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Moving From A Textbook To Facebook College Students' Motivations For Using Social Networking Sites In Education

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MOVING FROM A TEXTBOOK TO FACEBOOK:
COLLEGE STUDENTS' MOTIVATIONS
FOR USING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES
IN EDUCATION

by

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B.A. Georgia State University, 2005

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ABSTRACT

This study examined college student motivations for using social networking sites for educational purposes. Motives were examined through the uses and gratifications approach. If we can determine student motivations for using social networking sites, perhaps we can determine a way to successfully implement social networking sites into the classroom. By adding the concept of satisfaction, we can also determine if students will use the sites again. If students are satisfied with educational social networking site use, they will return to these sites for educational purposes again.

Data was collected by giving a questionnaire to undergraduate students that assessed social networking site use, as well as motivations for and satisfaction with use. For general uses, students were motivated to use social networking sites for relationship maintenance, passing time, and information seeking purposes. Overall, students were satisfied with their use of the sites. For educational uses, students were motivated to use the sites for relationship maintenance and information seeking purposes. Overall, students are not satisfied with their use of these sites for educational purposes. Theoretical and practical implications of these findings are discussed.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Social networking sites, generally defined as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (boyd & Ellison, 2008, p.211), are some of the most commonly visited websites in the country. As of August 2010, the number two most visited website in the United States is Facebook, and in the top 20 most visited websites are Twitter, MySpace, and LinkedIn (Alexa, 2010).

It seems that social networking sites have become influential forces in the lives of college students. Ninety percent of college students use social networking sites, and most students report using them every day (Smith, Salaway, & Caruso, 2009, p.14). College students are also spending an average of 19-25 hours a week online (p. 25). Current college students are from a generation that has always had computer presence. They are the net generation. This communication medium is obviously a very important part of their lives.

It's clear that college students are spending a lot of time on the Internet and on social networking sites. Ideally, college students also spend much of their time attending class and completing school work. However, after looking at the above numbers, students are spending more time on social networking sites than they are in class on class work. In the same survey, 27.8% of students reported used social networking sites for course related activities (Smith, Salaway, & Caruso, 2009, p.15). This statistic shows that perhaps there may be some potential

to converging social networking sites and education, but that it hasn't been determined how to properly do so.

However, the research on using social networking in the classroom is limited and conflicting. It has been suggested that "knowing students' motivations for using different forms of media and technology can help educators determine how to better use that technology to deliver educational content to students" (Brown, 2007, p. 1). So what are the motivations students have for using social networking sites, and how do they want to use them in education?

If we can find out the reason why students are using social networking sites, we can figure out how to effectively implement the sites into the classroom setting. This study will attempt to answer that question through examining student motivations for using social networking sites, including the motivations for using social networking sites for educational purposes, as well as their satisfaction with these experiences. Satisfaction plays an important role in examining motivations because if students are not satisfied with their media experience, they may not be motivated to use that media again. The uses and gratifications approach is a popular and useful tool for studying the reasons people use the Internet. Uses and gratifications has been used in several social media studies (Sheldon, 2008; Johnson & Yang, 2009), as well as in new media and education studies (Brown 2007; Mondi, Woods, & Rafi, 2008). By examining student motivations and satisfaction, educators can determine how to effectively use social networking sites for educational purposes.

This study seeks to determine college student motivations for using social networking sites, and how those motives will predict usage of social networking sites for educational

purposes. College students will be asked through a survey to rate motivations for general social networking site use as well as what would motivate them to use social networking sites for their classes. Participants will also rate their satisfaction with social networking site use, as well as satisfaction with social networking site use in class, if they have ever used it for that purpose. Participants will also be asked whether or not they would like to see social networking sites used in the classroom or for class purposes. This study hopes to find the relationship between student motivations for using social networking sites and if they will use them in an educational setting. If students are already spending a lot of time on social networking sites (Smith, Salaway, & Caruso, 2009, p. 14), it is beneficial for educators to put content and learning where the students already are. Because social networking sites are such an important part of college students' lives, it is necessary for educators to be on top of this technology.

Chapter two will outline the current literature relevant to this study, including an outline of uses and gratifications studies in media, as well as current studies in social media. Chapter three will present the methodology used in this study; chapter four will report the results. Those results will be discussed in chapter five, along with limitations, suggestions for future research, and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will outline the literature for the uses and gratifications perspective relevant to this study, including scholarship on motivations for media use and satisfaction with that use. It will then examine the relevant existing literature on new media, social networking sites, and educational media and then will propose several research questions. Chapter three will outline the methodology used to examine the research questions. Chapter four will present the findings of the study. The results will be discussed in chapter five, along with limitations and suggestions for future research.

Uses and Gratifications

In the early days of media studies, it was generally accepted that audiences were passive, that the media acted upon them, and that the media affected everyone the same way. However, from the late 1950s to the 1970s, research emerged that showed that the audience was not one mass crowd, but was actually made up of many unique individuals, and that the media were not just acting upon the audience, but the audience was actually doing something with the media (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974).

These statements are addressed in the uses and gratifications perspective. This theoretical approach is deeply rooted in psychology and emphasizes individual choice and use (Rubin, 2002). Specifically, the uses and gratifications approach studies "the social and psychological origin of needs, which generate expectations of mass media or other sources, which lead to different patterns of media exposure, resulting in need gratification and other consequences, perhaps unintended ones" (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974 p. 20). In other

words, media consumers have needs that vary from person to person, and people have an idea of which communication channels can fulfill that need. These ideas become the motivations that lead people to use those communication channels, which will fulfill those needs.

The principle objectives of the uses and gratifications approach are to "explain how people use media to gratify their needs, to understand motives for media behavior, and to identify functions or consequences that follow needs, motives and behaviors" (Rubin, 2002, p. 527). Katz, Gurevitch, and Haas (1973) identified several needs that motivate people: cognitive needs, affective needs, personal integrative needs, social integrative needs, and entertainment needs. In other words, cognitive needs are those dealing with comprehension and understanding. Affective needs refer to emotion. Personal integrative refer to establishing credibility, status, and confidence. Social integrative needs include interaction, socialization, and belonging. Entertainment needs simply amuse, or they can represent distraction or escape (Katz et al., 1973; Mondi et al., 2008). For example, if a college student misses her brother, she has a social integrative need to fulfill. She chooses to write an email to him. Thus, gratification is gained through the Internet. If she comes home from class and needs to escape the stress of the real world and simply be entertained, she can go to a movie and get lost in a fantasy world for two hours, thus fulfilling an entertainment need. Fulfilling needs is the motivation for media use, and in turn media gratifies needs.

Motivations for media use, or motives, are defined as "general dispositions that influence people's actions taken to fulfill a need or want" (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000, p. 179). In other words, motives guide the use of media. In terms of the uses and gratifications approach, motives are the reasons why people use media. We have control over our actions

and we can express a reason for wanting to use something such as the television or the Internet. We feel we will get something out of our media use, so we are motivated to use it. Thus, we are motivated to use media to fulfill needs. Additionally, motivations are the precursor to behavior. If we can determine what motivates one to use media, we can predict the use of that media.

While motives are one component of the uses and gratifications perspective, there are five assumptions of the approach. First, the audience is "goal-directed, purposive, and motivated" in media consumption (Rubin, 2000, p. 527). In other words, audience members can identify their needs and then are motivated to select an appropriate medium to fulfill those needs. Second, the audience does not simply sit idly by while the media act upon them. Rather, they are active in making media choices that will fulfill their needs. Third, every audience member is different. Each member has unique qualities that affect his or her response to media, so needs and motivations vary from person to person. Fourth, there are many different types of media available to the audience. They choose which media to use based on how well the medium fulfilled a need the last time it was used. Finally, the audience may come to rely on certain media based on their usage patterns by either using it again or rejecting it and selecting another medium (Rubin, 2000). In other words, audience members make their own decisions about what media to consume based on their own experiences, and maintain regular usage patterns based on those experiences.

An early demonstration of the uses and gratifications approach can be seen in television audiences. One assumption of the uses and gratifications approach is that the audience is motivated to use a particular medium to fulfill their needs. Rubin (1981) tested

this notion through surveying television audiences. First, participants were simply asked to identify their own reasons for watching television in an open-ended question. Participants were then presented with thirty reasons for watching television and were asked to rate those reasons on a five-point scale, from "exactly like my reason," "a lot like my reason," "somewhat like my reason," "not much like my reason," and "not at all like my reason." Significant motivations for using television include to pass time, for companionship, arousal, entertainment, relaxation, information, escape, social interaction, and content. The self provided reasons were coded and matched with the closed-ended motivation statements and were significantly correlated, which supports the assumption that audiences do know what they want to get out of a media experience and that uses and gratifications motivation studies do yield valid results (Rubin, 1981).

In examining the relationship between the user and the VCR, Rubin & Bantz (1987) noted the VCR enhances the idea of an active audience more so than television. Audiences use the VCR to skip commercials, rather than passively just taking in what the television is showing them. It also allows them to record programs to view at a later time, or "time shift." Time shifting is also evidence of audience activity. The audience can actively choose what time they want to watch a program; they are not glued to television schedule. The VCR also allows for an increase in available content in that movies could now be seen in the home environment. Thus, Rubin and Bantz (1987) found that the highest motivation for using a VCR was a utility function.

The uses and gratifications approach has been used to explain not just the use of traditional one way, mass media, but also how people use more interactive, personal media,

7

such as the telephone. O'Keefe and Sulanowski (1995) found that social and instrumental reasons were the biggest motivations for using the telephone. The telephone is widely used for social motives such as keeping in touch, sharing, expressing feelings, surveillance of others, and giving and receiving advice. The telephone is to a lesser extent used for information motives, such as emergency use, purchasing and scheduling, and getting information quickly. O'Keefe and Sulanowski (1995) also found that the more motivations a person has for using the telephone, the more that person will use the phone. This provides support for the assumption that media consumption is purposive and goal-directed: telephone users know what they can get out of using the telephone, so they purposefully choose to use it.

<u>New Media</u>

The uses and gratifications approach has proven to be very popular in new media research, with the Internet being the primary focus (Ruggiero, 2000). One of the most groundbreaking and influential applications of uses and gratifications to the Internet is the 2000 study by Papacharissi and Rubin. Motivations for using the Internet as we know it today, specifically the graphical world wide web interface, had not yet been fully examined. The study sought to determine what predictors of Internet use are. The authors recognized that the Internet consisted of both traditional interpersonal and mass communication components, so existing uses and gratifications items needed to be updated to reflect this convergence (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000). The authors found that users can be motivated to use the Internet for interpersonal or traditional reasons. By understanding these motives, we can determine why people use the Internet. Motivations can in turn dictate content for the Internet and users can get what they want out of Internet use.

The five motivations for Internet use that emerged reflect both interpersonal and traditional mass communication motives and included "interpersonal utility, pass time, information seeking, convenience, and entertainment" (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000, p.185). The strongest motive in this study was interpersonal utilities, which show the need to belong, communicate and interact with others, to express oneself, and to have means of surveillance. The second strongest motive was information seeking, which means that people use the Internet to conduct research or to find out about news and events. Other strong motives included convenience, which means the Internet is easy and can save time, pass time, which means it is something to do when one is bored, and entertainment, which suggests that the Internet users seek "a convenient vehicle of information and amusement (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000, p.185).

The use of the Internet has grown since Papacharissi and Rubin's 2000 study, as have the reasons for using it. Traditional media are moving online and are enhancing the features they offer along with it. One example can be seen with interactive options for newspaper websites, where Chung and Yoo (2008) found that there are three motivations for users to visit the website of a newspaper: entertainment, information seeking/surveillance, and socialization. These motivations are consistent with the motivations found by Papacharissi and Rubin (2000).

Chung and Yoo's (2008) study goes further to determine motivations for specific uses of the interactive features of the website. Interactive features were divided into three different types. Medium interactive features are where users only interact with the site by using search engines, reading articles, watching videos, or viewing photo galleries. Medium/human

interaction includes the customizable features of a site, such as custom weather or headlines, submitting your own stories, photos, or news tips, and taking polls. Human interaction includes features such as forums and chat rooms provided by the website and emailing the editor or journalist. Chung and Yoo (2008) found that all three identified motivations predict use of medium interactive features, while only entertainment and socialization motivations predict use of medium/human and human interactive features. Information seeking/surveillance motivations do not predict medium/human or human interactive feature use. In other words, if a user is simply motivated to use a newspaper website to find information, he will not want to use features that are customizable or facilitate communication with others. However, if a user is motivated to use a newspaper website for entertainment or socialization reasons, he will want to make use of all interactive features of the website. Another interesting finding is that younger people are more likely to use medium/human interaction features. The authors conclude that "interactivity can increase online activity and develop new ways of communication" (p.393) for website users. These mass and interpersonal communication interactive features are important and should be implemented. The interactive features that one may choose should depend on what type of audience one may have. If a newspaper's audience is strictly using its website for information seeking purposes, it may not be worth investing time and resources into developing other features.

The idea that Internet use is a convergence of mass media and interpersonal motivations, as suggested by Papacharissi and Rubin (2000), can be seen in a study of music downloading (Kinnally, Lacayo, McClung, & Sapolsky, 2008), which examined college student motivations for downloading music from the Internet. A large motivation for

downloading music was convenience and economic utility, which suggests that immediacy and convenience are important features of the Internet. Students also had surveillance and information seeking motives, because downloading music allows the user to try new music with no risk. The presence of social utility motivations suggest that students talk about what they found online, bridging the gap between the virtual world and the physical world (Kinnally et al., 2008).

Further convergence of interpersonal and mass media motives can be seen on the video delivery website, YouTube. The website combines traditional mass communication mediums, such as television and movies, with interpersonal communication mediums, such as comment fields, that allow users to communicate with other users. Haridakis and Hanson (2009) state that converging these two types of communication means that we need to re-examine and rethink the motives traditionally associated with them, so their study sought to examine if traditional motives predicted YouTube use. The authors found that YouTube has very similar motivations to television, but it is more social. The biggest motivations to watch videos on YouTube are for entertainment and information seeking reasons which are traditionally motives related to mass media. Other motivations are traditionally related to interpersonal communication and include social interaction and co-viewing, which means that users like to communicate with other users and watch videos not alone, but with other people. These motivations are all strong predictors of YouTube use (Haridakis & Hanson, 2009). In other words, if one is motivated to watch television, but also has some sort of social motivation, one will want to watch videos on YouTube.

Gratifications Sought and Obtained

As scholars continued to examine the uses and gratifications perspective, it became clear that there are different dimensions to "needs" and how those needs were "gratified" by the media. The concepts of gratifications sought and gratifications obtained add to the validity of uses and gratifications as a theoretical perspective by adding a predictive quality (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rayburn, 1980). That is, gratifications sought and obtained predict motivation to return to the same medium to fulfill needs again. A gratification sought is defined as "an expectation about content formed in advance of exposure" and a gratification obtained is defined as "satisfaction subsequently secured from consumption of it" (Katz et al., 1973, p. 25). In other words, a gratification sought is what the user is hoping the medium will do for him; e.g., an expectation that television will fulfill an entertainment need. The gratification sought is "why" one uses media. The gratification obtained is determined by whether that need was fulfilled by that medium. After watching television, the user is satisfied now that his need has been fulfilled. The gratification obtained is the "what happened" after the media was used. If the gratifications sought from a medium match the gratifications obtained from that medium, then the user will be satisfied and will choose to return to that medium again in the future to fulfill that need. However, if there are discrepancies between gratifications sought and gratifications obtained, a user will not choose to return to that medium (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rayburn, 1981). In other words, if the user's satisfaction with media use matches his expectations of media use, he will choose to use that medium again. If his satisfaction does not live up to his expectations, he will choose not to use that medium again.

An early study of gratifications sought and obtained examined this relationship with television news programs (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rayburn, 1980). Respondents were given several motivations for watching an evening news broadcast and were asked to rate how much they agreed with those being reasons why they watched that program. Items included statements such as "I watch TV news to keep up with current events and issues" (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rayburn, 1980, p. 172). Then, participants were given the same statements, but were asked to what extent the news program provides those outcomes (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rayburn, 1980, p. 171). In other words, participants were asked if watching TV news actually helped them keep up with current events and issues or not. The two sets of statements were then compared to determine user satisfaction with their news experience. In this particular study, the gratifications sought strongly correlated with the gratifications obtained, which means that users expectations and satisfactions matched for news programs. Users were satisfied and thus it is predicted that they will return to this medium again (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rayburn, 1980).

Media satisfaction was also explored by Dobos (1992). This study emerged at a time when electronic communication within companies and organizations was just becoming mainstream. By examining satisfaction with workplace communication through face-to-face communication, written memos, and electronic media, Dobos hypothesized that by examining discrepancies, or lack there of, between gratifications sought and obtained the reasons for choosing different communication channels would become more clear (Dobos, 1992, p. 34). The author also found that "gratifications sought represent the collective perceptions of communication requirements, whereas gratifications obtained are consensual perceptions

13

regarding the degree to which these communication requirements are met," (Dobos, 1992, p. 33). In other words, people will choose to use face-to-face, written memos, or electronic communication based on how well they think it can convey a message, and after using it will decide how well that medium actually worked. The results show that employees were most satisfied using electronic communication, though face-to-face satisfaction also held significant satisfaction, and that the lack of discrepancies between gratifications sought and obtained predicted this satisfaction (Dobos, 1992).

A study of newer electronic communication examined gratifications sought for an activity that was popular among college students: chatting online (Leung 2001). This particular study examines motivations for using ICQ, an Internet application that allows the user to chat, exchange files, and play games with other people online. Leung (2001) found that the more gratifications a student sought from ICQ, the more the student would use it, which supports the idea that gratifications sought and obtained enhance the predictive power of the uses and gratifications approach.

Lo and Leung (2009) examined the gratifications college students obtained from two more computer-mediated communication mediums: email and instant messaging. Peer-pressure and entertainment were found to be both the biggest motivation and gratification obtained for instant messaging. Students used instant messaging because their friends did, and they in turn continued to do so because of the satisfaction of fitting in after giving in to the peer pressure. As a result, instant messaging has become a "habit" and "trendy" (Lo & Leung, 2009, p. 162). Because email does not have the same peer pressure or entertainment outcome from use, students do not experience satisfaction or gratifications obtained from email, so it

has fallen out of favor as a chosen communication medium for college students in recent years (Lo & Leung, 2009).

<div align="center">Social Networking Sites</div>

While social networking sites are quite prevalent today, they didn't even exist a few years ago (Smith, Salaway, & Caruso, 2009). Social networking sites allow users to visually articulate their friends, acquaintances and colleagues (boyd & Ellison, 2008, p.211). Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn and many, many more have transformed the way people communicate and use the Internet; these sites are taking real world social networks and moving them online. However, research into this field is still sparse. Existing literature has suggested that the uses and gratifications approach is an appropriate framework through which to study it (Sheldon, 2008).

Ray (2007) examined qualitatively what motivates people to use social networking sites through twenty-five in-depth interviews. Motives that emerged include social utility, surveillance, diversion, entertainment, and information. Social utility motives include keeping in touch with friends and allowing for communication that otherwise would not be possible or would not happen. Users "do not want to lose their peer connections" (p. 9). Surveillance motives include having a profile that other users can see and viewing other users' profiles. Profiles are an easy way to present details about your life to your network and to find out details about others. Finding out about events and happenings are information and entertainment motives. Users enjoy having that sort of information easily accessible in one location (p. 15). The functionality and convenience of the websites was of great importance to

the interviewees (Ray, 2007). That is, social networking sites are adaptable for whatever the individual wants to do with it. Ray (2007) stated that social networking sites can gratify multiple needs, and the satisfaction of need fulfillment forms the motivation to repeated use of the site (p. 8).

Facebook is currently one of the most popular social networking sites (Alexa, 2010) and allows users to asynchronously communicate with other members in their network (Sheldon, 2008). Sheldon (2008) sought to examine what motivates students to use Facebook specifically, and if they were satisfied with the gratifications they received from that use. Relationship maintenance and passing time strongly predicted how many hours students spent on Facebook. Entertainment and "coolness," in addition to relationship maintenance and passing time, also predicted how often students logged on to Facebook. Students in this study who used Facebook to maintain relationships, be entertained, and to pass time were the students who were most satisfied with Facebook (Sheldon, 2008).

Urista, Dong, and Day (2008) implemented uses and gratifications to determine to what extent do young adults use social networking sites to fulfill wants and needs (p. 9) through focus group interviews with college students, but only with students who were members of Facebook and/or MySpace. Five themes emerged in the interviews as to why the students fulfill needs through Facebook and MySpace: "efficient communication, convenient communication, curiosity about others, popularity, and relationship formation/reinforcement" (Urista, Dong, & Day, 2008, p.12). In other words, social networking sites provide convenient, instant access to information about friends and are another outlet for getting in contact with someone.

Clark, Boyer, and Lee (2008) found information seeking and convenience to be the most significant motives for college students using social networking sites. Students are dependent on the Internet to find information, yet using Facebook to find information was found to be more purposeful than simply using a search engine or browsing web pages to find what they are looking for (p. 11). That is, it can be a convenient, one-stop-shop for information, which supports findings by Sheldon (2008) and Urista, Dong, and Day (2008). In other words, a social networking site would be a great place for a student to have access to all information they need, whether it be about people, activities, or news.

Johnson and Yang (2009) applied uses and gratifications to a different type of social networking site: Twitter. Murphy (2008, as cited in Johnson & Yang, 2009) defines Twitter as a website that allows users to post short messages to share with their social network. This article examined motivations of Twitter users, satisfaction of Twitter use, and the relationship between gratifications obtained and Twitter use. Respondents were asked to rate 15 reasons for using Twitter, and then to rate those same reasons as to how Twitter actually fulfills those reasons to measure discrepancies between what users went to Twitter for and what they actually got out of it. Motivations emerged into two categories: Social and information. Information motives were related to how many hours a week users spent on Twitter, while social motives were not. Respondents in this survey will log on to Twitter more often if they are receiving and sharing information. Twitter users successfully filled social and information needs, yet it failed to fill the need of having fun (Johnson & Yang, 2009).

<u>Education</u>

Unfortunately, very little research studying education and new media is empirically based (Katt, Murdock, Butler & Pryor, 2008). Many concepts proposed are simply "best practices;" that is, teachers employ a new tactic in their class and then assess the success of the tactic. Another shortcoming in the educational media field is the lack of unifying theories. Most articles do not base assumptions around theories (e.g. Norton & Hathaway, 2008; Madge, Meek, Wellens, & Hooley, 2009). Instead, researchers simply report findings without mentioning any theoretical linkages. This work is still valuable; it simply has pushed research into many different directions. Some research is beginning to emerge regarding the uses and gratifications approach in regard to media in the classroom, but more work is still needed in this area.

One of the foundational studies on incorporating media in the classroom was conducted in 1981 by Lynn Oppenheim at the Wharton Applied Research Center at the University of Pennsylvania. It is frequently cited in many more recent articles regarding media and in the classroom. The "new" media in question in 1981 was an overhead transparency projector. MBA students at the school were asked to simulate a business meeting where they were to make a group decision regarding the launch of a new product. Each group sat through two presentations. One presentation showed reasons why the product should be launched, while the other presentation showed reasons why the product shouldn't be launched. In various configurations of the presentations, one side of the debate used overhead transparencies and the other side of the debate did not. If an argument incorporated media, the students voted in support of that argument. Students reported that presenters using media

seemed more credible, thus leading to which side of the argument to agree upon (Oppenheim, 1981).

An extension of the Oppenheim study was conducted by the Management Information Systems Research Center at the University of Minnesota and the 3M Corporation (Vogel, Dickson, & Lehman, 1986). College students were asked to watch a presentation that was meant to persuade them to take action: in this case they were to be persuaded to sign up for time management seminars. Students who viewed the presentations with media aids, which were either 35mm slides or overhead transparencies, were more likely to sign up for the time management classes than students who did not view the presentation with a media aid. This article argues that incorporating media in lectures can be more persuasive (Vogel et al., 1986).

PowerPoint has now taken the place of overhead transparencies in the classroom. By utilizing computers and a projector, PowerPoint is one of the most common new media used in the classroom (Mackiewicz, 2008). Katt, Murdock, Butler, and Pryor (2008) found empirical evidence that PowerPoint presentations can increase student recall of information. Students listened to an audio recording of a lecture. Some students viewed a PowerPoint presentation that was choreographed with the recording, while the other students did not receive a PowerPoint presentation. Students who viewed the presentation recalled more information from the lecture than did students who did not receive the presentation (Katt et al., 2008).

Computers can do more than simply display PowerPoint presentations. Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI), as defined by Timmerman and Kruepke (2006), can provide supplements to oral lectures, recordings of oral lectures, provide text versions of

presentations, utilize games, and enact simulations (p. 74). In a meta analysis of student performance studies, these authors found that, compared to traditional lecture instruction, programs that incorporate some form of CAI lead to better student performance (Timmerman & Kreupke, 2006).

One of the primary functions of computers today is to provide access to the Internet, which has been proven to be a very useful tool for educational purposes. Norton and Hathaway (2008) examined two different ways of incorporating online activities into the classroom in a graduate teaching program that required students to take two online classes simultaneously. The classes are conducted in two different formats: one course uses a simple course management system, where lessons are posted as reading modules, and students are expected to conduct discussions on message boards; the second course places students with a one-on-one mentor with whom they communicate through email and instant messaging, and there is no contact with the other students. The students were surveyed at the end of the semester to assess feelings about the learning experiences. They reported that both class formats were very educational, informative, and enjoyable, but that the mentoring format proved to be difficult when the mentor was unreachable via email for extended amounts of time. Students felt that they were responsible for their own learning, but the role of the instructor as a facilitator is still essential. (Norton & Hathaway, 2008), These findings show that using new media technologies in the classroom is beneficial and provide educators with two suggestions for utilizing the Internet for class work that have been shown to foster student learning.

Education and Social Networking Sites

Just as the Internet has evolved to have value in education, so have social networking sites. Some universities are already using social networking sites to communicate with students. Social networking pages have been used by administration to announce upcoming events, to broadcast faculty and student work, to send out emergency alerts, and to start dialog between students (Lavrusik, 2009). Perdue University is allowing students to post Twitter and Facebook messages during class, as a way to either ask questions to in the instructor or simply to discuss the lecture with classmates (Dybwad, 2009).

Social networking sites play a huge role in the campus experience. Madge, Meek, Wellens, and Hooley (2009) noted that many first year college students wanted to meet people through Facebook before classes started so that they would have friends immediately at the beginning of the semester. The researchers were interested in finding out what role, if any, Facebook could have in an academic environment. Respondents reported Facebook is a key instrument for college students, and they did use it for more than just social reasons. While they enjoyed using Facebook for informal educational purposes, they did not want to use Facebook for formal educational purposes (Madge et al., 2009, p. 152). For example, students reported using it for working on group projects and for asking classmates questions about homework. However, the majority of respondents reported that they did not want their instructors or administrators to contact them through Facebook (Madge et al., 2009, p. 152).

Ritzenthaler, Stanton, & Rickard (2009) actually implemented Facebook in a classroom. An instructor of a large lecture college course created a Facebook group that was designed to provide materials that supplement the class lecture and discussion. These items

included links and videos to related subjects. The group was also designed so that students could get to know each other outside of the classroom and could serve as a message board for on-going discussion. Participation in the group was optional. At the end of the semester, students were surveyed to examine feelings toward the group. Overall, students found the group useful and enjoyable, and they felt the group enhanced classroom learning. Students felt this was a convenient way to access information, since it pops up in their news feed, and they actually would like to see more course material on the page, such as syllabi and course notes (Ritzenthaler, Stanton, & Rickard, 2009, p. 9). Interestingly, the students who used the material in the group did not use the group for social reasons; few students added each other as friends on Facebook. They made no effort to get to know classmates outside of class. Students also refrained from having discussions on the group message board (Ritzenthaler, Stanton, & Rickard, 2009).

Uses and Gratifications, Education, and New Media

There has been research examining education and new media, but as mentioned earlier, there is very little theoretical basis for this research (Katt et al., 2008). Kuehn (1994) suggested that the uses and gratifications approach would be a useful tool to study student motivations for using media in the classroom and established a connection between uses and gratifications and new media before computers were as prevalent as they are today. Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI) was beginning to infiltrate classrooms, and Kuehn felt this was a necessary medium to study. One of the assumptions behind uses and gratifications is the idea of actively choosing a medium to meet a need. If you are sitting down at a computer to complete a school lesson, you actively sought out that teaching method. Another

22

assumption of the approach is that the audience can report motivations for use. So, educators need to understand student motivations for using new media before it can effectively be implemented in the classroom (Kuehn, 1994).

Matthews and Schrum (2003) conducted two different research efforts regarding uses and gratifications of college students and the Internet. In part one of a two-part study, focus groups related to the authors that e-mail and instant messaging services were the most used functions on the Internet. This implied that students were motivated to use the Internet to fill a social connection need: they could keep in touch with family and friends. Another Internet activity involved downloading music, which could perhaps have motivated students to fulfill an aesthetic need (Matthews & Schrum, 2003).

Part two of the Matthews and Schrum study (2003) looked at the Internet as it relates to academic work. In addition to using the uses and gratifications approach, the authors also examined locus of control among college students. In this application, locus of control determines the extent to which a student feels that he is responsible for his academic success (Matthews & Schrum, 2003, p.130-131). The authors indicated that doing well in school can fill needs. Perhaps credibility can be enhanced through good grades, thus motivating students to fulfill a personal integrative need. The authors also found that students feel that if they put forth effort, they can have good academic achievements. One way of putting forth effort would be to do extra academic activities in the Internet, whether it is a training module or simply conducting research. Thus, students could be motivated to use the Internet to help fill a cognitive knowledge need. Overall, the study showed that if a student thinks he is control of his grade, he will be motivated to use the Internet for academic purposes and that the Internet

can in fact help with academic work. However, it should be noted that students found it hard to resist the social aspects of the Internet while completing academic work (Matthews & Schrum, 2003). It can be inferred that students would be more motivated to fill a social connection need than an academic need, but there is evidence that new media can be used for educational purposes.

Mondi, Woods, and Rafi (2008) sought to determine if new e-learning technology was actually beneficial to students and applied the uses and gratifications approach to study how and why students use it. Five need fulfillment motivation categories were examined: cognitive, or critical thinking, affective, or aesthetic experiences, personal integrative, or credibility, social integrative, or interaction and collaboration, and entertainment, fun or relaxing. The authors found that students were motivated to use e-learning to gratify aesthetic and emotional needs, credibility needs, and interactive and collaborative needs. Cognitive and entertainment needs were not fulfilled using e-learning resources (Mondi, Woods, & Rafi, 2008). This study shows that students are motivated to fulfill certain needs with educational media. One of the assumptions behind the uses and gratifications approach is that users know what needs they need filled and what media can do that. If students recognize that needs can be filled by educational media, maybe they will seek out that educational media and thus learn while fulfilling a media need.

In an application of uses and gratifications while using computers in education, Brown (2007) found that students did obtain gratification from computers. The author distributed handheld computers equipped with learning supplements to students. A cognitive need for knowledge was gratified through the learning supplement. However, it was found that the

students did not use the handheld computer as often as expected. They felt a gratification, but they were not actively choosing to use that media. Perhaps the need could be fulfilled elsewhere, somewhere more familiar. One assumption of the approach states that people tend to turn to the same medium again and again. The students simply were not comfortable with this new medium, and thus would not return to it (Brown, 2007).

<u>Research Questions</u>

Based on the literature, it is clear that while research into new media has focused on the reasons that people use social networking sites (Ray, 2007; Sheldon, 2008) and the satisfaction they may obtain from those sites (Johnson & Yang, 2009), there is also is gap in the research when it comes to the levels of satisfaction in college students with social networking in education. Consistent with Clark et al. (2008) and Johnson and Yang (2009), the following research questions about social media satisfaction are posed:

RQ1: What are college student motivations for using social networking sites?

RQ2: What are the discrepancies between gratifications sought and gratifications obtained for college students' use of social networking sites?

 If it's assumed that students report new media to be beneficial for education (e.g., Ritzenthaler, Stanton, & Rickard, 2009; Smith et al, 2009), then it's reasonable to assume that knowing how satisfied students are with their use of social media in the classroom can help educators make better use of that media. Consistent with Khuen (1994) and Brown (2007) the following research questions about social media in the classroom are posed:

RQ3: What are college student motivations for using social networking sites for educational purposes?

RQ4: What are the discrepancies between gratifications sought and gratifications

obtained for college students' use of social networking sites for educational purposes?

Because research on the use of media in education is lacking (Katt et al., 2008), this

study will add to that scholarship by posing an additional research question:

RQ5: What other aspects of social networking site use may enhance the understanding

of how to incorporate those sites into education effectively?

Chapter three will outline the methodology used to examine these research questions.

The findings will be presented in chapter four. Chapter five will discuss the results and

limitations of this research and will propose suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter will outline the methodology used to examine the research questions. Chapter four will present the findings of the study. The results will be discussed in Chapter five, along with limitations and suggestions for future research.

Participants and Protocol

After obtaining Institutional Review Board approval, an online survey was given to undergraduate students at a large, southeastern university. Participants were obtained from several general education communication courses, for a total of approximately 1800 potential participants. By using students in general education courses, there are a wide variety of ages and majors in the sample population, making the results of the survey more applicable to all college students. A total of 750 students ($n = 750$) responded to the survey, which gave a response rate of 42%. Most participants were female (63.9%), while the rest were male (36.1%). The average age of participants was 19.49 ($SD = 1.67$), with the youngest participants being 18 years old and the oldest 39. Since the classes polled are general education undergraduate classes, most students are classified as freshmen (20.3%) and sophomores (47.5%), and the rest of the students are classified as juniors (20.3%) and seniors (11.2%). Participants' majors included "Sciences" (21.5%), "Business" (14.2%), "Communication" (14.2%), "Engineering" (9.4%), and "Arts and Humanities" (9.4%), while remaining students reported being "Other" (27.8) or "Undeclared" (3.5%). The majority of students reported their race or ethnicity as "Caucasian" (67.9%), and of the remaining

students, 14.7% were "Hispanic or Latin American," 6.8% were "African-American," 5.5% were "Asian or Asian-American," 4.1% were "Multiracial," 0.7% were "Hawaiian or Pacific Islander," and 0.3% were "Native American." Demographics are consistent with university reported statistics for undergraduate students (University of Central Florida, 2009). While these students are certainly a convenience sample, they are actually the ideal participants for this study, because it is studying the motivations of college students.

Participation in the survey was voluntary and students were not given monetary compensation. Instructors were allowed to assign extra credit, but that decision was left up to each individual instructor. IRB regulations state that parental consent is required for participants under the age of 18. To avoid this additional hurdle, students under the age of 18 were not allowed to take the survey, but were still given the opportunity to complete an optional assignment for extra credit, if the instructor chose to offer it. Any students who simply did not want to take the survey were also given the alternative assignment option. The survey was conducted online through Survey Monkey, a website that has the capability to create surveys and collect data. The survey was accessible through a link that was emailed to all students enrolled in the communication course from their instructor. Responses were anonymous, though, after completion of the survey, they were taken to a separate survey where they could provide their names and their instructors' names to receive credit for participation. These names are in no way linked to the responses. (A copy of the survey may be found in Appendix D).

Survey Instrument

The survey began with a letter of consent that was required to gain access to the survey. Participants were told that they would be answering questions regarding their use of social networking sites. All questions are optional, so participants did not have to answer a question if they did not want to for any reason. If the participant agreed with the terms of the consent form, they were allowed to begin the survey. By beginning the survey, the participant also confirmed that he or she was aged 18 years or older. Demographic information such as age, gender, race, grade classification, and major was also collected in the beginning.

Participants were then asked several questions about online activities. They were asked how many years they had been online, how long they had been using social networking sites, and were given a list of several different social networking sites and other online activities and were first asked to select which sites they use on a regular basis, and were then asked to select which one they use the most. To measure social networking use, participants were asked how many hours each day they used all types of social networking sites, how often they logged onto all types of social networking sites, and how many days a week they logged onto all types of social networking sites. They were asked those same questions again in regards to their most commonly used site.

Motivations and Satisfaction

The next several sections of the survey discussed motives for and satisfaction with using social networking sites. Student use of social networking sites is the dependent variable and motivations and satisfaction are the independent variables. Motives were adapted from several different studies. Papacharissi and Rubin's (2000) Internet Motives Scale has been the

standard for uses and gratifications Internet studies, which combines interpersonal and traditional media motives. The Internet Motives Scale has also gained popularity in social networking studies as well (Clark et al., 2008; Sheldon, 2008). More recently, motives specific to social networking sites have also emerged, though they are still linked to the Internet Motives Scale. For this study, social utility motives, such as "to make new friends," were included. Similar to Papacharissi and Rubin's (2002) findings, Sheldon (2008) also found that entertainment, relationship maintenance, and passing time are still significant motives for using social networking sites. Entertainment motives used in this study include "to have fun" and "to be entertained." Relationship maintenance motives used in this study include "to reinforce existing relationships." Passing time motives used in this study include "to pass time when I'm bored." Consistent with the Internet Motives Scale, Ray (2007) and Urista, Dong, and Day (2008) found information seeking and convenience to be significant motives as well. Information seeking motives used in this study include "to learn about events and activities." Convenience motives used in this study include "to talk to people when it's convenient for me.

Palmgreen, Wenner, and Rayburn (1980) found that satisfaction with media use can be determined by presenting survey participants with the same motivation list, but with reworded choices. Gratifications sought motivation items changed into "what actually happened after using the media." This study took the same motivations list and simply changed the wording to measure satisfaction. For example, rather than using social networking sites to communicate with many people at once, participants are asked if social networking sites helped them communicate with many people at once.

Because there is no existing literature on the educational use of social networking sites, educational motives and satisfactions were adapted from the general social networking site motives and satisfactions used in this study. Items were changed to reflect possible ways that social networking sites could be used in the classroom. For example, rather than using social networking sites to find out about news and information, respondents were asked if they would use social networking sites to find out about class announcements, news, and information. Additionally, because prior research has shown that students do not want their instructors to see their profile pages (Madge et al., 2009), interpersonal communication motives were divided into communication with classmates and communication with instructors. For example, rather than using social networking sites to write on a someone's wall, respondents were asked if they would use social networking sites to write on their classmates' walls and to write on their instructor's wall.

To assess satisfaction with educational social networking site use, the same rewording tactic used for general social networking site use was implemented.

For each motivation and satisfaction section, participants were presented with a list of motivations and asked to rate their agreement with the statements on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree."

The first motivation section examined general motivations, or gratifications sought for using social networking sites. This was assessed by asking "I use social networking sites…" Next, participants were asked about outcomes of use, or gratifications obtained, from social networking sites. This was assessed by rating agreement with the statement "Social

networking sites actually help me…" After answering these motivation questions, participants were asked if they enjoyed their use of social networking sites.

<div align="center">Educational Uses and Outcomes</div>

The next set of motives addressed motivations for using social networking sites for educational purposes. "I would use social networking sites for my classes…" After this section, participants were asked if they had ever used social networking sites for class work. If they answered yes, they were taken to an additional gratifications obtained section, where they were asked "Social networking sites in my class actually help me…" After answering these motivation questions, participants were asked if they enjoyed their experience of using social networking sites for educational purposes. If participants had not used social networking sites for educational purposes, they were asked if they would like to incorporate social networking sites into their coursework. If they answered yes, they were asked to choose how they would like to see it implemented. These choices were developed by the researcher based on Ritzenhaler, Stanton, and Rickard's (2009) findings that convenience was a key factor for student use of a class Facebook group. Options included that it would be an easy way to communicate with instructor and classmates, that it would be a convenient way to get assignments and information about class, that it is convenient because they are already on the site, and that they like using the site more than other communication methods. Students were also provided a space to make additional comments on how they would like to see social networking sites used. If they answered no, they were asked why they would not like to use it. Options included that they don't want their instructor to see their page, they don't want to make friends with classmates, they want to keep school and social life separate, they don't

like communicating through social networking sites, and that they don't use social networking sites often. Students were also provided a space to make additional comments on why they would not like to see social networking sites used. Finally, participants were asked if they would prefer to have a group page specifically for their course work and through what method of communication they would prefer to use with their instructors.

<div align="center">Statistical Analysis</div>

Data was analyzed using the computer program SPSS. To determine motivation categories, gratification sought statements were examined through a principle component factor analysis using Varimax rotation. To determine satisfaction with social networking sites, means between gratifications sought and gratifications obtained were compared through paired sample t-tests. Comparing the mean of one gratification sought to the mean of the corresponding gratification obtained determined if a discrepancy existed. If there was no significant difference ($p > .05$), users are satisfied with using the site for that reason. If the difference between the means was significant ($p < .05$), users are dissatisfied with using the site for that reason.

Chapter four will present the findings. Chapter five will discuss the results and limitations of this research and will propose suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter will present the findings of the study that was explained in chapter three. The results will be discussed in chapter five, along with limitations and suggestions for future research.

Internet and Social Networking Site Use

All participants report that they use the Internet, and many have been using it for about half of their lives. Participants have been online an average of 9.76 years ($SD = 2.29$), for a minimum of 4 years and a maximum of 20 years. The results show that 96.9% of respondents use social networking sites. Respondents have been using social networking sites for an average of 5.05 years ($SD = 1.79$). Those few respondents who do not use social networking sites report that they have no interest in using them (50%), they have no time for them (25%), or have never heard of them (25%). Facebook is clearly the most popular social networking site: 95.7% of respondents with a social networking site account report using Facebook on a regular basis, while only 15.1% report using Twitter on a regular basis, 13.5% report using MySpace on a regular basis, 0.9% report using LinkedIn on a regular basis, while no students reported using Bebo or Plaxo. When asked which online medium they use most, 80% report that they use Facebook the most, with email in a distant second (13.3%). Students log onto social networking sites nearly every day ($M = 6.57$ days, $SD = 2.14$). Most respondents log on multiple times per day (85.3%), while 14.7% of respondents only log on once a day. Students spend an average of two and a half hours a day on social networking sites ($M = 2.32$ hours, $SD = 1.68$). Over the course of a typical week, 27.7% of respondents use social networking

sites more on weekdays, 14% of respondents use social networking sites more during the weekend, and 58.3% of respondents report using social networking sites equally during the week and on weekends.

<div align="center">Research Question 1</div>

The first research question asked: What are college student motivations for using social networking sites? Motivations for social networking site use were determined through a principle component factor analysis using Varimax rotation, in which five factors emerged. The factors include relationship maintenance, pass time, information seeking, convenience, and social utility (See Table 1).

The first factor, labeled *relationship maintenance,* included six items: "to get in touch with people I know," "to stay in touch with friends I don't see regularly," "to keep in touch with someone I met in real life," "to get through to someone who is hard to reach," "to send someone a message," and "to reinforce existing relationships." This factor accounted for 13.634% of variance among gratifications sought items. Two additional items were left out of the factor because they cross loaded with other factors. "To communicate quickly with someone" cross loaded with *convenience*, and "to write on someone's wall" cross loaded with *pass time*. Based on the factor analysis, a scale was created with those six items (Cronbach's α = .81, *M* = 4.00, *SD* = .64, See Table 2).

The second factor, labeled *pass time*, included five items: "to pass time when I'm bored," "when I have nothing else to do," "to read statuses," "to look at profiles," and "because it is part of my routine." This factor accounted for 13.20% of variance among gratifications sought items. Two additional items were left out of the factor because they cross

<div align="center">35</div>

loaded with other factors. "Because I just felt like it" and "because it is entertaining" cross loaded with *convenience*. Based on the factor analysis, a scale was created with those five items (Cronbach's α = .83, *M* = 3.94, *SD* = .74, See Table 2).

The third factor, labeled *information seeking*, included five items: "to find out news and information," "to read stories people post," "to learn about events and activities," "to keep aware of what's going on," and "to watch videos people post." This factor accounted for 11.42% of variance among gratifications sought items. One additional item was left out of the factor because it cross loaded with another factor. "To look at pictures" cross loaded with *pass time*. Based on the factor analysis, a scale was created with those five items (Cronbach's α = .81, *M* = 3.57, *SD* = .72, See Table 2).

The final factor, labeled *social utility*, included four items: "to make new friends," "to look popular," "so people can learn about me," and "to use a chat program." This factor accounted for 8.99% of variance among gratifications sought items. Two items were left out of the factor because they cross loaded with another factor. "To learn about new friends" cross loaded with *information seeking*, and "to relax" cross loaded with convenience. Based on the factor analysis, a scale was created with those four items (Cronbach's α = .72, *M* = 2.76, *SD* = .77, See Table 2).

<u>Research Question 2</u>

The second research question asked: What are the discrepancies between gratifications sought and gratifications obtained for college students' use of social networking sites? Satisfaction with each item was measured through a paired sample t-test to look for significant differences between gratifications sought and gratifications obtained. Correlation

36

tests measured the strength of the relationship between gratifications sought and gratifications obtained (See Table 3), consistent with Johnson and Yang (2009).

Participants were presented with the same list of gratification items that were used in the gratifications sought section, but were slightly reworded to reflect gratifications obtained, consistent with Palmgreen, Wenner, and Rayburn (1980). Of the 32 gratification items, six pairs did not have significant mean differences between gratifications sought and obtained, which means that respondents were satisfied with using social networking sites for these reasons. Respondents were satisfied with using social networking sites "to communicate quickly with people," "to stay in touch with friends not seen regularly," "to relax," "to be entertained," "because they just felt like it," and "to look at pictures people post."

Of the remaining 26 gratification items, 20 items had significant mean differences between gratifications sought and obtained in which the mean was higher for gratifications obtained than for gratifications sought. These means suggest that respondents are not only satisfied with using social networking sites for these uses, they are actually getting more out of the experience than they expected to.

The six remaining items had significant mean differences between gratifications sought and obtained in which the mean was higher for gratifications sought than for gratifications obtained. This suggests that respondents were not satisfied with using social networking sites "to get in touch with people," "to keep in touch with people," "to pass time," "because it is part of their routine," "because there is nothing else to do," and "to easily communicate with people."

<u>Research Question 3</u>

The third research question asked: What are college student motivations for using social networking sites for educational purposes? Principle component factor analysis using Varimax rotation yielded five factors for educational motivations. One factor is a combination of two factors from non-educational social networking site use mentioned previously. The factors include relationship maintenance and convenience, information seeking, social utility, pass time, and, a factor specific to educational motives, instructor communication (See Table 4).

The first factor, labeled *relationship maintenance and convenience,* included eight items which reflect both relationship maintenance and convenience motives: "to keep in touch with someone I met in real life," "to get in touch with people I know," "to quickly communicate with my classmates," "to stay in touch with classmates I don't usually see," "to get through to someone who is hard to reach," "to send my classmates a message," "to write on my classmates' walls," and "to learn about old classmates." This factor accounted for 23.07% of variance among gratifications sought items. Four items were left out of this factor because they cross loaded with other factors. "Because it provides an easy way to talk to people," "because I can communicate with lots of people at one time," and "because I can talk to people when its convenient for me" cross loaded with *information seeking*. "To start friendships with classmates" cross loaded with *social utility*. Based on the factor analysis, a scale was created using those eight items (Cronbach's α = .91 , M = 3.81, SD = .71, See Table 5).

The second factor, labeled *information seeking* included four items: "to find out class announcements, news, and information," "to keep aware of what's going on in class," "to learn about class assignments, events, and activities," and "to have fun doing classwork." This factor accounted for 18.03% of variance among gratifications sought items. Two items were left out of this factor because it cross loaded with another factor. "To make homework entertaining" and "to make class more entertaining" cross loaded with *social utility.* Based on the factor analysis, a scale was created using those four items (Cronbach's α = .89, M = 3.79, SD = .93, See Table 5).

The third factor, labeled *social utility*, included two items: "so that people can learn about me," and "to look popular." This factor accounted for 11.363% of variance among gratifications sought items. Two items were left out of this factor because they cross loaded with other factors. "To learn about old friends" and "to learn about new friends" cross loaded with *relationship maintenance*. Based on the factor analysis, a scale was created using those two items (Cronbach's α = .53, M = 2.72, SD = .90, See Table 5). However, because there is a low Cronbach's alpha and because of the cross loaded items, this is not a reliable scale. Removing either item does not improve reliability. While *social utility* proved to be a factor in general social networking site gratifications sought, it does not seem to be a motivation for using social networking sites for educational purposes.

The fourth factor, labeled *pass time*, included two items: "when there is nothing else to do in class" and "to pass time in class. This factor accounted for 9.59% of variance among gratifications sought items. One item was not included in this factor because it cross loaded with another factor. "Because it is part of my online routine cross loaded with *relationship*

39

maintenance and convenience. Based on the factor analysis, a scale was created using those two items (Cronbach's α = .89, *M* = 3.34, *SD* = 1.08, See Table 5).

A fifth factor, labeled *communication with instructor,* is unique to educational motives. "To write on my instructor's wall was a single item in this factor." "To send my instructor a message" and "to communicate with my instructor" cross loaded with *information seeking,* however, the gap between these loadings is large enough that these two items will be included in this factor. Based on the factor analysis, a scale was created using those three items (Cronbach's α = .89, *M* = 3.41, *SD* = 1.08, See Table 5).

<u>Research Question 4</u>

The fourth research question asked: What are the discrepancies between gratifications sought and gratifications obtained for college students' use of social networking sites for educational purposes? Twenty-seven point seven percent of the respondents reported using social networking sites for educational purposes (See Figure 1). Only data from these respondents was used for this section. If a student had not used social networking sites for educational purposes, there is no way to examine gratifications obtained or satisfaction with use. As with Research Question Two, satisfaction with each item was measured through a paired sample t-test to look for significant differences between gratifications sought and gratifications obtained. Correlation tests measured the strength of the relationship between gratifications sought and gratifications obtained (See Table 6).

Of the 28 gratification items, four items did not have significant differences between gratifications sought means and gratifications obtained means. These means suggest that students got what they expected out of the use of social networking sites for these reasons.

Respondents are satisfied with using social networking sites "to write on their instructor's wall," "to write on classmates' walls," "to look popular," and "to learn about old classmates."

All other gratification items had significant means between gratifications sought and obtained. In all cases, the mean for gratifications sought was higher than the mean for gratifications obtained. All items correlated moderately. These means suggest that students were not satisfied with using social networking sites for educational purposes.

When students were simply asked if they enjoyed their overall experience with using social networking sites for educational purposes, 77.7% reported that they enjoyed their experience, while 22.3% did not enjoy their experience (See Figure 2).

<u>Research Question 5</u>

The fifth research question asked: What other aspects of social networking site use may enhance the understanding of how to incorporate those sites into education effectively? For students who had not used social networking sites in the classroom, there were mixed feelings when asked if they would like to incorporate those sites into the curriculum. Out of all respondents, 51.4% stated that they would like to use social networking sites, while 48.6% stated that they would not like to use social networking sites for classroom purposes. Those who said they would like to see social networking sites in the classroom were asked how and why they would like to use the sites (See Figure 4). Participants were allowed to select all choices that they agreed with; 35.3% agreed that it would be an easy way to communicate with classmates, 35.1% agreed that it would be a convenient way to hear announcements, 33.6% agreed that it would be an easy way to communicate with an instructor, 29.5% agreed that it would be a convenient way to receive or complete assignments, 28.9% agreed that it

41

would be convenient because they are on there anyway, and 22.4% agreed that they like using social networking sites more than other communication methods. Respondents were also given space to state their own opinions on this topic. One stated that it could be used to "coordinate study groups." Another stated that using the sites would be a good idea, but that students may abuse them. Several students stated that it would be very convenient to use the sites, especially when compared to course management systems, and that they would be able to get to know and communicate better with their classmates.

Respondents who stated that they would not like to use social networking sites in the classroom were provided with a list of reasons why they would not like to do so and were allowed to select as many choices that they agreed with. Of respondents who would not like to use social networking sites in the classroom (See Figure 5), 48% agreed that they do not want their instructor to see their pages, 42.7% agreed that they want to keep their academic and social lives separate, 7.1% agreed that they don't use the sites that much, 6.7% agreed that they just don't like using the sites, and 3.2% agreed that they do not want to get to know their classmates. Respondents were also given space to state their own opinions on this topic. Many students felt that using social networking sites seemed unprofessional and that the sites would just make classes and communication more complicated. A large number of respondents said that being on a social networking site would be too distracting.

Nearly half of the respondents don't want to use social networking sites in the classroom. To see if clearing this privacy issue would make students more open minded to the use, all participants were asked if they would be willing to join a class page or group, so that the instructor would not have access to specific profiles (See Figure 6). Of all respondents,

85.2% of students stated that they would be willing to join such a group, while 14.8% of students stated that they would not be willing to join such a group.

Students were asked through what method they would most like to receive information from their instructors (See Figure 7). The most popular choice was email (51.3%), distantly followed by Facebook or MySpace (20.5%), course management system email (13.1%), course management system announcements (8.0%), and Twitter (1.7%), while 5.4% of respondents want to receive information in class only, using no electronic means.

Students were then asked through what method they would most like to send information to their instructors. Again, email was the most popular choice (62.76%), followed distantly by Facebook or MySpace (17.2%), course management system email (15.5%), course management system announcements (1.5%), and Twitter (0.7%), while 2.4% of respondents want to speak to instructors in class only, using no electronic means.

Chapter five will discuss the results, limitations, and future research options for this study.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Chapter five will discuss the results and limitations of this study, and will then posit suggestions for future research.

Discussion

This study sought to determine student motivations for and satisfaction with using social networking sites for educational purposes. The study found that the majority of college students use social networking sites, particularly Facebook, and they log onto them multiple times a day. Students have a wide variety of motives for using these sites and in general they are satisfied with their media experience. The most important findings of this study are that students are not satisfied with educational social networking site use, that educators need to examine motives before implementing social networking sites into the classroom, and that a Facebook class group may be the most effective way to implement social networking sites into education. This idea will be further explained through examining educational social networking site satisfaction, motivations, and educational usage data.

The first of the important findings of this study is the confirmation of what many educators have believed for some time – that students do not want to use social networking sites in education, at least not in heavy doses. But there's more to that confirmation - when examining consistencies between education motives and general use motives, one can see that relationship maintenance (General use $M = 4.00$, $SD = .64$; Educational use $M = 3.81$, $SD = .71$) and information seeking (General use $M = 3.57$, $SD = .72$; Educational use $M = 3.79$, $SD = .94$) factors are the same. All relationship maintenance motivation statements that emerged

for general use of the sites also emerged in relationship maintenance for educational use, and three out of the four educational motives are the same as three of the five general use motives for information seeking (See Tables 2 and 5).

While the motivations are similar, there is a contrast in student satisfaction with use. For general use outcomes, students are satisfied with their use of the sites for relationship maintenance and information seeking purposes (See Table 3), which means students want to use social networking sites to connect with their friends and find out what's going on in the world. However, when it comes to educational uses, students are not satisfied with information seeking and relationship uses (See Table 6). We know that they like using the sites for these reasons in everyday life, but not in the academic world. This could be because there is one element in educational use that does not exist in everyday use: instructor presence. There is a high motivation for using social networking sites to communicate with friends and ambivalent motivation for talking to their instructor. So, they want to use social networking sites for educational purposes, but they do not want the instructor involved.

Even though students stated that they enjoyed using social networking sites for educational purposes (See Figure 2), discrepancies between gratifications sought and obtained statements show that what they expected to get out of social networking site use and what they actually got out of social networking site use were different. Students expected that social networking sites would help them maintain relationships, pass time, and find information, and those expectations were met. However, students expected to be able to maintain relationships with classmates and find out class information, and these expectations were not met. This finding indicates that students expressed dissatisfaction with educational

social networking site use because it was not used the way they wanted it to be used. For example, students report being motivated to use social networking sites for educational information seeking purposes. However, they also reported being dissatisfied with using them this way, which suggests that there was either no information available on the site or the site did not have the type of information the students were looking for. According to motivation statements, students want to use social networking sites to find out class announcements, news, and information ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 1.07$), to learn about class assignments, events, and activities ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 1.05$), and to keep aware of what's going on in class ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.02$). Thus, educators need to examine these student motives before utilizing new media in the classroom.

When examining general use and educational motives, it becomes clear that students recognize a difference between educational uses and general uses, similar to findings by Madge et al. (2009). One example of these motivational contrasts can be seen through differences between educational and general relationship maintenance uses. In educational uses, relationship maintenance motives loaded with convenience motives (See Table 4); however, in general uses, convenience and relationship maintenance motives loaded into separate factors (See Table 1). These loadings suggest that social networking sites provide a convenient way to communicate with classmates, but that social networking sites are not the most convenient way to communicate with friends that they see outside of the classroom. For example, if a student is trying to get in touch with a friend who is getting out of class on the other side of campus, it may be more convenient to send that friend a text message about meeting up for lunch. However, if a student is trying to set up a study group with a classmate,

writing on that classmate's Facebook wall may be more convenient, especially if the students have not exchanged phone numbers.

The relationship maintenance factor provides another example of contrasting motives for educational and general uses. Maintaining relationships with classmates is different than maintaining relationships with friends. Two motivation statements factored into educational relationship maintenance that did not factor into general relationship maintenance: "To communicate quickly with classmates" ($M = 3.98$, $SD = .85$) and "To write on my classmates' walls" ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.00$). Educational relationship maintenance may only be used to ask classmates questions or to arrange study groups, whereas general relationship maintenance means cultivating deeper relationships with people outside of the student's educational realm.

Another contrast can be seen with passing time. Passing time emerged as the second highest motivation for general use ($M = 3.94$, $SD = .74$), but less so for educational use ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.08$). They are not passing time by looking for school work. "To look at profiles" ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.01$) and "to read statuses" ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.03$) are motivation statements that grouped together in general use motives but not in educational use motives. When passing time on social networking sites, students are looking at profiles and statuses of people they know as a means of surveillance. If students are looking at classmates' statuses, it may be for an information seeking purpose to find posts about class or homework.

Social utility is one motive that is consistent between both educational and general uses. This factor has a low motivation in both general ($M = 2.76$, $SD = .77$) and educational ($M = 2.72$, $SD = .90$) social networking site use. Social networking sites are not a tool used to look popular for general ($M = 2.11$, $SD = 1.05$) or for educational use ($M = 2.19$, $SD = 1.07$).

47

Students also do not use the sites so that people ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 1.13$) or classmates ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 1.09$) can learn about them. This suggests that having a social networking site is now the norm. This supports the findings in this study, which found that 96.9% of students report using these sites. It is not a new technology that only a few people use. Social networking accounts are a commonplace item that nearly every college student has.

As mentioned previously, motivation statements included items that differentiated between communicating with instructors and communicating with classmates. Communicating with classmates fell into the relationship maintenance motive; however, communication with instructor emerged as its own motive for educational uses ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 1.08$). These uses did not have low means, and the means were actually higher than social utility ($M = 2.72$, $SD = .90$) and pass time motives ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.08$), which loaded before communication with instructor. When looking at the specific motive statements, sending instructors a message ($M = 3.55$, $SD = .1.21$) and quickly communicating with instructors ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.19$) actually seem to have slightly higher means than expected, indicating a higher motivation. On the other hand, students are ambivalent when it comes to writing on instructors' walls ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.20$). The picture becomes more interesting when those results are examined in light of the results of research question five. Research question five found that students' preferred method of instructor communication is through email and that students do not want their instructors to see their personal profiles. These findings suggest that students do not like the element of communicating with instructors via wall posts, because that may invade privacy. On the other hand, students may not mind

communicating via private messages on social networking sites, because this function is similar to sending an email.

This study carries practical implications for educators who want to connect with their students in this way. Students reported being motivated to use social networking sites for relationship maintenance and information seeking purposes. Thus, educators need to encourage use of the sites in that way. Students also reported that they would be willing to join a class group on a social networking site. This means that this purpose would be the best way to implement these sites into classroom use. Because Facebook is a clear favorite among college students, creating a group on this site would be the most beneficial and convenient location. To fulfill relationship maintenance needs, the instructor should encourage students to get in touch with classmates, reach out to classmates who haven't been in class, reinforce relationships with classmates, and send classmates messages when questions arise. To fulfill information seeking needs, the group should contain class information. The page should contain posts of class announcements, assignments, and due dates. Because students expressed concern with their instructors seeing their profile pages, it would be best if educators assigned someone else to post class information on the group page. The instructor should not be part of the group and should not solicit students for friend requests, though he or she should allow communication through private messages.

The theoretical implications of this study can be seen through its confirmation and extension of existing social networking site research. This study examined two different uses for social networking sites. When communicating, the medium does matter. There is a difference between sending an instructor an email and writing on his or her Facebook wall.

49

Educational uses of social networking sites are not the same as general uses of social networking sites. The educational uses found in this study reflect the findings of Ritzenthaler et al. (2009) by determining that students would like to use Facebook groups for class. This study also confirms the idea that some students want to keep their academic lives and social lives separate (Madge et al. 2008). However, the motives that emerged in this study suggest that students aren't as opposed to the idea as the students questioned by Madge et al. Students do have needs that could be filled by using social networking sites in education, which is a contradiction to those previous findings.

This study also confirms and extends findings in general social networking site use studies. Ray (2007) states that social networking sites can fulfill multiple needs. With all of the motives found in this study, this idea is supported. The educational motives found in this study show that there are even more needs that can be filled using the sites beyond those that Ray found. Johnson and Yang (2009) found that if people are satisfied with their use of social media, they will use that medium again. This study found that college students are quite satisfied with their use of social networking sites, and, as their usage data reports, they continue to use these sites on a nearly daily basis.

Another theoretical implication of this study is that it supports the assumptions of the uses and gratifications approach. College students are goal directed and purposeful. They can identify what needs they want the media to fulfill. They know that they simply want to pass the time. They actively choose to log onto Facebook, because they know it will help fill that need of passing time. Then, they develop usage patterns. If Facebook helped filled their pass

time needs, the students are satisfied, and return to the media again, as can be seen by how often students use the site ($M = 6.57$ days, $SD = 2.14$).

<div align="center">Limitations</div>

This research does have some limitations. Less than one-third of the respondents reported using social networking sites for educational purposes. This finding suggests that social networking sites have not been largely implemented in the classroom. Thus, satisfaction with educational use of social networking sites may not have been able to be as deeply explored as possible. Lack of respondents to that section of the survey may not mean the results cannot be generalized to a larger population.

Perhaps one reason why there has not been adoption of social networking sites into the classroom, which contributed to the low response rate stated previously, is because of the lack of research in this area. The lack of existing research on social networking sites use in education is also a limitation of this study. This study is very exploratory in nature, and had to adapt methodology from new media studies which were not specific to this area of research.

Also stemming from the lack of prior research, perhaps there may have been a flaw in the motivation and satisfaction statements themselves. Respondents may have benefitted from having more options to choose from. The items used in this study were limited to the researcher's ideas and from the few existing studies out there. There may be additional motivations that students may have that were not reflected in this study.

Additionally, the lack of unifying educational theories may have posed a limitation. There are few empirical educational studies of this subject matter, so there was little to pull from to enhance this study.

Future Research

This study is just the tip of the iceberg for research into the educational use of social networking sites. As stated previously, one limitation of this study was the lack of prior research on which to base this paper. Clearly, more research is needed not only in uses and gratifications, but in social networking sites in education in general.

One way to study this topic more in depth would be through qualitative methods. It may be beneficial to simply interview students to determine their motivations for using social networking sites for educational purposes. One could ask students open ended questions regarding their feelings about using social networking sites in the classroom. It would be interesting to know what features they would like to see used and what type of information they would like to have available through that medium. Through asking open ended questions it would be possible to have students express their thoughts in their own words, rather than being forced to choose from reasons provided by the researcher. The students are the ones who would be using this medium, so it would be useful to have their input regarding its use.

Case studies would be another beneficial way to study the use of social networking sites in education. Katt et al. (2008) state that many educational studies simply offer best practices and analysis of a tactic an instructor implemented in class. Though previously stated as a shortcoming of educational research, one way to get feedback is to implement some sort of social networking site use in a class and then report on its effectiveness. An instructor could start posting homework assignments and class announcements on Facebook and then ask students what they thought of it at the end of the semester. This assessment could be done through the aforementioned qualitative, open ended questions, or a survey could be

constructed similar to the tool used for this study in order to quantitatively study satisfaction with use of the site.

When comparing the findings of this study and the findings from the study by Ritzenthaler, Stanton, and Rickard (2009), it becomes clear that studying the use of groups would be quite beneficial. Respondents in this study state that they would be willing to join a class group on a social networking site, and Ritzenthaler and colleagues received positive feedback regarding their use of a Facebook group for class. This could be a beneficial way to implement social networking sites into the classroom, but more research needs to be done in that specific area.

Finally, it is essential to stay on top of new media. While researchers may rush to study Facebook and Twitter, it may not be the big social media a few years down the road. This decline could be foreseen through the drop in popularity of MySpace. It used to be a highly used social networking site, but its users continue to dwindle. With technology changing so quickly, there's no reason to doubt that the Facebook craze may fade away. Just as new media is constantly changing, so must the research focus of academics.

APPENDIX A: TABLES

Table 1:

Factor Analysis of Measures of Social Networking Site Gratifications Sought

	Loading				
Factor	RM	PT	IS	C	SU
Relationship Maintenance					
To get in touch with people I know.	**.75**				
To stay in touch with friends I don't see regularly.	**.74**				
To keep in touch with someone I met in real life.	**.70**				
To get through to someone who is hard to reach.	**.62**				
To send someone a message.	**.58**				
To communicate quickly with someone.	.52			.42	
To write on someone's wall.	.49		.47		
To reinforce existing relationships.	**.49**				
Pass Time					
To pass time when I'm bored.		**.78**			
When I have nothing else to do.		**.77**			
To read statuses.		**.64**			
To look at profiles.		**.61**			
Because it is part of my routine.		**.56**			
Because I just felt like it.		.56		.51	
Because it is entertaining		.51		.51	
Information Seeking					
To find out news and information.			**.68**		
To read stories and articles people post.			**.68**		
To learn about events and activities.			**.67**		
To look at pictures.		.46	.57		
To keep aware of what's going on.			**.56**		
To watch videos people post.			**.51**		
Convenience					
Because I can talk to people when it's convenient.				**.59**	
Because I can communicate with many people at once.	.44			.56	
To have fun.		.41		.55	
Because it is an easy way to communicate with people.	.53			.55	
Social Utility					
To make new friends.					**.74**
To look popular.					**.69**
So people can learn about me.					**.61**
To learn about new friends.			.41		.58
To use a chat program.					**.46**
To relax.				.42	.43

Table 2:
Reliability Scale of Social Networking Site Gratifications Sought Factors

Factor	Mean	SD	Variance	α	N
Relationship Maintenance	**4.00**	**.64**	**13.63**	**.81**	**706**
To get in touch with people I know.	4.23	.74			
To stay in touch with friends I don't see regularly.	4.28	.86			
To keep in touch with someone I met in real life.	4.19	.79			
To get through to someone who is hard to reach.	3.74	1.04			
To send someone a message.	3.86	.88			
To reinforce existing relationships.	3.71	1.01			
Pass Time	**3.94**	**.74**	**13.12**	**.83**	**708**
To pass time when I'm bored.	4.25	.84			
When I have nothing else to do.	4.15	.89			
To read statuses.	3.71	1.03			
To look at profiles.	3.76	1.01			
Because it is part of my routine.	3.80	1.02			
Information Seeking	**3.57**	**.72**	**11.42**	**.81**	**708**
To find out news and information.	3.68	.95			
To read stories and articles people post.	3.35	1.03			
To learn about events and activities.	3.80	.92			
To keep aware of what's going on.	3.95	.80			
To watch videos people post.	3.10	1.07			
Social Utility	**2.76**	**.77**	**8.99**	**.81**	**697**
To make new friends.	2.54	1.13			
To look popular.	2.11	1.05			
So people can learn about me.	3.04	1.08			
To use a chat program.	3.34	1.19			

Table 3:
t-tests for Social Networking Site Gratifications Sought and Obtained Variables

Variable	N	GS Mean	GS SD	GO Mean	GO SD	Diff.	Sig.	Cor r.	S/U /E*
Get in touch with people I know	705	4.24	.73	4.16	.68	.08	.00	.54	U
Stay in touch with friends I don't see regularly	704	4.29	.84	4.24	.71	.05	.06	.64	S
Keep in touch with someone I met in real life	706	4.20	.78	4.10	.72	.09	.00	.63	U
Get through to someone who is hard to reach	706	3.74	1.04	3.86	.92	-.11	.0	.68	E
Send someone a message	704	3.87	.88	3.98	.79	-.11	.00	.62	E
Communicate quickly with people	702	3.98	.97	4.03	.86	-.05	.07	.66	S
Write on someone's wall	699	3.80	.92	3.91	.84	-.11	.00	.66	E
Pass time when bored	707	4.25	.84	4.08	.82	.17	.00	.68	U
When I have nothing else to do	704	4.16	.86	3.96	.90	.20	.00	.64	U
Read statuses	700	3.71	1.03	3.85	.90	-.13	.00	.67	E
Look at profiles	705	3.77	1.00	3.85	.88	-.08	.01	.67	E
It is part of my online routine	707	3.80	1.02	3.71	1.00	.09	.00	.75	U
I just like to use it	701	3.90	.87	3.87	.83	.03	.16	.76	S
It is entertaining	701	3.92	.82	3.90	.84	.02	.32	.73	S
Find out news and information	700	3.68	.96	3.78	.88	-.10	.00	.69	E
Read stories and articles people post	698	3.36	1.03	3.64	.95	-.29	.00	.71	E
Learn about events and activities	698	3.81	.91	3.93	.84	-.12	.00	.70	E
Look at pictures	700	3.96	.89	4.00	.83	-.04	.09	.77	S
Keep aware of what's going on	706	3.95	.79	4.00	.76	-.05	.05	.64	E
Watch videos people post	700	3.11	1.07	3.42	1.020	-.32	.00	.73	E
I can talk to people when it's convenient for me	699	3.97	.85	4.04	.75	-.07	.00	.66	E
I can communicate with lots of people at one time	701	3.85	.92	3.94	.87	-..09	.00	.66	E
Have fun	700	3.65	.94	3.70	.91	-.05	.03	.76	E
It provides an easy way to communicate with people	700	4.18	.72	4.08	.75	.10	.00	.68	U
Make new friends	705	2.54	1.12	2.91	1.18	-.37	.00	.64	E
Look popular	698	2.10	1.05	2.41	1.16	-.31	.00	.73	E
People can learn about me	698	3.05	1.08	3.38	1.05	-.33	.00	.66	E
I can learn about new people	701	3.16	1.10	3.49	1.06	-.33	.00	.68	E
Use a chat program	704	3.34	1.19	3.55	1.08	-.21	.00	.74	E
Relax	704	3.37	1.02	3.38	1.05	-.01	.70	.72	S
I can learn about old friends	700	3.81	.87	3.98	.77	-.17	.00	.66	E
Reinforce existing relationships	701	3.72	1.00	3.85	.90	-.13	.00	.65	E

Note. *S = Satisfied with media use, U = Unsatisfied with media use, E = Media use exceeded expectations.

Table 4:

*Factor Analysis of Measures of Educational Social Networking Site Gratifications Sought*

	Loading				
Factor	RM&C	IS	SU	PT	CWI
Relationship Maintenance & Convenience					
To get in touch with people I know.	**.76**				
To keep in touch with someone I met in real life.	**.75**				
To stay in touch with classmates I don't usually see.	**.69**				
To reinforce existing relationships.	**.68**				
To communicate quickly with my classmates.	**.67**				
Because it is an easy way to communicate with people.	.64	.61			
To communicate with lots of people at once.	.63	.50			
To get through to someone who is hard to reach.	**.61**				
To send my classmates messages.	**.61**				
Because I can talk to people when it's convenient.	.60	.57			
To write on my classmates' walls.	**.59**				
To initiate friendships with classmates.	.57		.45		
Information Seeking					
To find out class announcements, news, and information		**.81**			
To learn about assignments, events, and activities.		**.81**			
To keep aware of what's going on in class.		**.78**			
To make homework entertaining.		.58	.53		
To make class entertaining.		.56	.46	.45	
To have fun doing homework.		**.40**			
Social Utility					
So that my classmates can find out about me.			**.71**		
To learn about old classmates.	.47		.65		
To look popular.			**.62**		
To learn about new classmates.	.54		.60		
Pass Time					
When there is nothing else to do.				**.88**	
To pass time when bored.				**.88**	
Because it is part of my routine.	.40			.57	
Communicate with Instructor					
To write on my instructor's wall.					**.76**
To send my instructor a message.		.46			**.75**
To quickly communicate with my instructor.		.50			**.70**

Table 5:

Reliability Scale of Educational Social Networking Site Gratifications Sought Factors

Factor	Mean	SD	Variance	α	N items
Relationship Maintenance & Convenience	**3.81**	**.71**	**23.07**	**.91**	**697**
To get in touch with people I know.	3.88	.83			
To keep in touch with someone I met in real life.	3.86	.85			
To stay in touch with classmates I don't usually see.	3.67	.96			
To reinforce existing relationships.	3.56	.98			
To communicate quickly with my classmates.	3.98	.85			
To get through to someone who is hard to reach.	3.84	.90			
To send my classmates messages.	3.87	.92			
To write on my classmates' walls.	3.59	1.00			
Information Seeking & Entertainment	**3.79**	**.94**	**18.03**	**.89**	**692**
To find out class announcements, news, and information	3.91	1.07			
To learn about assignments, events, and activities.	3.90	1.05			
To keep aware of what's going on in class.	3.93	1.02			
To have fun doing homework.	3.43	1.10			
Social Utility	**2.72**	**.90**	**11.36**	**.55**	**697**
So that my classmates can find out about me.	3.24	1.09			
To look popular.	2.19	1.07			
Pass Time	**3.34**	**1.08**	**9.59**	**.89**	**700**
When there is nothing else to do.	3.34	1.13			
To pass time when bored.	3.34	1.16			
Communicate with Instructor	**3.41**	**1.08**	**9.52**	**.88**	**700**
To write on my instructor's wall.	3.03	1.20			
To send my instructor a message.	3.55	1.21			
To quickly communicate with my instructor.	3.63	1.19			

Table 6:

t-tests for Educational Social Networking Site Gratifications Sought and Obtained Variables

Variable	N	GS Mean	GS SD	GO Mean	GO SD	Diff.	Sig.	Corr.	S/U /E*
Get in touch with people I know	192	3.93	.89	3.57	1.13	.36	.00	.56	U
Keep in touch with someone I met in real life	193	3.92	.87	3.58	1.16	.34	.00	.54	U
Stay in touch w classmates I don't see regularly	194	3.69	.99	3.46	1.15	.23	.00	.50	U
Reinforce existing relationships	192	3.72	.97	3.37	1.17	.35	.00	.60	U
Communicate quickly with my classmates	192	4.03	.90	3.71	1.16	.32	.00	.55	U
It provides an easy way to communicate with people	190	4.03	.87	3.78	1.09	.25	.00	.62	U
I can communicate with lots of people at one time	190	3.89	1.00	3.62	1.12	.27	.00	.64	U
Get through to someone who is hard to reach	193	3.99	.91	3.63	1.16	.36	.00	.54	U
Send my classmates a message	194	4.01	.85	3.71	1.10	.30	.00	.42	U
I can talk to people when it's convenient for me	191	3.95	.90	3.69	1.15	.27	.00	.59	U
Write on my classmates' walls	192	3.71	1.03	3.52	1.11	.19	.01	.54	S
Start friendships with classmates	192	3.81	.90	3.45	1.17	.35	.00	.47	U
Find out class announcements, etc.	190	4.16	.97	3.91	1.10	.25	.00	.60	U
Learn about class assignments, etc.	191	4.15	.96	3.96	1.02	.18	.01	.56	U
Keep aware of what's going on in class	192	4.17	.91	3.84	110	.33	.00	.55	U
Make homework more entertaining	127	3.50	1.11	3.17	1.21	.33	.00	.72	U
Make class more entertaining	125	3.64	1.10	3.37	1.17	.27	.00	.57	U
Have fun doing classwork	192	3.47	1.04	3.26	1.16	.22	.00	.58	U
People can learn about me	191	3.39	1.12	3.26	1.18	.13	.03	.73	U
I can learn about old classmates	192	3.47	1.15	3.37	1.21	.10	.13	.67	S
Look popular	192	2.34	1.18	2.27	1.18	.07	.19	.78	S
I can learn about new classmates	192	3.67	1.06	3.52	1.14	.15	.03	.61	U
When there is nothing else to do in class	193	3.42	1.15	3.19	1.26	.24	.00	.55	U
Pass time when bored in class	194	3.45	1.26	3.14	1.32	.31	.00	.65	U
It is part of my online routine	194	3.70	1.05	3.45	1.15	.25	.00	.67	U
Send my instructor a message	194	3.77	1.17	3.43	1.26	.34	.00	.46	U
Write on my instructor's wall	192	3.10	1.21	2.95	1.25	.15	.08	.57	S
Communicate quickly with my instructor	192	3.87	1.09	3.45	1.21	.42	.00	.48	U

Note. *S = Satisfied with media use, U = Unsatisfied with media use, E = Media use exceeded expectations.

APPENDIX B: FIGURES
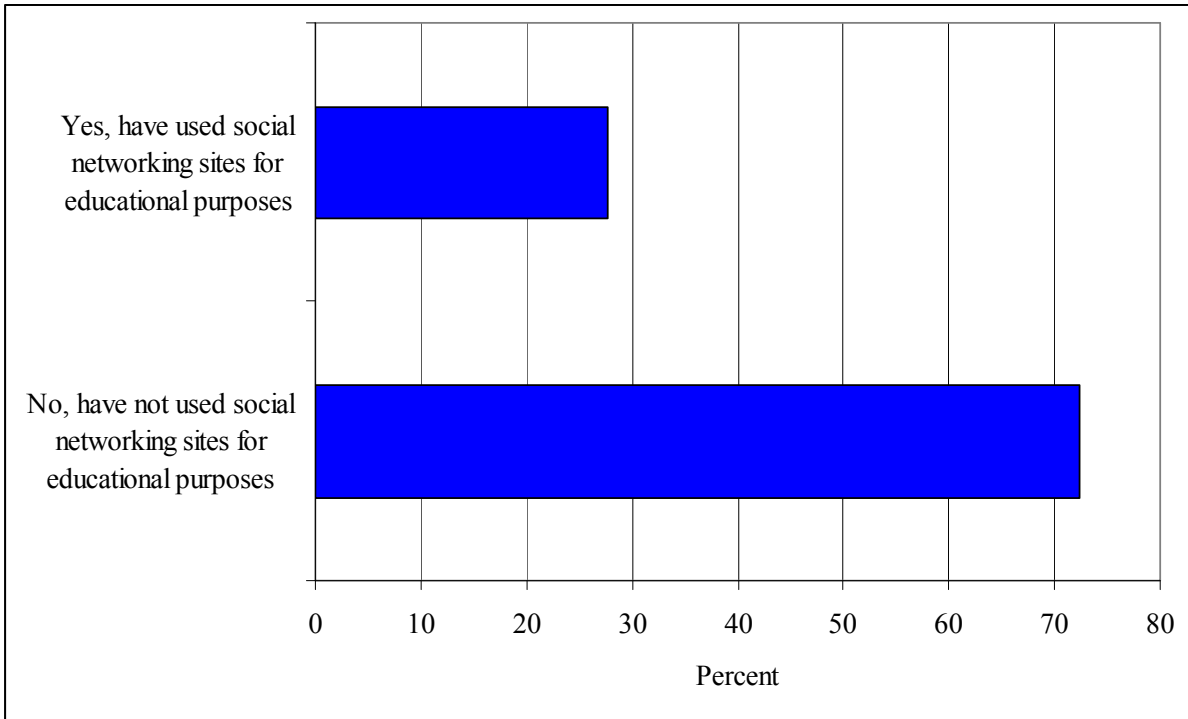
Figure 1: Frequency Statistics for Educational Social Networking Site Use
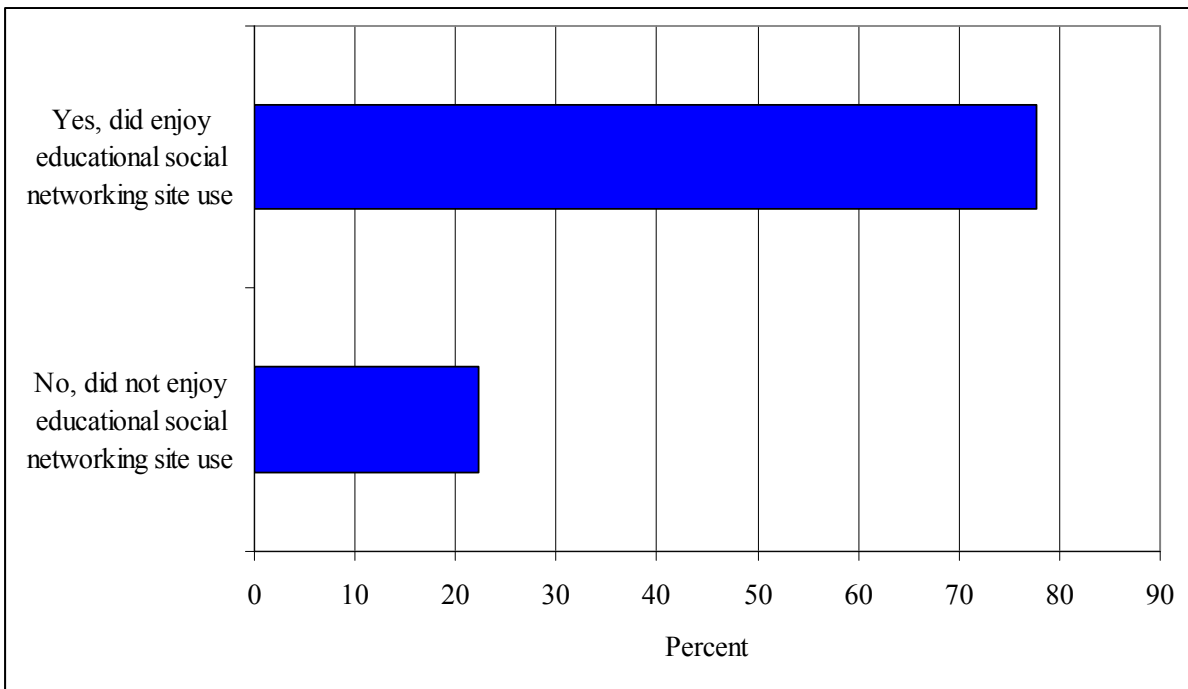
Figure 2: Frequency Statistics for Educational Social Networking Site Satisfaction with Use
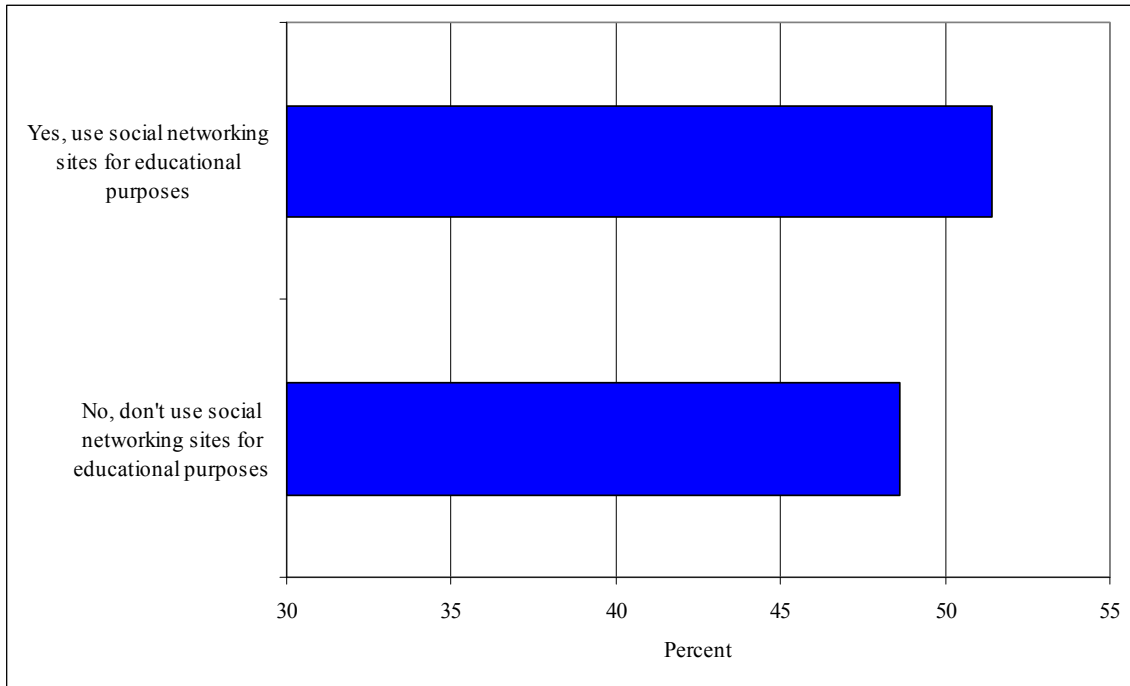
Figure 3: Frequency Statistics for Willingness to Use Social Networking Sites for Educational Purposes
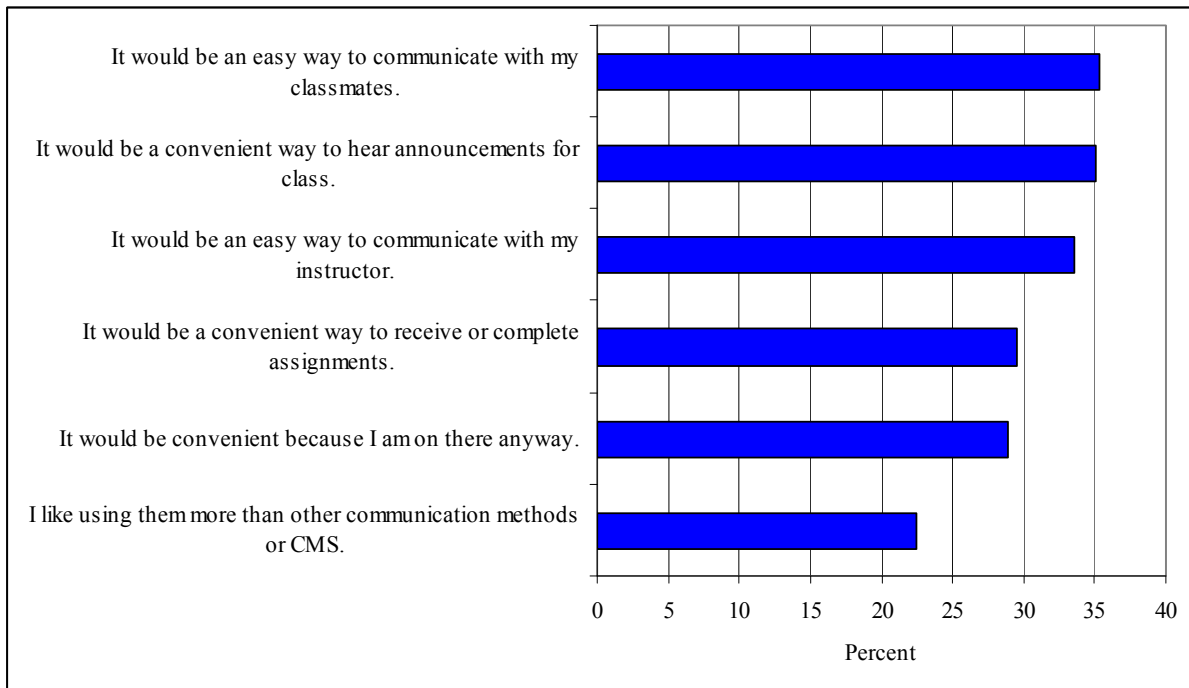
Figure 4: Frequency Statistics for Why Use Social Networking Sites for Educational Purposes
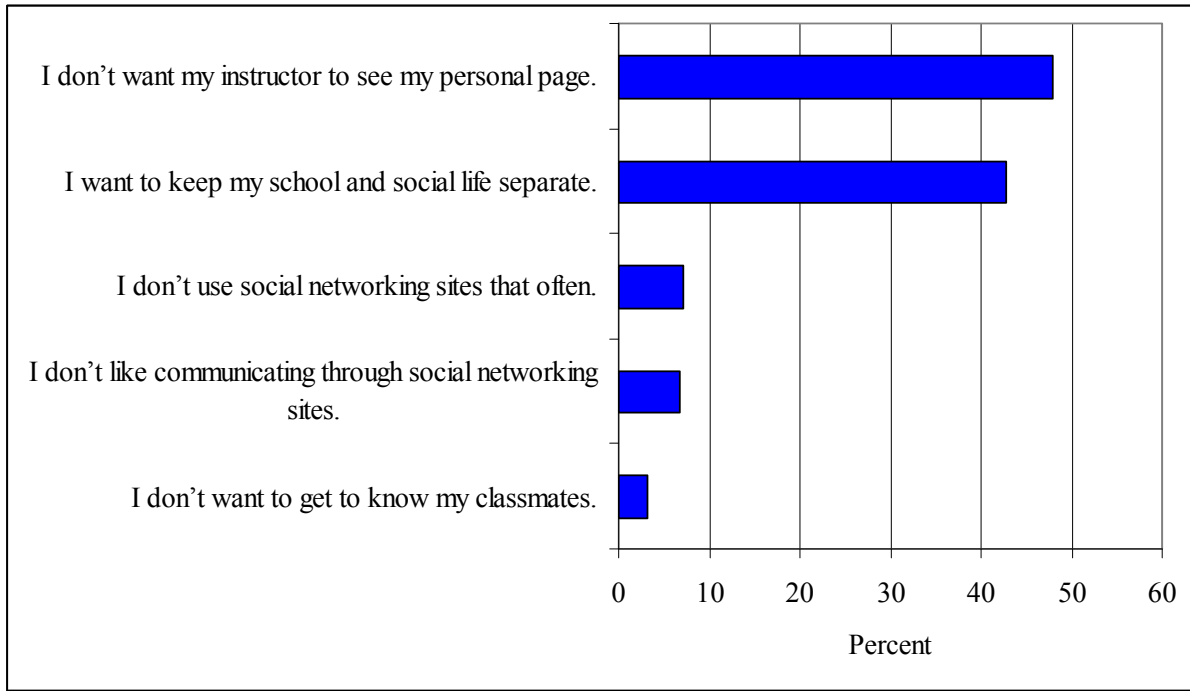
Figure 5: Frequency Statistics for Why Not Use Social Networking Sites for Class
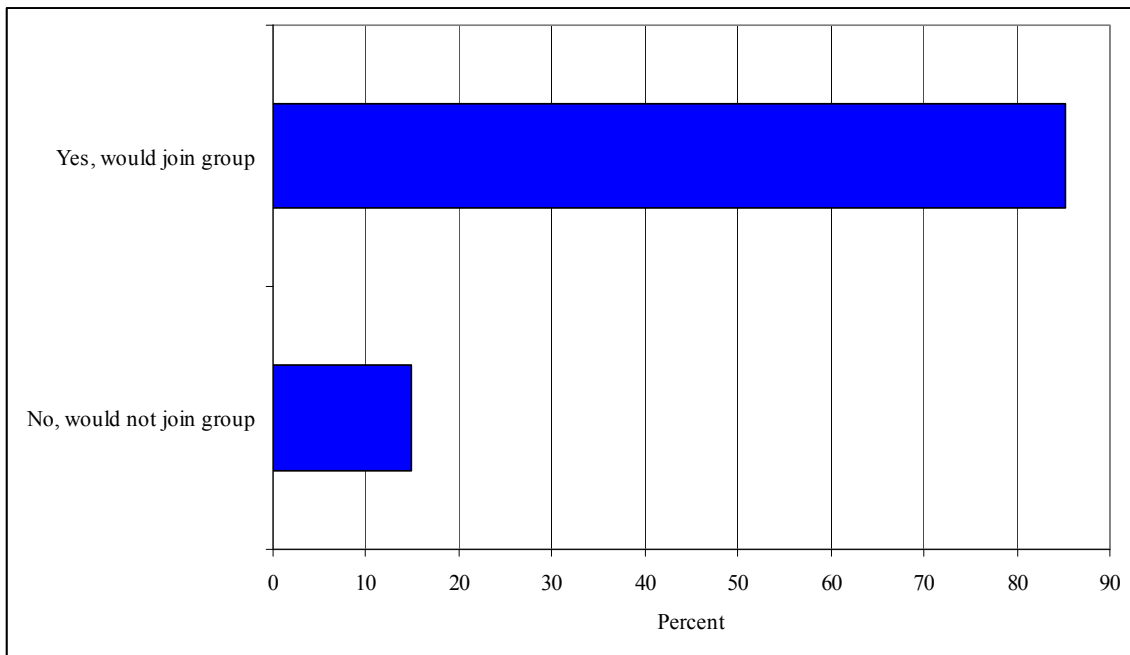
Figure 6: Frequency Statistics for Willingness to Join a Class Group
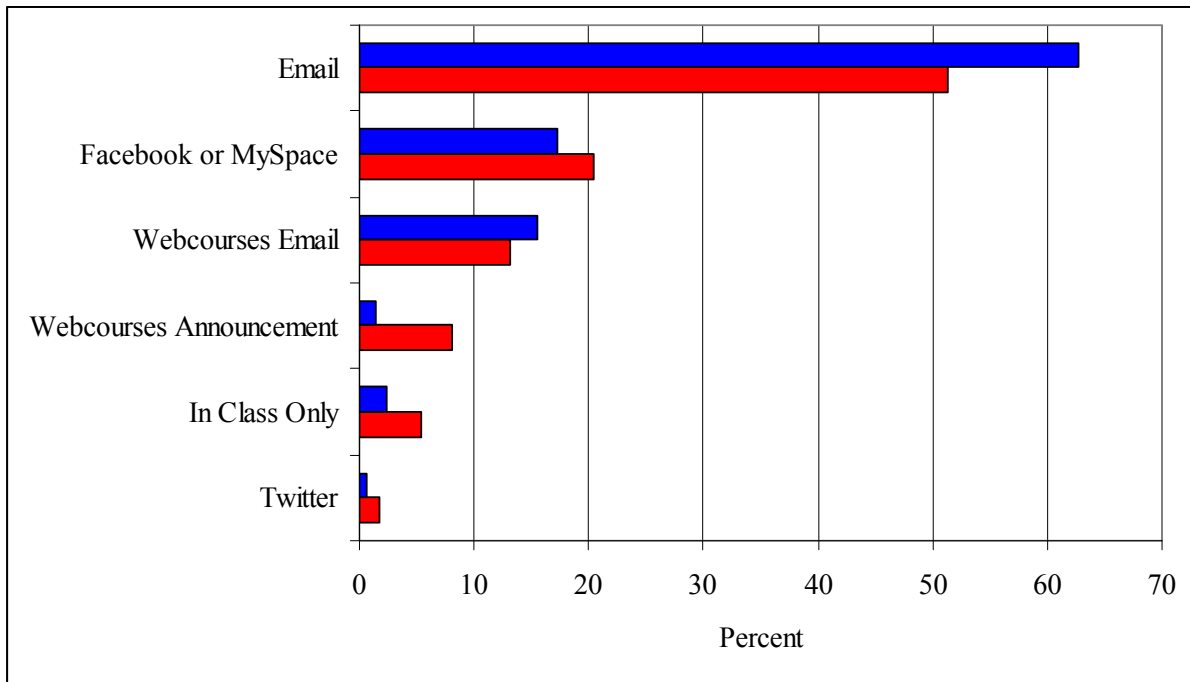
Figure 7: Communication with Instructor

Blue represents how students would like to receive information from instructor. Red represents how students would like to send information to instructor.

APPENDIX C: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1**
FWA00000351, IRB00001138

To: **Heather J. Halter**

Date: **May 18, 2010**

Dear Researcher:

On 5/18/2010, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Initial Review
Project Title:	COLLEGE STUDENTS' MOTIVATIONS FOR USING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IN EDUCATION
Investigator:	Heather J Halter
IRB Number:	SBE-10-06693
Funding Agency:	None

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Joseph Bielitzki, DVM, UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Janice Turchin on 05/18/2010 11:12:39 AM EDT

IRB Coordinator

Page 1 of 1

APPENDIX D: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Halter - Social Networking Sites 2

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you.

The purpose of this research is to determine student motivations for using of social networking sites for educational purposes. If we can understand why students use social networking sites, educators can effectively implement social networking sites into course work and the classroom.

You will be asked to complete a survey. All items are completely voluntary and you may opt out of the survey at any time. You will be asked to answer questions that refer to your online and social networking activities, such as why you use social networking sites. The survey may be completed at any time on any computer for the duration of the data collection period, which is approximately two weeks.

There is no follow up to the survey, so your participation is only required this one time. The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Though you may be asked to provide your name in order to receive class credit, there is no way to connect your name to your answers. Please note that the decision to award credit is up to your instructor. He or she reserves the right not to assign credit. If you are under the age of 18, you are ineligible to complete the survey. If your instructor is awarding credit, he or she may give you an additional assignment in lieu of participation in the survey. Additionally, if you are over the age of 18 and simply do not want to take the survey but do wish to receive any credit your instructor may give, he or she may give you an additional assignment in lieu of participation in the survey.

You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study.

Your instructors will not know who has completed the questionnaires until it is time to award extra credit, if any is to be given.

Your responses will be analyzed and reported anonymously to protect your privacy. By starting the questionnaire, you are indicating your agreement with the conditions as laid out above.

Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, contact Heather Halter, Graduate Student, Nicholson School of Communication, College of Sciences, (407) 823-0269, or by email at hhalter@knights.ucf.edu, or Dr. Tim Brown, Faculty Supervisor, Nicholson School of Communication, College of Sciences, (407) 823-5273, or by email at timbrown@mail.ucf.edu.

IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint: Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901.

By starting this survey, you are confirming that you are over the age of 18.

Halter - Social Networking Sites 2

We'd like to start off by asking you a few basic questions about yourself.

2. What is your gender?

○ Male

○ Female

3. What is your age?

[   ]

4. What is your current level of education?

○ Freshman

○ Sophomore

○ Junior

○ Senior

○ Graduate Student

5. What is your major?

○ Communication (Mass, Interpersonal, etc.)

○ Business (Accounting, Finance, Marketing, etc.)

○ Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Political Science, Psychology, etc.)

○ Arts and Humanities (Film, Theater, Languages, etc.)

○ Engineering and Computer Sciences

○ Other (Education, Hospitality, Health, Medicine, Nursing, etc.)

○ Undeclared/Undecided

6. How would you classify your race or ethnicity?

○ Caucasian

○ African-American

○ Hispanic or Latin American

○ Asian or Asian-American

○ Native American

○ Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

○ Multiracial

Halter - Social Networking Sites 2

Next, we'd like to know a little bit about your online activities.

7. How many years have you been using the Internet?
(Please list whole numbers and do not list a range of years.)

[ ]

8. If you use them, how many years have you been using social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace, etc.)?

[ ]

9. Which of these web sites or applications do you use on a regular basis? Please check all that apply.

[ ] Facebook   [ ] Instant Message

[ ] MySpace   [ ] RSS Feeds

[ ] Twitter   [ ] Message Boards

[ ] Bebo   [ ] Forums

[ ] Plaxo   [ ] Post/Write Blogs

[ ] LinkedIn   [ ] Wikis

[ ] Email   [ ] None of the Above

10. Now we're going to present you with that list again. This time, please choose the ONE thing you believe you do more than any other on a regular basis.

( ) Facebook   ( ) Instant Message

( ) MySpace   ( ) RSS Feeds

( ) Twitter   ( ) Message Boards

( ) Bebo   ( ) Forums

( ) Plaxo   ( ) Post/Write Blogs

( ) LinkedIn   ( ) Wikis

( ) Email   ( ) None of the above

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

Now we're going to ask you some questions about how you use different social networking sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.

11. Do you have a social networking site account that you use?

◯ Yes

◯ No

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

12. Why do you not have a social networking site account (or don't use it)?

- ◯ No time for it
- ◯ Too hard to figure out
- ◯ None of my friends do
- ◯ There are other ways for me to keep in touch with people
- ◯ No interest in it, even though I know how it works
- ◯ Never heard of it

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

13. Think about all the social networking sites that you use. How many days a week do you use them? (Please list whole numbers and do not list a range of dates. If you do not use multiple social networking sites that you use, skip to the next page.)

14. On days you use social networking sites, how many times do you typically log on?

◯ Once a day

◯ Multiple Times Per Day

15. How many hours per day do you spend on social networking sites? (Please list whole numbers and do not list a range of times.)

16. Is there any difference in how often you log on during the week. In other words, do you log on more during the week, during the weekend, or is there no difference?

◯ More during the week

◯ More during the weekend

◯ No difference

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

Rather than thinking about all the different social networking sites you use, we'd now like you to think about the one social networking site you use the most.

17. How many days per week do you log on to that site? (Please list whole numbers and do not list a range of dates.)

18. On days that you use that social networking site, how many times do you typically log on?

◯ One time

◯ Multiple times

19. How many hours per day do you spend on that site? (Please list whole numbers and do not list a range of times.)

20. Is there any difference in how often you log on during the week. In other words, do you log on more during the week, during the weekend, or is there no difference?

◯ More during the week

◯ More during the weekend

◯ No difference

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

The following statements will examine why you use social networking sites.

We're going to present you with a list of possible reasons for logging on and using social networking sites. Please tell us if these are reasons why you use social networking sites.

21. Using the options you have below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

"I use social networking sites..."

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
To communicate quickly with people	○	○	○	○	○
To stay in touch with friends that I don't see regularly	○	○	○	○	○
To get in touch with people I know	○	○	○	○	○
To get through to someone who is hard to reach	○	○	○	○	○
To reinforce existing relationships	○	○	○	○	○
To keep in touch with someone I met in real life	○	○	○	○	○
To make new friends	○	○	○	○	○
To pass time when bored	○	○	○	○	○
Because it is part of my online routine	○	○	○	○	○
To relax	○	○	○	○	○
When I have nothing else to do	○	○	○	○	○
To write on someone's wall	○	○	○	○	○
To send someone a message	○	○	○	○	○
To use a chat program	○	○	○	○	○
To read statuses	○	○	○	○	○
To look at profiles	○	○	○	○	○

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

Here's a few more possible reasons why you use social networking sites.

22. Using the options you have below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

"I use social networking sites..."

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree or agree	agree	strongly agree
To keep aware of what's going on	○	○	○	○	○
To learn about events and activities	○	○	○	○	○
To find out news and information	○	○	○	○	○
To look popular	○	○	○	○	○
So people can learn about me	○	○	○	○	○
So I can learn about old friends	○	○	○	○	○
So I can learn about new people	○	○	○	○	○
Because I can communicate with lots of people at one time	○	○	○	○	○
Because I can talk to people when it's convenient for me	○	○	○	○	○
Because it provides an easy way to communicate with people	○	○	○	○	○
Because it is entertaining	○	○	○	○	○
Because I just like to use it	○	○	○	○	○
To have fun	○	○	○	○	○
To look at pictures	○	○	○	○	○
To watch videos people post	○	○	○	○	○
To read stories and articles people post	○	○	○	○	○

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

Now we're going to ask you to what extent do social networking sites actually provide you with some of the things we've just asked you about.

In other words, the earlier question asked you about why you go to these sites, and in this question we want to know what you think these sites actually help you accomplish.

23. Using the options you have below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

"Social networking sites actually help me..."

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
Communicate quickly with people	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Stay in touch with friends that I don't see regularly	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Get in touch with people I know	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Get through to someone who is hard to reach	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Reinforce existing relationships	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Keep in touch with someone I met in real life	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Make new friends	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
To pass time when bored	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Because it is part of my online routine	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Relax	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
When I have nothing else better to do	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Write on someone's wall	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Send someone a message	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Use a chat program	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Read statuses	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Look at profiles	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

Here's a few more statements about what social networking sites actually help you accomplish.

24. Using the options you have below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

"Social networking sites actually help me..."

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
Keep aware of what's going on	○	○	○	○	○
Learn about events and activities	○	○	○	○	○
Find out news and information	○	○	○	○	○
Look popular	○	○	○	○	○
People learn about me	○	○	○	○	○
Learn about old friends	○	○	○	○	○
Learn about new people	○	○	○	○	○
Communicate with lots of people at one time	○	○	○	○	○
Talk to people when it's convenient for me	○	○	○	○	○
Easily communicate with people	○	○	○	○	○
Be entertained	○	○	○	○	○
Because I just like to use it	○	○	○	○	○
Have fun	○	○	○	○	○
Look at pictures	○	○	○	○	○
Watch videos people post	○	○	○	○	○
Read stories and articles people post	○	○	○	○	○

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

25. Overall, are you satisfied with your social networking site use?

◯ Yes

◯ No

Halter - Social Networking Sites 2

Now we want you to think about using social networking sites for educational purposes.

We're going to present you with a list of possible reasons for using social networking sites in your courses and for class work. Please share if you would be willing to use social networking sites for these purposes.

For example, if your teacher were to incorporate Facebook, MySpace, or Twitter into your course work, why would you want to use it?

26. Think about if you were to use social networking sites for your classes and for course work. Then state your level of agreement with the following statements.

"I would use social networking sites for my classes..."

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
To quickly communicate with my instructor	○	○	○	○	○
To quickly communicate with my classmates	○	○	○	○	○
To stay in touch with classmates I don't usually see	○	○	○	○	○
To get in touch with people I know	○	○	○	○	○
To get through to someone who is hard to reach	○	○	○	○	○
To reinforce existing relationships	○	○	○	○	○
To keep in touch with someone I met in real life	○	○	○	○	○
To start friendships with classmates	○	○	○	○	○
To pass time when bored in class	○	○	○	○	○
If there is nothing else to do in class	○	○	○	○	○
To have fun doing classwork	○	○	○	○	○
Because it is part of my online routine	○	○	○	○	○
To write on my instructor's wall	○	○	○	○	○
To send my instructor a message	○	○	○	○	○
To write on my classmates' walls	○	○	○	○	○
To send my classmates a message	○	○	○	○	○

81

Here's some more statements about if you were to use social networking sites for your classes and for course work.

27. Think about if you were to use social networking sites for your classes and for course work. Then state your level of agreement with the following statements.

"I would use social networking sites for my classes..."

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
To keep aware of what's going on in class	○	○	○	○	○
To learn about class assignments, events and activities	○	○	○	○	○
To find out class announcements, news and information	○	○	○	○	○
To look popular	○	○	○	○	○
So people can learn about me	○	○	○	○	○
So I can learn about old classmates	○	○	○	○	○
So I can learn about new classmates	○	○	○	○	○
Because I can communicate with lots of people at one time	○	○	○	○	○
Because I can talk to people when it's convenient for me	○	○	○	○	○
Because it provides an easy way to communicate with people	○	○	○	○	○
To make class more entertaining	○	○	○	○	○
To make homework more entertaining	○	○	○	○	○

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

28. Do you currently use, or have you in the past used, any social networking sites for course work?

◯ Yes

◯ No

Halter - Social Networking Sites 2

Now we would like you to think about a time when you used social networking sites for a class. What did it actually help you with?

Just like before, we've already asked you about why you would potentially use these sites, and in this question we want to know what you think these sites actually helped you accomplish.

29. After using social networking sites in your classes, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

"Social networking sites in my classes helped me..."

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
Communicate quickly with my instructor	○	○	○	○	○
Communicate quickly classmates	○	○	○	○	○
Stay in touch with classmates I don't usually see	○	○	○	○	○
Get in touch with people I know	○	○	○	○	○
Get through to someone who is hard to reach	○	○	○	○	○
Reinforce existing relationships	○	○	○	○	○
Keep in touch with someone I met in real life	○	○	○	○	○
Initiate friendships with classmates	○	○	○	○	○
Pass time when bored in class	○	○	○	○	○
Because it is part of my online routine	○	○	○	○	○
When I had nothing else to do in class	○	○	○	○	○
Have fun in class	○	○	○	○	○
Write on my instructor's wall	○	○	○	○	○
Send my instructor a message	○	○	○	○	○
Write on my classmates' walls	○	○	○	○	○
Send my classmates a message	○	○	○	○	○

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

Here's some more ways you could have used social networking sites for class.

30. After using social networking sites in your courses, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

"Social networking sites in my classes helped me..."

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
Keep aware of what's going on in class	○	○	○	○	○
Learn about class assignments, events and activities	○	○	○	○	○
Find out class announcements, news and information	○	○	○	○	○
Look popular	○	○	○	○	○
People learn about me	○	○	○	○	○
Learn about old classmates	○	○	○	○	○
Learn about new classmates	○	○	○	○	○
Because I can communicate with lots of people at one time	○	○	○	○	○
Because I can talk to people when it's convenient for me	○	○	○	○	○
Because it provides an easy way to communicate with people	○	○	○	○	○
Make class more entertaining	○	○	○	○	○
Make homework more entertaining	○	○	○	○	○

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

31. Overall, are you satisfied with your social networking site use for educational purposes?

◯ Yes

◯ No

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

We've got only a few more questions...

32. Would you like to use social networking sites for your classes?

◯ Yes

◯ No

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

33. Why would you want to use social networking sites for your classes? (Select all that apply)

☐ It would be an easy way to communicate with my instructors

☐ It would be an easy way to communicate with my classmates

☐ It would be a convenient way to hear announcements for class

☐ It would be a convenient way to receive or complete assignments

☐ I like using them more than other communication methods or course management systems (Email, WebCourses, WebCT, etc.)

☐ It would be convenient because I am on there a lot anyway.

Please list any other ways you would use it

[   ]

Halter - Social Networking Sites 2

34. Why wouldn't you like to use social networking sites for classwork? (Select all that apply)

☐ I don't want my instructor seeing my personal page

☐ I don't want to get to know my classmates

☐ I want to keep my school and social life separate

☐ I don't like communicating through social networking sites

☐ I don't use social networking sites that often

Please list any other reasons why you would not use it

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

35. Would you be willing to join a class page or class group so that your instructors and classmates don't have access to your personal page?

○ Yes

○ No

Halter – Social Networking Sites 2

We have just two more questions to ask you, and they're about your preferences when it comes to communicating with your instructors.

36. What method would you most prefer to RECEIVE information from your instructors?

○ Twitter

○ Email

○ Webcourses email

○ Webcourses Announcements

○ Facebook/MySpace

○ Announcements in class (no electronic means)

37. Now we're going to show you that list again, and this time we'd like you to choose the method you would most like to SEND information to your instructor.

○ Twitter

○ Email

○ Webcourses email

○ Webcourses Announcements

○ Facebook/MySpace

○ Discussion in class/office hours (no electronic means)

Halter - Social Networking Sites 2

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

If your instructor is offering extra credit for taking part in this survey, please click here to enter your name and instructor's name.

1. Thank You

Thank you for accessing this survey. If you've been brought here by clicking on a link at the end of another survey, it is likely because you believe your instructor is providing extra credit for taking part in this research project.

Please fill out the questions below (your first name, your last name, your section number, last name of instructor). Once the research is completed, your instructor will receive a list of all those who have submitted their names for extra credit.

You should be aware that there is no way to connect your name with any of the answers you provided in the previous survey. The only information that we are gathering here is who you are and who your instructor is.

Thank you for your participation.

1. What is your name?

First   [_____]

Last   [_____]

2. What is your section number?

[_____]

3. What is the last name of your instructor?

[_____]

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