the white paper can be used to garner support for the increased use of social media tools in instruction, as well as encourage administrators to offer training for faculty members in the use of these tools for instructional purposes. In fact, Graham, (2001) noted that "many business decision makers look to white paper to aid them in their decision making process" (p. 5). Similarly, in the educational arena, a white paper can aid in the decision making process regarding the increased use of social media tools in teaching and learning. The goal of presenting the results of the data in a white paper is to gain the interest of a specific audience. This white paper (Appendix A)

is an effective mode of communicating the results of my research on the role of social media tools in instruction at WCU.

Collaboration to Increase the Use of Social Media Tools at WCU

The results of the study indicated the need to explore additional strategies which are designed to encourage faculty members at WCU to use social media tools in their instructional practices. These research results will provide a platform where administrators, faculty members, ICT personnel, general staff and stakeholders, can collaborate, identify and plan specific strategies that can be used to increase the use of social media technological tools in instruction at WCU.

According to Gewerc, Montero and Compostela (2014), "teaching is a complex social activity that takes place within institutions that are loaded with social, cultural and political meaning; there is not only one university but a polyhedron of faculties, departments, institutes and people" (p. 56). They continued to say that "changes in the ways of addressing teaching and learning processes at a university are not a novelty…" but can be achieved through collaboration (Gewerc, Montero & Compostela, 2014, p. 57).

In fact, Kutsyuruba (2013) noted that, "collaboration has become the cornerstone of institutions as postmodern organizations, serving as the basis for: (a) decision-making, and (b) problem solving" (p. 28). He also noted that, collaboration is a recognizably pronounced integrating principle of: (a) action, (b) planning, (c) culture, (d) development, (e) organization, and (f) research in institutions. Therefore, in a bid to increase collaboration in higher education institutions, current reform efforts have focused on collaboration amongst all stakeholders in an institution. Collegiality and collaboration

have been presented by scholars as having many virtues, and has become a crucial component when undertaking any changes in higher education institutions (Kutsyuruba, 2013).

Despite the benefits and promises of collaboration, there are many challenges, and difficulties in attempting to implement changes within higher education institution. These difficulties include: (a) faculty members' willingness to allocate time to work on unfamiliar strategies; (b) time management; (c) teacher efficacy constraints; (d) fragmented vision; (e) team competitiveness; (f) conflict management; and (g) the isolated physical structure of schools (Kutsyuruba, 2013).

However, despite these challenges experienced in developing change through the process of collaboration, there are positive gains to this initiative. Edelson (2003) said that in order to create an environment where collaborative process is thrives, administrators need to: (a) develop staff expertise, (b) engage in structural preparedness for change process; (c) address economic problems; (d) create a vision for the process; (e) assign faculty to decision making responsibilities; (f) create incentives; (g) address anticipated issues; and (h) build trust and willingness amongst faculty members (pp. 4-6).

Project Description and Goal

The goal of this project is to increase awareness and use of social media technological tools in teaching and learning practices. The themes identified in the research study will help to create the proposed collaboration initiative to find solutions regarding this existing problem. The themes from research findings revealed that social media tools played both a positive and a negative role in instructional practices at WCU. Faculty members recognized the positive role of social media technological tools in

instruction, including: (a) multi-disciplinary tools; (b) provide easy access to information; (c) build inferential skills and enhances communication; (d) provide variety to the learning experiences; (e) increase collaboration; and (f) create a repository of information. However, there are many negative factors that deter faculty members from using social media tools in instruction, including: (a) students' distraction and lack of discipline; (b) unreliable nature of these tools; (c) social media blurring lines of demarcation; and (d) cyber-bullying issues. These negative factors intimidate and hinder WCU's faculty members use of social media tools in instruction. Collaborative efforts of faculty members can increase the number of instructors who use social media tools for instruction, by focusing on the positive role of social media tools, and addressing the issues that hinder the use of these tools.

The success of this project depends on the open-minded attitude of faculty members in changing the existing situation. According to Dufour (2011), faculty members may accept changes if they are directly involved in a collaborative process of change regarding the role of social media tools in instruction. Patria (2012) noted that the support of the administrators is also critical in creating changes within the institution. The collaborative process to increase the use of social media tools at WCU would also include Information Computer Technology (ICT) personnel, Library staff, and other support staff that play an integral role in this change process because they offer support for students who experience ICT issues and they offer assistance to students who use the school.

Interviewees recommended that there needs to be changes in the current practices at WCU regarding the use of social media tools, and faculty members need to adopt innovative practices to decrease the negative issues that they experience in using social

media tools in teaching and learning. The recommendations of interviewees can begin the collaborative process to initiative changes in WCU's institutional policies and pedagogic practices regarding the use of social media tools in teaching and learning. The collaborative practices proposed by this white paper are categorized into three sections: (a) administrative support; (b) creation of a committee; and (c) professional development sessions aimed at training faculty members to use social media tools in instruction at WCU.

First, in order to begin the process of collaboration, there needs to be support from administrators at WCU. It is imperative that the President lends his support to this initiative, so that the collaborative team members can gain necessary resources for this venture. Furthermore, there needs to be an open invitation to WCU administrators, support personnel, staff and faculty members to become a part of this initiative. This inclusive approach will encourage team members to become a part of this ongoing initiative to teach, train, offer support, change curriculum and policies pertaining to the use of social media tools in instruction at WCU.

Secondly, a committee has to be created to lead the collaborative process. I will take the lead role in creating a committee to oversee and lead this collaborative process. The collaborative committee will consist of administrative personnel, support staff, faculty members from each department, and ICT personnel and me. I will serve as consultant for this collaborative committee and help them to understand my research findings and the goals of my proposed white paper. Therefore, I will meet with the committee and share my current research findings on the positive and negative issues related to the use of social media tools in instruction. Then the committee will review my

research findings and provide feedback regarding the feasibility of proposed plans to encourage faculty and staff to use social media tools in instructional practices at WCU. The committee will inform and include all community stakeholders, and seek financial as well as support for training faculty members and students in using social media tools.

Thirdly, in the white paper, I proposed the need for professional development sessions to equip faculty members with the skills necessary to use social media tools in instruction. I will play a key role in the planning and development of the proposed professional development sessions. Based on my research findings, the committee and I will plan and develop professional sessions that are geared towards: (a) equipping teachers with the most recent strategies and practices for instruction using social media tools; (b) changing the current instructional practices of faculty members who do not incorporate social media tools in instructional practices; and (c) encouraging faculty members to implement social media tools in instructional practices.

Evaluation of the collaborative process will take place after each professional development sessions. Throughout the year, the committee members will plan and organize at least eight professional development sessions to assist faculty members in using social media tools for instructional purposes. Evaluation sheets will be distributed at the end of each professional development session to assess the skills and knowledge base of faculty in using social media tools. The last thirty minutes of each professional development session will operate as a forum for faculty members to voice their concerns regarding the issues that they expect to encounter in using social media tools in the teaching and learning process. At these forums, committee members can also evaluate

willingness and the ongoing commitment of faculty members in using social media tools in instruction.

Finally, this project would aim to increase the use of social media tools in the teaching and learning practices of faculty and students at WCU by: (a) highlighting the strategies that work, and (b) focusing on methods of diminishing the problems or negative issues that faculty and students face in using these tools for instructional purposes. The proposed collaborative dialogue amongst all stake-holders can identify strategies that faculty and students can use to incorporate social media tools in instruction.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

The Dean in charge of Research and Publication at WCU has invited me to present my research findings to faculty members and general staff members, after my research has been approved by Walden University. This presentation will be done at one of their college-wide professional developmental sessions, held at the beginning, and during the academic year. Many participants of the study are also eager to hear the findings of my research, and have voiced their interest in attending this professional development session. WCU has the necessary support structures in place for this presentation, including supplies, equipment, and tools for publicity. Therefore, there is in place both the existing support and resources for this presentation.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

There will be no problem in presenting my research and white paper to the faculty and general staff, at the professional developmental session. However, potential barriers may arise during the process of embarking on collaborative strategies to encourage

faculty members to use social media tools at WCU for instructional purposes. Scholars highlighted potential problems that occur during the process of collaboration, including: (a) time management; (b) lack of incentives; (c) lack of adequate technological resources; and (d) conflict management (Kutsyuruba, 2013; Austin et al., 1991). In addition, I foresee issues such as: (a) faculty members opting to use old fashioned techniques for teaching; (b) lack of time allotted for faculty to embark on training in the use of social media tools; and (c) limited number of knowledgeable ICT professionals who can assist when faculty encounter problems in using social media tools for instruction.

Administrators can overcome these challenges by: (a) having prior knowledge of the dynamics of the institutions; (b) rewarding and recognizing collaborative achievements in private and public ways; (c) initiating the collaborative process; (d) encourage students to be a part of the change process; (e) provide technological support for faculty; and (f) garner communal financial support to offset expenses involved in preparing faculty members and students to use social media tools in instruction at WCU.

In addition, the President of WCU endorsed this research through a letter of approval to conduct my research at this institution. Finally, I have received tremendous support from the Dean of Research and Publication, chairs of several departments, and faculty members from WCU.

Implementation Timeline

Professional development sessions occur at regular times during the academic year; therefore, I will present my findings at the professional development session that coincides with Walden's approval of my study. In this way, administrators at WCU can begin the collaborative process immediately after my presentation. The duration of the

presentation would be an hour, with an additional thirty minutes for questions and feedback from faculty members.

Afterwards, the collaborative process may extend for several weeks. I will take the lead role in creating a committee to oversee and lead this collaborative process. It will take approximately two to three weeks to garner support and representation from every department at WCU to create this collaborative committee. Afterwards, this collaborative committee will focus on getting administrative support for this project. Furthermore, I estimate that this collaborative committee will be engaged from September, 2015 to July 2016, in an ongoing process of planning and conducting professional development sessions for faculty members at WCU. These professional development sessions will be aimed at training WCU faculty members to use social media tools in instruction. I expect to be very involved in these professional development sessions to share research findings, and the knowledge and skills that I have learned during the process of conducting this research.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role for presentation of my white paper and research, included in Appendix A, is my primary responsibility. I will contact the Dean of Research and Publication at WCU to notify him that I have completed my study, and received approval from Walden University. I will serve as consultant for this collaborative committee and help them to understand my research findings and the goals of my proposed white paper. I will also play a key role in the planning and development of the proposed professional development sessions. Therefore, the Dean of Research and Publication at WCU will email the time and venue for the upcoming professional development session at WCU. At

the session, I plan to present my research and white paper in a succinct and timely manner.

Project Evaluation Plan

After my presentation at the professional development session, an evaluation sheet will be distributed to staff and faculty members to judge the efficacy and feasibility of the presentation and proposed action plan. The feedback from this evaluation sheet will determine the next steps of the collaborative process to encourage faculty members at WCU to use social media tools in instruction. This evaluation sheet will also ask faculty to indicate their interest in this collaborative process. Also a meeting date can be set to begin the process of creating a committee from various departments at WCU to lead this initiative.

Throughout the year, I will work with the collaborative committee to plan and organize several professional development sessions to assist faculty members in using social media tools for instruction. Evaluation sheets will be distributed at the end of each professional development session to assess the skills, knowledge base of faculty in using social media tools. The last 30 minutes of each professional development session will operate as a forum for faculty members to voice their concerns regarding the issues that they may encounter in using social media tools in the teaching and learning process. At these forums committee members can also evaluate willingness and the ongoing commitment of faculty members in using social media tools in instruction.

Key Stakeholders

The aim of the project was to encourage WCU's faculty members at WCU to use social media tools in higher education instruction. The stakeholders include: (a) faculty

members, (b) administrators, (c) general staff members, (d) students, support services, and (e) community support personnel. The purpose of the white paper is to encourage all of these locally based stakeholders to collaborate in identifying innovative strategies that will encourage faculty members to use social media tools in teaching and learning at WCU.

Project Implications

Social Change Implications

Evidence of positive social change will be visible at the local level. At this level, social change will be demonstrated though: (a) increased interest in students, (b) collaboration amongst faculty members and students; (c) innovative strategies used in the process of teaching and learning; (d) flexibility and ease in learning; and (d) student's excitement in learning. On a long term basis, engagement and collaboration can be conducive to better academic results and retention.

In addition, the lesson learned from the implementation of this project might be used to replicate similar positive experiences beyond the local context. Therefore, positive social change may be visible in students being more efficient in the working world, adapting to the use and changes of technological devices at their work places. Staff will also benefit in increased knowledge, skills and versatility in using social media tools in instruction. They can also tap into the reservoir of online material available, and keep abreast with technological changes and academic innovations.

Far-Reaching Impact

The aim of the project is to encourage faculty members at WCU to use social media tools in teaching and learning. According to Ghandoura (2012), the technological

revolution is spiraling, and scholars advised educators to incorporate technology in their instructional practices. The use of social media technology in instruction can result in: (a) differentiation in learning; (b) increased collaboration amongst stakeholders; (c) equipping students for working world; and (d) change in curriculum at WCU.

There are many different learning styles; therefore, the use of social media tools in instruction can lead to differentiation in learning. Some students are kinesthetic learner, while others are visual or tactile or auditory learners. Therefore, the use of social media tools in instruction will be beneficial because it caters to varying learning styles of students. According to Carney-Strahler (2012), social media technology offers teachers and opportunity to create an atmosphere of learning that fuels creativity in. If students are thinking and becoming creative, then: (a) academic performance will improve; (b) retention rates will increase at WCU; (c) students will graduate successfully; and (d) students can contribute to the society in a positive way.

There will also be increased collaboration amongst stakeholders, whereby the community can intervene and support this program. Communal support is important in providing the finance needed for care and upkeep of technological tools, and provision of necessary technological tools. This may also create increased interest in the welfare and development of WCU.

The banking, tourism, business and other industries in this region where WCU is located are already using social media tools. Majority of the students who graduate from WCU seek employment in this western Caribbean country. Therefore, if students are equipped to use social media tools in instruction, they would have developed the

discipline and skills needed to adapt and positively impact their community, country and other Caribbean regions where these students migrate to find jobs.

Curriculum changes are important if social media tools are integrated into the teaching and learning programs at WCU. Therefore, this project can initiate and lead to changes in the curriculum at WCU.

Conclusion

A qualitative case study was used to investigate the role of social media tools at WCU. A number of 10 faculty members were interviewed, and results indicated reasons why faculty members do not use social media tools at WCU. These results will enable stakeholders to identify innovative strategies that can be used to encourage faculty members to sue social media tools in teaching and learning practices at WCU.

The white paper will be used to inform, encourage and educate all of the administrative personnel, faculty members, and support services to collaborate in promoting the use of social media tools in instruction at WCU. In Section 4, I will outline the strengths and limitations, recommendations for alternative approaches, scholarship, project development, change and reflection, applications and implications for future study.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

In this section, I share my reflections on the project's strengths and limitations, recommendations for alternative approaches, scholarship, project development, leadership, and change. I also share reflections on myself as a scholar, researcher, and project developer. It is my passion for teaching and learning that fuels my desire to research the role of social media tools in teaching and learning at WCU. I believe that this research will act as a catalyst for change in the strategies used by practitioners at WCU, and it may also become a stimulus for collaboration that leads to change in the curriculum. In addition, I reflect in this section on the importance of the work, the project's implications, applications and directions for future research, the project's potential impact for positive social change, and recommendations for future research.

Project Strengths

There are several strengths of this project. The project and the related data collection effort enabled faculty members to share positive and negative views related to the role that social media tools play in instruction at WCU. In the white paper, I highlight major themes from the findings of this research and propose strategies that can be implemented to encourage faculty to use social media tools in instruction.

In addition, the data harnessed from interviews revealed positive and negative reasons regarding the use of social media tools in instruction. The negative reasons that inhibited the use of social media tools in instruction were overwhelming. Therefore, the research findings outlined in the white paper may help administrators at WCU to evaluate the existing practices that deter faculty members from using social media tools in

instruction. This may lead to collaborative discussions pertaining to the use of social media tools that can enhance teaching and learning. The study may also provide opportunities for other faculty members to conduct further detailed quantitative or even mixed method studies on this topic. Furthermore, the proposed collaborative decision-making process may spark interest and motivation in faculty members concerning the use of social media tools in instruction. This process may also increase collaboration among staff.

Limitations and Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The limitations of this project include the small sample size and the dependence on one source for data collection. The relatively small sample size limits the results of this study from being generalized to other settings. Additional data from a larger number of participants could strengthen conclusions and data analysis. The data collected from interviews provided in-depth insight regarding the role of social media tools in instruction at WCU; however, these data do not represent the views of all faculty members from this local university. In order to overcome this limitation, future research could be done with an additional quantitative phase to measure a wider range of participants' perceptions of social media technology tools.

Another limitation is the dependence on one source of data collection. Interviews provided the only source of data used in this study. Despite the use of verbatim transcripts that were peer reviewed and member checked, additional sources of data from observations and surveys could supplement data in this study. The white paper was proposed to spark further discussions among faculty in various departments, thus leading

to innovative strategies that could be used to encourage faculty members at WCU to use social media tools in instruction.

Scholarship

According to Tolk (2012), a scholar has a keen attention that delineates an area of inquiry. The characteristics of a scholar include: (a) disposition, one who demonstrates academic poise; (b) immersion, one who is intimately knowledgeable and familiar with recent literature; (c) authority, one who speaks with clarity and authority about research; (d) persistence, one who is resolute in seeking thorough explanations about events; (e) passion, one who is zealous about research; (f) connection, one who is networked with other international scholars; (g) honesty, one who is candid about one's work and accepts positive criticism; and (h) loyalty, one who supports the institution and engages in development of new ideas and programs (Tolk, 2012, p. 55).

I have learned a lot about scholarship in the process of conducting this research. I have learned that a scholar needs to be resilient in developing material that is trustworthy, credible, and applicable. I have also learned that it is important to analyze and synthesize material from various sources. Scholars use references that are current, which often means material that is not more than 5 years old. Similarly, the standards of the American Psychological Association are updated on a regular basis, therefore, scholars using this style need to keep abreast with these changes, and their writing follows the current standards. In addition, writing a scholarly paper is a rigorous exercise that has to be reviewed repeatedly, so that grammatical errors are not evident in the work. Every scholar participates in courses that train researchers to protect the rights of humans during research.

Project Development

The data results provided a guide for the development of the project. The decision to use the white paper was determined by the findings from the research done at WCU. In drafting the project, I had to use the findings to create the goals and intended outcomes of this project. The intended goal was derived from the revelation that faculty members at WCU recognize the usefulness of social media tools for instructional purposes but rarely use these tools because of seemingly insurmountable issues that plague the institution. The intended outcome was to encourage faculty members to use social media tools to enhance teaching and learning at WCU.

A major task in this project was developing a white paper to present to the faculty members at WCU. The white paper was an appropriate format to present my research findings to the audience at WCU. The white paper condensed the lengthy research findings into a succinctly articulate paper that could be easily read and understood by faculty members. The white paper ends with a call to action for faculty members, urging them to collaborate in their efforts to increase the use of social media tools in teaching and learning. The white paper does not present solutions to the problem but acts as a catalyst for collaboration among faculty members in using social media tools in instruction. The white paper may spark the interest of faculty members in doing further research on the problem.

Leadership and Change

Often, change is regarded as a "quick fix." This approach often does not address the impact of change on the organization; therefore, change may create significant interruptions in the daily functioning of the institution (Gill, 2003, p. 308). However, as

Gill (2003) noted, change is a "process of taking an institution on a journey from its current state, and dealing with the challenges that they encounter along the way" (p. 309). In the context of this study, change took place within me, and change may also occur within the institution.

On a personal level, the process of conducting this research has encouraged me to promote the use of social media in my institution as an effective tool for teaching and learning. Currently, I am keeping abreast with new trends and changes in the technological arena so that I can be available to train faculty members and staff members in using social media tools for instructional purposes. In addition, I have gained confidence, knowledge, and skills needed to assist other faculty members and enhance teaching and learning in my institution.

At the institutional level, change may occur through the collaborative efforts of faculty members toward increasing the use of social media tools in instruction. The research findings and the white paper may create the catalyst for change at WCU. Collaboration may begin from the moment the problem is identified and continue to the implementation of solutions. In this case, solutions may involve (a) accepting that a problem exists; (b) identifying solutions to the problem; and (c) implementing solutions to the problem, which may involve training of faculty members to use social media tools in instruction.

Self as a Scholar

During this doctoral study process, I have learned to become a scholar. As a scholar, I have grown in my abilities to (a) analyze and synthesize peer-reviewed articles; (b) conduct in-depth research; (c) evaluate research resources; (d) investigate research

resources for credibility, bias, relevance, and currency to my paper; (c) summarize ideas of various authors; (d) immerse myself in literature; (e) speak with clarity and authority about my research; and (f) become resolute and determined to complete my studies regardless of the obstacles that present themselves.

In addition, I have learned about professional ethics, in learning to quote sources, paraphrase the work of other authors with references, and use the American Psychological Association standards to cite my research. I have also developed academic poise, and the ability to critique my work, with an aim to produce work of a high standard.

Self as a Practitioner

I have grown tremendously as a practitioner. My entire doctoral journey has helped me to hone my skills as a practitioner. The coursework, research process, and development of the project have helped to develop my skills, knowledge and expertise as a practitioner. In addition, I have gained knowledge and expertise from reading a number of educational journals and research articles. I am able to analyze and synthesize materials from educational research. I can also use my expertise to teach and train faculty members to use social media tools in higher education instruction.

Self as a Project Developer

The nature of the findings combined with the nature of the problem studied provided the options for the type of project that could be developed. The two options given were: professional development and white paper. The choice of the type of project was based on the research findings and the goal and desired outcome of the project. Therefore, white paper was chosen as the most suitable format for presenting my research

to faculty members at WCU. The white paper would (a) offer solution to the problem, and (b) introduce new strategies for using social media tools in instruction. Graham (2001) posited that, the white paper: (a) predominantly educates; (b) highlights the benefits to the reader; and (c) guides the reader to a recommended decision.

In addition, the goal of the project is to use the white paper as a catalyst to spark collaborative discussions amongst faculty members, support services and administrators, regarding the use of social media tools in instruction. The desired outcome was to encourage faculty members to use social media tools in instruction at WCU. Within the allotted hour given to present my white paper to faculty members at WCU, I can deliver my white paper in a succinct manner, and try to promote collaborative discussion amongst faculty members at WCU regarding the use of social media tools at WCU.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

The research and project study was important to me, and I believe that the research findings will be beneficial to the faculty, administrators, support personnel, and the staff members at WCU. For the first time, the faculty members will gain an informed, research driven insight into the role that social media tools play in instruction at WCU. They will also hear the views of other faculty members regarding the importance of social media tools in instruction. Faculty members will benefit from collaborative efforts that will increase the use of social media tools in instruction, and enhance teaching and learning. In addition, the community will benefit by having trained graduates who can contribute to the growth and development of their companies.

This project study is important to me because I have increased in knowledge in using social media tools in instruction. I have also developed expertise that can be used to

train other faculty members. I have become an agent of change, where my research can act as a catalyst that changes the curriculum, strategies and dynamics of WCU and the community.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Worldwide, many studies have been done on the role of social media tools in higher education instruction. However, there has never been a previous study on the role of social media tools for instructional purposes at WCU. A small number of faculty members are using social media tools in instruction, and they have tried to encourage other faculty members to use social media tools in instruction. However, this study has unearthed several factors that hinder WCU faculty members from using social media tools in instruction.

These negative factors include: cyber bullying, lack of privacy, blur in lines of demarcation and lack of focus in classes. Therefore, future quantitative or mixed method researches may examine ways in which faculty members can overcome these problems, so that they can use social media tools in teaching and learning at WCU. Similarly, a mixed method research may yield more information from a wide cross section of faculty members and students. It is important that the views of the student population are taken into consideration regarding the use of social media tools for instructional purposes. A survey may generate more data pertaining to students' use of social tools in instruction.

Potential Impact for Positive Social Change

The potential impact for positive social change lies in the implications for enhanced instructional practices; increased retention rates; high graduation rates and students' ability to adapt to changing technologies used in the workforce. Furthermore,

students will be able to use their social media skills in the workforce, since the business and tourism industries are already using social media tools to promote their products. Ultimately students who graduate from WCU will be able to contribute to positive social changes in their society.

Not only will WCU students be comfortable in using social media tools in the working world, but they will also be able to contribute the continued development of their country as one of the leading banking capital of the world. WCU is a unique society, known as an offshore banking haven. Social media tools are currently being used for communication, banking transactions and more. Therefore, if WCU students are already capable of using social media tools for academic purposes, then they would have the discipline and skills required to function in the workforce; and contribute in a positive way to the development of their country. This partnership will foster communal relationships that can open gateways for financial support from community. The university will ultimately be meeting the needs of the community.

Faculty members will also benefit, because their collaborative efforts may act as a catalyst for social change in their institution. Collaboration may bring create cohesion, unity and increase the technological skills of faculty members at WCU. Collaboration brings together voices from different facets of the university, who will give creative solutions to the problem, and also analyze the prom from varying angles. The collaborative process will highlight experts who can train other faculty members in using social media tools in instruction.

Conclusion

This qualitative, case study was based on the role of social media tools in higher education instruction. A sample size of ten faculty members enabled me to gain in-depth information on the role of social media tools in teaching and learning. The results unearthed positive and negative reasons why faculty members use or do not use social media tools in their instructional practices. It is my hope that this research will act as a catalyst to encourage changes in the teaching and learning strategies of both faculty and students at WCU. The study will also spark the interest of other researchers who can pursue quantitative or mixed method researches, and gain the perspective of students in their in their use of social media tools in instruction.

The white paper document presented in this research will spark collaborative discussions amongst faculty members. These collaborative discussions may bring about changes in the teaching and learning strategies used by faculty and teachers. Furthermore, it is my hope that curriculum changes may occur at WCU as a result of the findings of this research.

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Appendix A: White Paper

Increasing the Use of Social Media Tools in Instruction at WCU:

A Collaborative Approach

A White Paper by Marlene Holder-Ellis

The Goals of this White Paper are:

- **Provide an overview of the role of social media tools in instruction at WCU.**
- **Inform administrators, faculty, support personnel and staff of my qualitative studies.**
- **Introduce the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).**
- **Persuade the faculty members at WCU to use social media tools in instruction.**

Introduction

This white paper gives insight into the role of social media technological tools at WCU. The findings are derived from a qualitative case study. A sample size of ten faculty members was interviewed to find out the role of social media tools in instruction at WCU. The project contains recommendations that aim to encourage administrators at WCU to contemplate addressing the issues that prevent faculty members from using social media tools; and encourage faculty members to use social media tools to enhance teaching and learning.

The Problem

The local problem that prompted the need for this study emerged from a conversation with the Dean of Student Affairs at a local university that will be called Western Caribbean University (WCU), in July, 2011. WCU's Dean of Student Affairs noted that staff members and faculty do not satisfactorily use social media tools in instruction, despite the revolutionary nature of social media in (a) promoting professional development (Bosman, 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011), (b) broadening the reach of the institution (Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011), (c) increasing student success (Dillion et al., 2007; Watson, 2008), and (d) collaborating and participating for students' educational growth (McNaughtet et al., 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011).

This situation occurs despite the abundance of social media tools available to both staff and students at WCU (Watson, 2008, p. 3). Some students at WCU use the social media tools available to enhance their learning, while others use it unfavorably. At WCU, students use a vast amount of social media tools for leisure (Watson, 2008, p. 2). For example, students use Facebook to post pictures and communicate with family and friends; Twitter to follow friends, celebrities and families; Instagram to post pictures; and YouTube to download videos.

Students are already using social media tools for non-educational purposes; instructors can find ways in which social media tools can be used for instructional purposes. Scholars noted that social media tools are utilized in higher education institutions in UK, the United States and Europe (Bosman, 2011; Dillion et al., 2007; Lui, 2010; McNaughtet et al., 2011; Tay & Allen, 2011; Watson, 2008). Therefore, at WCU, faculty members can learn from their experience and find ways to use social media tools for education.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

From a theoretical perspective, a blend of social media technological tools and learning strategies in higher education results in an excellent application of the ideas or concepts found in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Many qualitative researchers have used these two theoretical concepts to support the study of social media tools.

The Theory of Planned Behavior

This theoretical model was proposed by Ajzen in 1991, as an extended part of the Theory of Reasoned Action (Teo, 2012, p. 5). Researchers have extensively used this theory for the prediction of behaviors and intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980; Armitage & Connor, 2001; Armitage & Connor, 2007; Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Mathieson, 1991; Teo, 2012).
TPB can be defined as the negative or positive feelings that faculty and staff have towards using social media (Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Teo, 2012). In TPB, attitude is ascertained by the examination of the individual's belief pertaining to the consequences derived from that individual's behavior as an assessment of the attractiveness of these consequences (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980; Armitage & Connor, 2001; Armitage & Connor, 2007; Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013; Mathieson, 1991).

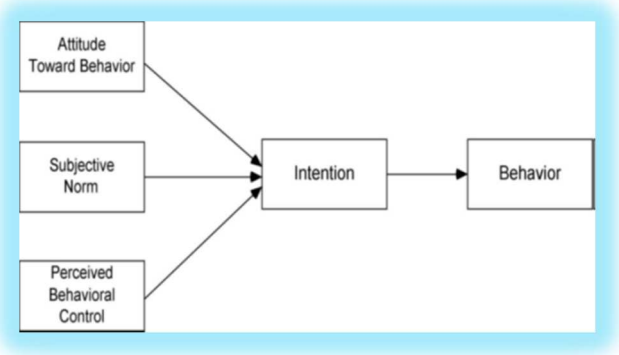

Figure 1. Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

The Technology Acceptance Model

The Technology Acceptance Model is the first research framework to include psychological issues that affect the acceptance of technology (Davis et al. 1989; Hofstede, 2001; Mazman Usluel, 2010; McCoy & Galletta 2007; Su Luan & Sing, 2008; Teo, Straub et al. 1997; Teo, 2012; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Wiid, Cant, & Nell, 2013). This model has the capability of describing user behavior over a vast range of user population as well as end-user computing technologies, while at the same time maintaining user caution (Echeng, Usoro, & Majewski, 2013;Teo, 2012).

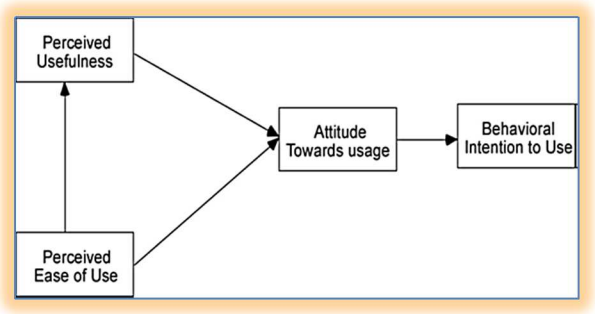

Figure 2. Technology Acceptance Model (Davis et al., 1989)

Synopsis of the Study

Currently technology is widely used by the faculty members and students at higher education institutions in this Western Caribbean region. According to the Survey of ICT and Education in the Caribbean Volume II: Country Reports, (2010), the ratio of students to computers is 4:1, which is comparable to countries where instructors in higher education use social media; for example, Canada - 6:1, USA - 8:1 and UK - 9:1 (p. 2).

At WCU, many students view social media technology as an important tool that enhances their learning experiences, while other students typically do not use it for learning. Faculty members doubt that students will use social media tools to enhance students' learning experiences (Watson, 2008, p. 3). Moreover, faculty members at the local university are unsure of how to use the social media to enhance students' learning.

Faculty members need to attend workshops on social media tools for instruction and give clear instructions to students, with regards to the use of any form of social media tools for instruction (Redecker, Ala-Mutka, & Punie, 2011, p. 153). Currently, there are no professional workshops at WCU that help faculty members identify strategies, and provide students with guidance on how to use social media as a learning tool.

Research Questions

In alignment with the local problem and the findings from the literature, the following research questions will be the focus of this study:

- **How do the faculty members at a WCU perceive the overall effectiveness of social media tools in instruction?**
- **What kind of social media applications do faculty members at WCU consider as effective tools to enhance student learning in their classrooms?**
- **What kinds of instructional strategies do faculty members at WCU perceive as being useful to integrate social media tool in classrooms?**
- **What concerns do faculty members have regarding the use of social media tools for teaching?**

Research Design and Approach

To identify the role of social media tools in instruction at WCU, I used an exploratory qualitative case study. The case study method enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the specific issue, as it related to the role of social media tools in instruction at WCU (Stake, 2005, p. 23). In qualitative approach, truth emerged from the way people understood their world (Merriam et al., 2007; Merriam, 2009). I discovered the experiences of instructors regarding the utilization of social media tools in instructional process.

Population and Sample

In this exploratory qualitative study, the goal was to develop an in-depth understanding of the role of social media tools at WCU (Creswell, 2012, p. 139). The population included instructors from various departments at WCU. Ten faculty members at WCU were interviewed. Participants were selected using purposeful sampling, a nonrandom sampling method (Creswell, 2012; Lodico et al., 2010).

Data collected also showed that few participants at WCU used social media tools such as: Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Social Bookmarking, Wikis, or Blogs for instructional purposes. From the pool of 10 participants who reported their use of social media tools in instruction, one used Twitter, one used Blogs, four used YouTube, none used Facebook, Social Bookmarking, and Wikis for instructional purposes at WCU. In addition, five participants did not use any type of social media tools in instruction, and the five remaining participants used only one form of social media tools in instruction.

Data Analysis

After the interviews were conducted, I compared the verbatim transcripts to digitally recorded versions of the interviews to ensure that the transcripts were accurate. I used "systematic," coding based on a recognizable process that is standardized practice for qualitative researchers (Hatch, 2002, pp. 147-210). The four steps involved in this process of systematic coding were: (a) found common elements (codes), (b) reduced these codes by grouping similar codes in themes, (c) analyzed the identified themes to reduce the overlaps, and (d) created major themes significant my your study.

Results

A total of 9 broad themes emerged during the process of analysis of interviewee's responses and data collected from the interviews. Interviewees gave responses regarding the role social media tools at WCU. Table 3 shows the themes that emerged from this data collection process, along with the research questions from the project study. The themes that emerged included: (a) the effectiveness, (b) benefits, (c) training, (d) availability, (e) accessibility, (f) concerns, (g) institutional policies, and (h) support provided in the use of social media tools.

Theme 1: Social Media Tools as Extremely Effective Teaching Tools

Many interviewees felt that social media tools were extremely effective in higher education, but they differed in terms of the areas of effectiveness. Interviewees believed that social media is effective because it enables: (a) students to see things as the lecturer perceives them; (b) students to learn theory and relate it to real world; (c) lectures to give instructions to students outside of the classroom setting. Despite the fact that Interviewees 203, 204, 210 found social media tools as effective for instructional purposes, only a few faculty members at WCU use social media tools in instruction, and only faculty members who felt competent in the use of these tools actually embraced them in instruction.

"Only competent faculty members embrace the use of social media tools in social media tools."

Inhibitions of the Older Generation Regarding the Use of Social Media Tools

Interviewees believed that social media tools were useful especially with the younger generation who were: (a) "techno savvy", (b) are far more comfortable with technology, and (c) enjoyed lecturers using social media tools that assist them in learning. However, some interviewees believed that the older generation of students at WCU has inhibitions regarding the use of social media tools for instructional purposes.

This disparity between the older and younger generation creates a problem for the lecturer who has to find strategies to bridge the gap between finding ways to reach their younger and modern learners, while at the same time, not leaving behind the older, more mature learners who simply cannot keep abreast with shifts and changes in technology.

"In using social media tools, it is problematic for faculty members to bridge the gap between the old and young people."

Mixed Views on the Effectiveness of Social Media tools

Some Interviewees felt that social media tools can sometimes be effective in the instructional process, especially for: (a) dissemination of information, and (b) accessibility to information. On the other hand, social media tools can be extremely ineffective in a number of ways, such as: (a) students' interdependence or total reliance on these tools, (b) distraction incurred by devices with access to social media tools. These mixed views regarding the effectiveness of social media tools provided a lack of consensus amongst faculty members at WCU regarding the use of social media tools for instructional purposes.

Mixed views regarding the role of social media tools create a lack of consensus amongst faculty members.

Faculty prefers Traditional Methods rather than Social Media Tools

Some faculty members did not use social media tools in instruction. Many instructors opted to use: (a) traditional methods that involved "chalk and talk;" and (b) technological gadgets, such as: CD's and DVD's, rather than social media tools. For example, interviewee 205 preferred to use simple technological tools, rather than social media tools for instruction. In fact, this lecturer used technological such as: projectors, music tapes, DVD, films and parts of films, and recorded speeches which are historically authentic. She said that "I have used YouTube for courses in public speaking, literature and I have also used films and parts of films, recorded speeches which are historically authentic…and are particularly useful for the Public Speaking course, where we study great speakers and speeches."

"Some faculty members opt to use traditional methods of teaching rather than using social media tools."

Theme 2: Students Benefit from Using Social Media Tools

Responses from all of the Interviewees were varied, and answers revealed that social media tools were beneficial to students because of: (a) multi-sensory approach, (b) accessibility and

freedom in learning, (c) changing abstract concepts to concrete ones, (d) adapting to modern methods of learning, (e) building strong critical and inferential reading skills, (f) adding interest and excitement to learning experiences, (g) communicating with lecturers, (h) cutting down on work load and (i) interacting with peers and lecturers. However, despite the numerous benefits mentioned in interviews, some faculty members either do not use social media tools, or is deterred by the overwhelming challenges that will be mentioned in the next section of this paper.

Social Media as Multi-Sensory Tools and Freedom in Learning

A few of the interviewees posited that social media tools were beneficial to the educational experiences because students enjoy: (a) multisensory approach to learning; and (b) freedom of learning. In addition, other interviewees noted that students needed to become disciplined in order to benefit from these experiences.

For example, interviewee 201 noted "general benefits would be the multi-sensory approach, in that; it is not just the oral, but the visual, the tactile skills that come into play." She mentioned that students enjoyed seeing and hearing, rather than constantly being exposed to the "chalk and talk", a Caribbean term which refers to a lecturer who only uses the classroom board and lecturing to communicate to his/her students. These interviewees believed that social media can be a very beneficial tool if students are focused and use social media for the right purpose.

"Social Media tools appeal to oral, visual, tactile or auditory learners."

Social Media Tools enable Students to Access Information Easily

Interviewees posited that social media tools enable students to access materials for learning even if they are not physically present at school. Students also can use social media tools to understand concepts that are difficult. For example, interviewee 202 believed that social media tools made learning accessible to students everywhere, anywhere and around the world. He also noted that, many WCU students own the most recent smart phone technology, which they used to quickly access to WCU's Angel or Blackboard sites. This Interviewee stated that, "lecturers posted power-points, tests, assignments, and Blog discussions on these sites." In addition, "instructors posted assignments on Facebook, which was easily accessible to students,"

"Students can use social media tools to understand concepts that are difficult."

Social Media Tools build Inferential Skills and Enhances Communication

In retrospect, Interviewee believed that the benefits included: (a) the development of stronger inferential reading skills, and (b) increased confidence in interpreting and analyzing Literature material. The consensus from the Interviewees is that despite the benefits derived from using social media tools in instruction, only a minority of students from WCU used these tools for these educational purposes.

Despite the benefits of using social media for instructional purposes, only few students use them as learning tools.

Students Use Social Media Tools to Enhance Learning

Some interviewees noted that social media tools were used for: (a) research purposes, (b) collaboration, (c) revision, (d) problem solving, and for instructional purposes. In addition, some interviewees believed that students used social media tools to: (a) do independent research; (b) recommended research; (c) access different internet sites in preparation for quizzes; (d) record and video lecturers during class session; (e) solve Mathematical problems, (f) access information, and (g) share information on the World Wide Web.

Social media tools help students to build skills in collaboration, research and revision.

Theme 3: General Benefits that Faculty derive from Using Social Media Tools

Some interviewees felt that social media tools offered more benefit to the students, than to the lecturers. Many lecturers at WCU do not use social media tools for instructional purposes, however, some lecturers still feel that these tools can be beneficial in the teaching and learning process.

Responses from interviewees pointed out that faculty members benefit from using social media tools because they: (a) encourage students; (b) meet the needs of the students; (c) build a repository of information; (d) diversify the teaching experience; (e) collaborate amongst faculty members; (f) facilitate easy lesson planning; (g) provide personal benefits and (h) create opportunities for professional development. Despite the abundance of social media tools available to faculty members at WCU, some instructors prefer their older methods of teaching.

Social Media Increases Collaboration

Some interviewees noted that social media tools are beneficial because they enabled faculty members to collaborate with students online: (a) to reinforce concepts taught in class, and (b) encourage students to make academic progress. In addition, social media tools encouraged collaboration amongst students: (a) to complete assignments, (b) do research, (c) preparing for tests.

Despite the positive role that social media tools play in increasing collaboration amongst students and faculty members, interviewer 208 noted that, “We have also become very dependent on social media that if you doing work and your internet go off, then you are stopped…so it has its pros and cons, but the pros outweigh the cons.”

Social Media Tools Changes Lecturer’s Method of Delivery

Social media tools help the lecturer to be creative in planning lessons. For example, interviewee 203 posited that Instructors can use these tools to create “three dimensional” images; instead of the two dimensional images usually drawn on the white board. In addition, he mentioned that instead of merely visualizing concepts, students could literally see them. Interviewees 201 and 203 noted that the incorporation of social media tools in instruction increased students’ interpretation and understanding of concepts taught in classes.

Social media tools “increase students’ interpretation and understanding of key concepts in class.”

Repository of Education Information on Social Media

Some interviewees posited that instructors used social media tools to: (a) communicate with other faculty members; (b) collaborate on tests and exams; (c) assist other faculty with lesson planning; (d) networking with shareholders; (e) keeping abreast with current news and social events; (f) providing professional development for other faculty members; (g) communicate important notices and schedule meetings; and (i) tracking student performance. For example, interviewees 206 and 201 shared the opinion that social media tools: (a) enable the instructor to reach the students readily; (b) provide a wealth of resources materials; and (c) present ideas for diversifying the classroom experience.

Social media tools create differentiation in learning.

Social Media Tools adds Excitement to Teaching

Social media tools benefitted instructors because they added excitement to the teaching process. Interviewee 206 and 209 added that social media tools are: (a) relatable to young people, (b) breaks the monotony of talk, and (c) is accessible to young people. In addition, Interviewee 206 posited that, "A student no longer enters a lecture hall and being bored to death by someone who is speaking constantly." Lecturers now have choices of adding Blogs, YouTube, Myspace, Twitter and Facebook to their lessons to make lessons more interesting.

Social media tools help faculty members to change "concepts that are intangible to tangible."

Interviewee 202 stated that there are no financial benefits provided by government or the school to encourage instructors to use social media tools in instruction. In addition, Interviewee 205 said that, only IPads and IPhones are given to faculty members for classroom use. Interviewee 205 also noted that these IPads and IPhone are beneficial because instructors communicate easily with their students, and this replaces office hours.

In fact, Interviewee 205 posited that, faculty members are also given lap top and cell phones in order to maintain communication with school administrators, colleagues and students. In addition, interviewee 209 stated that faculty members do not get time off from work to participate in workshops that teaches them how to use social media tools in instruction.

Social media tools help faculty members to communicate with students.

Theme 4: Training in the Use of Social Media Tools

Various interviewees: (a) had no knowledge of the training offered in the institution, regarding technology, or social media tools; (b) noted that that currently WCU does not have any training or workshops based on the use of social media tools in instruction; (c) mentioned that annual workshops are done at WCU in the use of technology, but not in the use of

social media tools; (d) stated that faculty members, who are experts in the use of general technology, teach other faculty members how to use technological tools. However, interviewees noted that, training sessions does not focus on the use social media tools such as: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Myspace and Flickr as instructional tools.

Training is done on the use of technology at WCU, but not in the use of social media tools for learning.

Workshops on the Use of Technology

Interviewees 201, 203, 204, 205, 209 and 210, said that currently WCU does not have any training or workshops on the use of social media tools in instruction. However, these interviewees noted that WCU hosts training in the use of Grammarly and Turnitin. Interviewee 205 posited that a few faculty members teach instructors how to use Grammarly and Turnitin, which is WCU's learning platform. For example, she noted that, last semester, faculty members had a series of workshop for lecturers in the Language Arts Department for Grammarly and Turnitin.

Theme 5: Accessibility and Availability of Social Media Tools

The responses were unanimous, in that, all the Interviewees mentioned that students owned smart phones, IPhones, IPads, lap-tops and other technological devices, and they accessed free Wi-Fi at the university. Despite the abundance of these technological tools, only a minority of the student population used social media tools for instructional purposes.

Over the years, interviewee 202 stated that, "administrators have filtered sites such as: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and YouTube, to prevent students from using them for the wrong purposes." In addition, this interviewee argued that, "some faculty members are trying to get the administrators to unblock YouTube, so that they can make it accessible to students and faculty members." However, the reasons for blocking these social media sites include: (a) younger students misuse the tools; (b) the use of these tools increases the level of distraction in class; (c) students quickly divert from looking at these tools for instructional purposes, and get drawn away by the other materials, which are not beneficial educationally.

Despite the abundance of these technological tools, only a minority of the student population used social media tools for instructional purposes.

Theme 6: Concerns in Using Social Media Tools in Instruction

Question 6 from the Interview Protocol provided answers to the question pertaining to the any concerns which lecturers might have regarding the use of social media tools in teaching. Interviewees noted that there were overwhelming concerns regarding the use of social media tools in instruction. These concerns include: (a) distraction and lack of focus; (b) lack of discipline; (c) lack of reliability; (d) hindrances to cognitive development, and (e) blurring of the lines of demarcation between students and faculty members.

Distraction and Lack of Focus in Using Social Media Tools

Interviewees noted that the major concerns in using social media tools include distraction and a loss of focus. These interviewees mentioned that, students are easily distracted from lessons when they: (a) become absorbed in viewing videos from YouTube, (b) view messages on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Subsequently, even if the lecturer uses these tools to enhance learning, students lose focus: (a) become distracted, (b) stray from the intended purpose of using the social media tools, (c) to play games, (d) chat with friends, and (e) view their favorite places when they ought to be engaged in learning.

"Social media tools offer too much distraction to students."

Lack of Discipline in Using Social Media Tools

Interviewee 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 202, 208 and 210 posited that a major concern in the use of social media tools is the lack of discipline. The consensus is that students are not focused on their lessons because they are too engrossed with social media tools. Interviewee 210 noted that, the weaker students seem to be on the phone texting friends, doing "selfies", or exploring on favorite sites. In addition, this interviewee posited that, students hide and use them in their laps, and lecturers waste a lot of time policing them, and this can be frustrating. Interviewee 205 said that, regardless of WCU's No Cell Phone Policy, lecturers still waste time policing and reinforcing this rule, and this extraneous task is counter-productive and time wasting.

"Students are not focused on their lessons because they are too engrossed with social media tools."

Social Media Tools can be Unreliable

There is also the serious concern that the technological tools which enables the social media tools to function is often times unreliable. Interviewee 206 and 209 supports the view that technology very often fails. For example, interviewees 206 and 209 noted that, students who had to meet deadlines by submitting their assignment via the internet encountered technological setbacks such as: (a) the internet went down few minutes before submission of an assignment; (b) the website had technical issues; and (c) the software malfunctioned. Therefore, interviewee 206 concluded that "the internet is not 100 percent reliable." In addition, interviewee 209 noted that, "students also complained about not having the knowledge to effectively manipulate the system, so there isn't always time within the school system to train the students or even train the instructors adequately in how to use technological tools."

"The technological tools that enable the social media tools to function is often times unreliable."

Social Media Tools Hinder Cognitive Development

Interviewees 208 and 205 think that social media tools hinder cognitive development and critical thinking skills. For example, interview 208 said that, instead of them thinking about a problem, they google the question and get the answer directly from social media sites. Therefore,

interviewee 208 thinks that, some students do not like to think and relate the questions to the concepts or theories taught in class. In addition, this interviewee 208 noticed that, sometimes, students plagiarize, in that, they copy and paste the answer from the media without analyzing the information, and synthesizing ideas to come to conclusions. Also interviewee 208 said that, lecturers do not know if the students have learned anything from the lessons taught, since they simply copy their answers, instead of using these social media to enhance their understanding of the concepts taught in classes.

"Social media tools hinder cognitive development and critical thinking skills."

Social Media Tools Blurs the Lines of Demarcation

Another problem for staff is mentioned by Interviewee 208 is that there is no line of demarcation between work and school. This interviewee stated that, the lines of demarcation between work and school have become so blurred, because lecturers find themselves checking emails, text messages and social media sites at home, in order to keep abreast with students' progress. This interviewee continued to say that, "these activities take away from their family time." Interviewee 205 mentioned that lecturers are not paid for this "home time services to students."

"Faculty members find that the lines of demarcation are blurred because of the use of social media tools."

Major Incidents that Deter the Use of Social Media Tools

Interviewees 205, 206 and 207, 208, 209 and 210 have not had any experiences of abuse of social media tools. On the other hand, Interviewee 202 mentioned that, students used their IPads to view pornography, which is illegal on the campus of WCU. This interviewee noted that, the ICT personal tried to filter these sites so that they are not accessible to students. However, Interviewee 202 continued to say that, students have their personal devices that are connected to the internet, and it is difficult to control what students view on their personal devices. Interviewee 203 mentioned that students in classes complained about the frequent disturbances of cell phones ringing in class and interrupting the learning process.

"Students used their IPads to view pornography, which is illegal on the campus of WCU."

Theme 7: Institutional Policies regarding the Use of Social Media Tools

Question ten from the Interview Protocol provided answers to the question of the policies at WCU that deals with the abuse of social media tools or prevention of breech of privacy in using social media tools in instruction. All interviewees mentioned that WCU had a "No Cell Policy," "Code of Conduct," and "ICT Rules." Most policies are outlined and reinforced by individual faculty members.

Cell Phone Policies at WCU

Interviewees 204, 206, 207, 209 and 210 were not aware of any policies that dealt

with the abuse or prevention of breach of use of social media tools. However, interviewees 201, 202, 203, and 206 mentioned that the "No Cell Phone Policy" at WCU that deals with breach of privacy in using social media tools. Interviewee 205 said that, despite this "No Cell Phone Policy," students flout this rule everyday regardless of the faculties' attempts to stop them. In fact, this interviewee stated that, students are always texting and looking at their phones during lessons. Despite faculties' efforts to reinforce these rules in their classroom, a vast number of students disregard this rule, and still bring their phones to classes.

Students flout the rules of the institution regarding the use of cell phones in classes.

WCU's Code of Conduct

Interviewees 202, 204 and 203 are not aware of any policy at WCU that deals with abuse of social media tools. However, 202 and 204 said that WCU has a Code of Conduct which outlines how students need to behave on campus. Interviewee 202 said that, "the Code of Conduct also states that students are not allowed to use the internet resources at WCU to access prohibited websites on campus." This interviewee also stated that, "if students violate the rules then they would be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Conduct."

The Code of Conduct does not explicitly rule against abuse of social media tools.

WCU's Hierarchy of Discipline

Interviewee 205 said that, "I had no experience regarding breach or misuse of social media tools, therefore, I never enquired to find out if such policies existed." Also, interviewee 205 mentioned that if she encountered instances where students abused social media tools, then she would first report this incident to the Chair Person of the Department. Furthermore, this interviewee said that, "the Chair would follow-up with the Disciplinary Committee, then perhaps the President would get involved to resolve the matter if it was necessary." Interviewee 206 posited that, "at the classroom level, if students misused social media tools, the student would be asked to leave the room, but this decision is the instructor's choice."

WCU has strict chain of authority deal with issues regarding the abuse of social media tool.

WCU's ICT Policies

Interviewee 208 mentioned that WCU has an ICT policy which states that, "students are not allowed to view porn or any obscene material on the internet sites on WCU campus." In fact, he was instrumental in creating this rule; however, this rule was never reinforced in the institution. For example, this lecturer would go into a classroom and encounter students who are viewing obscene materials on their screens. Interviewee 206 noted that, "there is no documentation on the use of social media tools in WCU's policies."

Theme 8: Support Staff for who use Social Media Tools in Instruction

Some interviewees said that the Helpdesk and ICT Personnel offer support

for ICT tools. Other interviewees mentioned the Grievance Committee, Dean of Academic Affairs, Department Chair and the Disciplinary Committee offer support for students and staff who might encounter negative issues in using social media tools in instruction.

WCU offers support for faculty and students who encounter issues while using technology, but the support is not specific to social media tools.

Help Desk and ICT Personnel assist with Technological Issues

Interviewees 204, 205, 208 and 209 were not aware of any Department at WCU that offer support for students and staff who might encounter negative issues in using social media tools in instruction. Interviewees 201, 203, 206, 207 and 208 said that the Helpdesk does not necessarily offer support for the use of social media tools, but they offer assistance with iPads and laptops. In addition, interviewee 206 noted that, "the Helpdesk is available to the instructors, where they troubleshoot, instruct, advise, train, and are readily available to assist, whether it is in the classroom, offer individual help, or train group students."

"There is a high turnover rate of ICT staff that affects assistance that faculty and students receive when they use social media tools for instruction."

The Disciplinary Committee's Acts against Abusers of Social Media

Interviewees 202, 205, 208 and 210 spoke of the Grievance Committee, Dean of Academic Affairs, Department Chair and the Disciplinary Committee offer support for students and staff who might encounter negative issues in using the internet or the web 2.0 technologies in instruction. For example, interviewee 205 noted that, "there is a Grievance Committee who will hear the complaints against students who violate Codes of Conduct and then they have to report to the matter to the Disciplinary Committee." In addition, the interviewee said that, "the Disciplinary Committee will deal with any other student misconduct, for example: drugs, pornography and smoking." In these cases, the interviewee noted that, "the committee would meet and they would decide on what action to take based on WCU's Code of Conduct."

Recommendations for Collaboration

This white paper presents recommendations that focus on a collaborative process of encouraging faculty members at WCU to use social media tools in instructional practices; and also encourage administrators to develop innovative policies that will address the negative issues that faculty encounter in using social media tools in instruction. The collaborative practices proposed by this white paper will be categorized into three sections: (a) administrative support; (b) role of committee; and professional development sessions aimed at training faculty members to use social media tools in instruction at WCU.

Action Plan for encouraging Faculty Members to Use Social Media Tools in Instruction at WCU

1. Gain support of the President, administrators and key stakeholders.
2. Create a channel for collaboration, and encourage participation from administrators, support personnel, ICT personnel, faculty members and staff members.
3. Present the project and research findings to all stakeholders.

The committee will:

1. Organize professional development training sessions on a regular basis.
2. Encourage increased interaction between ICT support personnel.
3. Encourage administrators to provide resources; dedicated time for faculty to attend workshop; and
4. Encourage faculty to engage in further research in the role that social media plays in higher education instruction.

The committee will:

1. Plan professional development sessions to train all faculty members in using social media tools for instructional purposes.
2. Encourage faculty members to us social media tools to increasing student achievement through the use of social media tools.
3. Embark on initiatives to teach students how to use social media tools for assignments, presentations, and collaboration and learning purposes.
4. Encourage faculty members to attend workshops where they can observe experts who use social media tools for instructional purposes.
5. Conduct a survey amongst faculty members to ascertain their knowledge and skill level in using social media tools for instructional purposes.

Conclusion

The white paper presents a collaborative plan to encourage faculty members to use social media tools in their instructional practices. The proposed action plan requires the support of all stakeholders, especially the President and administrative team, in bring about changes in the teaching and learning strategies employed by faculties and students; and also encourage change the curriculum and policy changes at WCU.

The white paper highlights the problem, theoretical and conceptual framework, synopsis of the study, research design, population and sample, and research findings from the study done at WCU. These findings will act as a catalyst for discussions regarding the role that social media is to play in instructional practices of faculty at WCU.

Finally the project includes recommendations and an action plan that outlines the processes of collaboration. The collaborative process begins with administrative support, followed by role of the committee and professional development that will train and guide faculty members in using social media tools for instructional purposes.

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Appendix B: Consent Form
CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study of the role of social media tools in higher education instruction. I will examine the kinds of social media tools used by faculty members in enhancing learning in the classroom, and instructional strategies which faculty attempted to use, or intend to use in classroom instruction. I will examine the concerns which faculty members may have if social media tools are implemented in instruction. The institution will be referred to as WCU in my study, for purposes of confidentiality. The researcher is inviting instructors in higher education at this institution, who use social media tools in their instructional practices to participate in the study. For example, instructors from English, Science, Math, Business, Humanities, and other departments at the university are invited to be a part of the study. Due to the limited scope of the study, a total of 8-10 participants are needed for the study. Participants can include male and female, and various nationalities and ethnic groups are invited to be in the study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Marlene Holder-Ellis who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to research how faculty members at a WCU perceive the overall effectiveness of social media tools in instruction; what kind of social media applications faculty members at WCU consider as effective tools to enhance student learning in their classrooms; what kinds of instructional strategies faculty members at WCU perceive as being useful to integrate social media tool in classrooms and what concerns do faculty members have regarding the use of social media tools for teaching.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Participate in interviews either in person or via telephone for your convenience.
- Each interview will be expected to last for about 25-45 minutes.
- The interviews will be digitally recorded followed by preparation of verbatim transcripts.

Here are some sample questions:

- How do the faculty members at a WCU perceive the overall effectiveness of using social media tools in instruction?
- What kind of social media tools do faculty members attempted or intended to use, to enhance the learning in their classrooms?

- What kinds of instructional strategies do faculty members attempted or intended to use, to integrate social media tools in courses?
- What concerns do faculty members have regarding the use of social media tools for teaching?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at the University College of the Cayman Islands will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as exhaustion during interviews, tiredness after work hours or the need to take a break during interviews. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

The study's potential benefits include:

As a positive repercussion of the findings from this project, faculty members may reflect on strategies of using social media technological tools in instruction, and those outlined by scholars and educators worldwide.

The project study also highlights some of the concerns which faculty may have in using social media technology tools in formal lessons. Therefore, this case study provides recommended strategies that faculty can use to alleviate concerns about use of social media technology tools in learning.

This study will contribute to positive social changes, by providing faculty with a greater understanding of the barriers that prevent the use of social media tools.

Payment:

There will be no reimbursements for participation, and involvement is voluntary.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by (a) concealing identities from anyone not directly in the study; (b) real names will not be used in transcripts or research reports; and (c) administrators at WCU will not have knowledge of names of informants and information given in this study.

Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:
You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via 1345-917-0655 or marlene.holder-ellis@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 001-612-312-1210 (for participants outside the US). Walden University's approval number for this study is **IRB will enter approval number here** and it expires on **IRB will enter expiration date.**

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant

_____

Date of consent

_____

Participant's Signature

_____

Researcher's Signature

_____

Appendix C: Demographic Data—Letter to Potential Participants

My name is Marlene Holder-Ellis, graduate student at Walden University. I hereby invite you to participate in a qualitative research study based on the role of social media technology tools in higher education instruction. Due to the limited scope of the study, a total of 8-10 participants are needed for the study. Each participant will be asked to participate in 45 minutes interview sessions, explaining the role of social media technology tools in higher education instruction. Participants can include male and female from various nationalities and ethnic groups.

The purpose of this study is for partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education at Walden University. This study focuses on the role of social media tools in higher education instruction. Please note that the information given here is confidential and will not be divulged to anyone.

In this study, participants will be selected using purposeful sampling, which is a non-random sampling procedure. This qualitative study will include a sample of instructor from a broad range of ethnic groups and departments at WCU, as well as balanced gender representation. In addition, the selection criteria will include diversity in ethnicity, gender and from various departments at WCU. You are not obligated to answer these questions, but if you do so, it will assist me in getting a wide range of participants for this study.

To further assist me in recruiting 8-10 suitable participants for this study, I am requesting that you answer the following questions:

1. Please indicate which department you are affiliated with.

Mathematics _____

English _____

Modern Languages _____

Humanities _____

Sociology _____

Science _____

2. Please indicate what instructional technology you typically use in your classroom?

_____

Thank you for your contribution to this project.

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Study ….The role of social media tools in higher education instruction.

Time of Interview:
Date:
Method:
Interviewee alphanumerical code:
Script:

My name is Marlene Holder-Ellis and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. Thank you again for your willingness to participate in my study. The purpose of this interview is to investigate the role of social media tools in higher education instruction. In order to protect your identity, please refrain from using your name at any point in this interview. I will be recording this interview in order to obtain a permanent record. Is it okay with you if I begin recording now? (Action: Record the meeting)

Effectiveness of social media tools in instruction

1. How would you judge the effectiveness of social media tools in instruction? (Additional Probe: Can you provide specific examples?)
2. In your opinion, what are the general benefits that your students derive from using social media tools in instruction? (Additional Probe: Can you provide an example?)

Advantages of using social media tools

3. How do you perceive the benefits of using social media tools in instruction? (Additional Probe: Can you elaborate?)
4. Please describe the kinds of activities or workshops available for training instructors at your institution in the use of social media tools for instruction. (Additional Probe: Can you provide an example?)
5. Can you describe any kinds of benefits provided for faculty members in the using social media tools? (Additional Probe: Can you provide an example?)

Accessibility and availability of using social media tools in instruction

6. Please describe the kind of social media tools readily available to your students in your classroom. (Additional probe: Can you provide specific examples?)
7. Please explain ways in which your students use social media available to them in instruction and learning. (Additional Probe: Can you provide additional details?)

Concerns in using social media tools in instruction

8. Please explain any concerns which you might have regarding the use of social media tools for teaching. (Additional Probe: Describe your greatest concern?)
9. Describe any negative experiences you found or your students have reported in their use of social media tools in learning. (Additional Probe: Can you expand further on this?)
10. Describe the policies in your institution that deals with abuse of social media tools or prevention of breech of privacy in using social media tools in instruction. (Additional Probe: Can illustrate further?)
11. Please explain the role of the department that offers support for students and staff who might encounter negative issues in using social media tools in instruction. (Additional Probe: Can you provide additional details?

I greatly appreciate your cooperation in this study. Is there anything you would like to add before the interview concludes? Again, thank you for taking the time to participate in my study. Your responses will remain confidential.