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Full length article

The relationship between social media co-worker connections and work-related attitudes

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ABSTRACT

Many people have social media connections with co-workers. An important question that arises is how such connections impact important organizational factors. This study begins to look at such impact by examining how a user's total number of co-worker social media connections and the percentage of total social media connections that are co-workers impacts perceptions of organizational support and organizational spontaneity. In a sample of 106 union members across a number of organizations it is found that percentage of co-worker social media connections has a significant positive relationship with both perceptions of organizational support and organizational spontaneity. Total co-worker social media connections was not related to either organizational support or organizational spontaneity. Implications and reasons for these results are discussed, as well as important directions for future research.

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1. Introduction

While social media sites like Facebook and Twitter were originally used for personal life, increasingly they are being used to connect professional colleagues. Weidner, Wynne, and O'Brien (2012) found that 60% of participants, and a recent Pew Research Center survey found that 58% of participants (Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lenhart, & Madden, 2015), had at least one Facebook “friend” who was a work colleague. Weidner et al. (2012) also found that 25% of participants were Facebook friends with their supervisor. Research suggests people are connecting to their professional networks through social media.

Despite this prevalence, research looking at social media and work-related functions and outcomes has been limited. Much of the existing research has focused on social media use from the organizational perspective such as how organizations can and do use social media for Human Resource functions such as recruitment (Carr & Walther, 2014; Chiang & Suen, 2015) selection (Davison, Maraist, & Bing, 2011; Kleumper, Rosen, & Mossholder, 2012; Van Iddekinge, Lanivich, Roth, & Junco, 2013), termination decisions

(O'Connor & Schmidt, 2015; Schmidt & O'Connor, 2015), and in the development of internal social media sites within an organization (Kaupins & Park, 2011; Landers & Goldberg, 2014). Less research has looked at work-related social media from the individual side. Research that has been done has focused more on reactions to how organizations use social media (Drouin, O'Connor, Schmidt, & Miller, 2015) or on the types of behaviors, comments, or photos (i.e., actual behavior) people post on social media sites (Weidner et al., 2012).

One area in significant need of research is the relationship between work-related social media connections and a person's work-related behaviors and cognitions, for example, how do colleague work connections relate to a person's actual work attitudes, feelings, and behaviors? To date little to no research has examined this issue. However, literature suggests that social media can be used as a way to help people within an organization or industry connect. For example, Schmidt and Landers (2010) suggest that social media could be used as a way for members of the field of Industrial/Organizational Psychology to more strongly connect with each other and discuss aspects of shared identity. While this suggestion is with regard to a particular field, it could extend to other fields, industries, or organizations. This idea raises questions of what connections between co-workers mean. Do co-workers connect to each other due to connection to the organization or are such

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connections with co-workers unrelated? Do more co-worker connections on a social media site suggest a worker is more or less connected and embedded at an organization?

This research begins to examine these issues. We look at how total number of social media co-worker connections, percentage of total connections that are co-workers connection, and total number of connections relate to perceptions of organizational support and organizational spontaneity. This helps us to better determine how social media connections might relate to these important work-related cognitions and behaviors. We find very different relationships for total number of co-worker connections compared to percentage of total connections that are co-workers. It has been suggested that social media might be beneficially used by unions (Fowler & Hager, 2013). This research looks at a sample of unionized workers, which is a further contribution to the literature as no existing empirical research has looked at social media use among unionized workers. We start by reviewing the existing literature on why people use social media sites in general and then discuss how the use of social media can relate to a workplace setting and organizational outcomes. We then review our results and the implications they suggest.

1.1. Why people use social media

Research on why people use social media has suggested two major categories for use: developing/maintaining relationships and gaining or presenting information (Anderson, Fagan, Woodnutt, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2012; Bonds-Raacke & Raacke, 2010; Sheldon, Abad, & Hinsch, 2011; Wilson, Gosling, & Graham, 2012; Wise, Alhabash, & Park, 2010). Social media can be used to connect people together and keep them in contact. Social media can also be used to gain information about others or to present information, such as in the case of impression management techniques. These reasons could also impact the desire of an individual to connect with work colleagues. The existing research on these two major categories for why individuals use social media is reviewed below.

Social media is often used by others to connect with people they know. A Pew Research study suggested that the primary reason for people to use social media was to stay in contact with or re-connect with family and friends (Smith, 2011). Sheldon et al. (2011) found that social media use led people to feel connected to others and that people that felt disconnected often used social media as a way to try to regain such connections.

The desire to connect to others is shown in the relationship between social media use and the development of various types of social capital. Social capital is the benefits individuals gain in support, information, and ideas from their social relationships and interactions with other people (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2011). There are two major types. Bonding social capital involves the ability of a person to draw on resources from closely connected others (such as family and close friends), while bridging social capital involves weaker ties to others (such as acquaintances and work colleagues) that can provide valuable information and new perspectives (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Putnam, 2000). Ellison et al. (2007) found that the Facebook usage of participants in a college student sample related to their perceptions of possessing both bonding and social capital, as well as success in maintaining such social capital. In a follow up study Ellison et al. (2011) found that Facebook use encouraged students to convert latent (potential) ties they possessed (such as friends of friends) to weak ties (such as Facebook connections) and that Facebook facilitated users making requests for information or support from others. Thus, social media connections potentially helps to strengthen personal connections to other people as well as offer a medium for requesting support

from others.

Social media is also used by people to both gain information and present information (Anderson et al., 2012; Bonds-Raacke & Raacke, 2010; Wilson et al., 2012; Wise et al., 2010). Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2010), looked at reasons for using social media sites and found that in terms of information purposes they were used for sharing personal information, informing others about social activities and events, gaining academic knowledge, and posting/looking at pictures. Information seeking can be further broken down into subcategories. Wise et al. (2010) broke down information seeking into two categories: passive social browsing, where users look at information from the Facebook News Feed or other automatic social media update applications, and extractive social searching, where a user looks for specific information in another user's profile or sends a direct request for information to another user. Thus, people can gain information by just following information the site provides to them in real time, actively searching out information from previously posted content, and directly asking other users for information, both personal informational and more general factual data.

Users can also choose to share information with others. People use social media to share information they might not otherwise have an opportunity to tell others. This function enables people to carefully select the information that they share and thus social media sites are also used in impression management, as a way to illustrate positive aspects of an individual. A user can make posts that suggest competence, morality, or intelligence to create a good impression with other users. Despite this potential, much of the literature has found that people tend to be relatively accurate in their social media profiles (Back et al., 2010; Gosling, Gaddis, & Vazire, 2007; Wilson et al., 2012). Research has shown, however, that when users have social media profile elements that suggest competence, or relevant job related values or skills, such information does impact evaluator perceptions of factors like perceived person-organization fit (Chiang & Suen, 2015). Thus, the potential use of social media content for impression management purposes exists.

1.2. Why people might use social media to connect with work-colleagues

Considering the reasons why people use social media there are certainly several reasons why individuals might want to connect with work colleagues in particular. Connections with co-workers offer a significant means by which to develop and maintain work relationships. So accepting or making a friend request may be a way to take a working relationship and extending it into the online realm. Social media might also be a way to strengthen existing offline relationships with colleagues. Social capital research related to social media suggests social media is a way to convert latent ties to weak ties and strengthen existing ties that may have been made offline (Ellison et al., 2011).

Social media connections to co-workers might also provide significant informational benefits. If a person has a question about what to do or how to do something relating to work co-worker connections on social media might be an informal way to ask questions, potentially of many co-workers at once. Social capital in part is having the ability to gain information or support when needed (Putnam, 2000) and social media might be a significant tool by which a person can call on their co-workers for help. For one example, a worker might have a more difficult time finding someone to cover his or her shift when people need to be contacted individually, but a Facebook status update or group instant message could find someone to help considerably quicker. Social media could offer a network of support to a worker for requests and information (Ellison et al., 2011).

Based on these reasons for connecting with co-workers through social media, we might expect some particular impact of social media connections on workplace behaviors and cognitions. Two areas of particular relevance might be perceived organizational support and organizational spontaneity.

1.3. Perceived organizational support (POS)

Perceived organizational support (POS) is an attribution made by an employee about the degree the employer cares about his/her personal well-being and values his/her work contributions (Eisenberger, Huntingon, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). An Employee with a high level of POS feels that he or she is valued and the organization is looking out for what is best for him or her. This in turn leads the employee to want to help the organization succeed through positive work behaviors in line with a reciprocity norm (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001). Because the organization is concerned about the well-being of the employee the employee in turn behaves in ways that help the success of the organization.

These ideas have received considerable empirical support. In a meta-analysis by Kurtessis et al. (2015) perceived organizational support had positive relationships with job satisfaction and job self-efficacy, and negative relationships with burnout, stress, and work-family conflict. In terms of worker behaviors and cognitions, POS had significant positive relationships with effort, organizational citizenship behaviors, organizational identification, and affective organizational commitment (Kurtessis et al., 2015). Overall, POS is positively associated with beneficial workplace attitudes and outcomes, and negatively related to detrimental attitudes and workplace outcomes. These relationships provide support for the idea that when employees perceive the organization is supporting their needs, they reciprocate through beneficial workplace behaviors.

Social media connections could both be a way to repay perceived organizational support as well as a medium that builds perceptions of organizational support. If an employee feels supported in the workplace the reciprocity norm from such support may lead an employee to support other co-workers by connecting with them through social media and interacting with them. Thus, organizational support is “paid back” by offering support to co-workers at the organization.

Social media connections could also act as a medium by which employees feel supported by the organization. Social media connections may increase the ease with which an employee can ask co-workers for information and help, and thus the employee feels more supported. Co-workers might also use social media sites to offer congratulations or inquire about the individual well-being of others they work with. Both these factors might lead an individual to feel valued by the organization. It may not even be support directed at the employee in question, as seeing co-workers offer encouragement and support for another co-worker might make an employee feel they can gain such support when needed.

When considering hypotheses, a greater number of co-worker social media connections and a higher percentage of total social media connections being co-worker connections will lead to higher levels of perceived organizational support. When a person has more co-worker social media friends they have a greater chance of seeing co-workers supporting or being concerned about each other. From a requesting support or information perspective the more co-worker connections a worker has the greater the pool of potential co-workers to offer that help or information.

Having a larger number of co-worker connections on social media may also suggest that an employee is more connected with others in their organization. Thus, more co-worker connections

might relate to a greater chance of success when asking for support or help. Employees will know more workers and will have an easy method of accessing them. Workers who already have high levels of perceived organizational support also might “friend” or add connections with co-workers through social media as part of their reciprocity back to the organization for its support. This suggests that adding co-worker connections on social media is a way that employees try to support co-workers and become further integrated into the organization. Thus, having a higher number of co-worker connections and a higher percentage of social media connections could relate to higher organizational integration. This rationale suggests the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. The percentage of co-worker social media connections relates positively to perceived organizational support.

Hypothesis 2. The number of co-worker social media connections relates positively to perceived organizational support.

In comparing the total number of co-worker social media connections and percentage of co-worker social media connections on how they perceived organizational support we might expect some differences in relationship magnitude. For social media users that already have a large number of connections, having a significant number of co-worker connections may not have the same amount of impact. A person with 10 co-worker connections out of 30 total connections is likely to see that co-worker content and interact with them more than a person with 50 co-workers connections out of a total of 1000 connections. The greater number of total connections acts to some degree as “noise” from seeing and interacting with co-worker content. A person with a large number of total connections might also not be very discriminating in who they friend and thus have many weak ties that they interact with very rarely. A higher percentage of co-worker social media connections might also suggest that a person uses the social media site for connecting with co-workers or that in fact much of the employee's friend and connection network is fellow workers. As such, those co-worker connections might have more of an impact. It is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 3. The strength of the relationship between percentage of co-worker social media connections and perceived organizational support will be stronger than the relationship between the number of co-worker social media connections and perceived organizational support.

1.4. Organizational spontaneity

Organizational spontaneity is defined as spontaneous behaviors that are voluntary extra-role behaviors that help organizational effectiveness (George & Brief, 1992). This includes behaviors such as helping co-workers, protecting the organization, developing oneself, and spreading goodwill by representing the organization in a good light to the wider community (George & Jones, 1997). Spontaneity as used here means that the individual is choosing to do such behavior, rather than having it be prescribed by a job description or manager. Thus, these behaviors do not have to be impulsive actions and are often preceded by forethought or planning (George & Jones, 1997). Organizational spontaneity behaviors help organizations to function effectively.

Social media offers a potential means by which to engage in organizational spontaneity. As discussed previously, social media can be a medium for requesting and offering help. An employee can offer help to a co-worker through social media. Employees can also spread good will on social media by talking about the organization and the good things the organization and its employees

are doing. Thus, social media could facilitate an individual engaging in organizational spontaneity. Since it is easy for co-workers to contact each other through social media and it is a way that multiple co-workers can be reached at once, it offers greater visibility for people to ask and offer help. It might also help facilitate helping behaviors as the offer of help might be public and others in the organization could potentially acknowledge how co-workers have provided help. This might be particularly relevant if someone is connected with their team members or supervisors on social media. They may be aware of the visibility of their comments and actions. [George and Jones \(1997\)](#) highlight the importance of context in determining how much organizational spontaneity an individual engages in. They discuss contexts related to the individual level (e.g., role definition), group level (e.g., group norms), and organization level (e.g., organizational culture). Social media was not a particular context they considered, but we might think of social media as a context (perhaps at a societal level) that helps individuals engage in such helping behaviors with others.

As with perceived organizational support there are two ways in which such a relationship between connections on social media and organizational spontaneity could come about. The first reason co-worker connections might relate positively to organizational spontaneity is that more co-worker connections lead to more opportunities to engage in helping behaviors. Social media gives an avenue for people to ask for help ([Ellison et al., 2011](#)) and thus workers will potentially see more requests for help they can act on. The second reason is that workers that already want to engage in organizational spontaneity behaviors may connect to more co-workers in order to increase the overall pool of people they can help. Thus, more connections give them more opportunities to help. Workers might see social media connections as a way to facilitate their future organizational spontaneity behaviors. As such it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 4. The percentage of co-worker social media connections relates positively to organizational spontaneity.

Hypothesis 5. The number of co-worker social media connections relates positively to organizational spontaneity.

When considering the strength of the relationship with organizational spontaneity it seems likely that percentage of co-worker connections might have a larger impact. The greater the percentage of co-worker friends, the greater the likelihood the user will see help requests from co-workers. A user with a larger number of total friends may have the activities of those non-co-worker friends distract the user from helping co-workers. The non-co-worker friends may also make their own requests that may compete for the user's attention. An employee that makes social media connections in order to engage in organizational spontaneity is also potentially more likely to have a high percentage of co-worker friends. If the social media site is being primarily used for interacting with co-workers that user may be particularly interested in helping other co-workers. Additionally, a stronger percentage of co-worker friends may suggest that employees likely have more strong ties with co-workers. Having strong ties outside of social media with someone suggests co-workers may feel more obligated to help others when they are in need. As such it is predicted:

Hypothesis 6. The strength of the relationship between percentage of co-worker social media connections and organizational spontaneity will be stronger than the relationship between the number of co-worker social media connections and organizational spontaneity.

2. Methods

2.1. Sample

The full sample consisted of 327 unionized retail employees in the Midwestern United States that worked across a number of different organizations and who filled out a pencil and paper survey (response rate 6%). Out of that full sample only the workers who indicated they used social media and gave values for total connections and total co-worker connections were included in the final sample used for analyses, which was 106. Study participants worked across a number of different store types and job functions. Some examples include cashier, stocking clerk, and pharmacy assistant. The final sample had an average age of 38.2 years and was 37.4% male. In terms of work characteristics the average organizational tenure was 5.3 years, average hours worked per week was 33.97, and 58.5% of the workers were designated as having full-time worker status.

2.2. Scales

2.2.1. Total social media connections

Participants were asked the following question: "How many total contacts do you have on your preferred social networking site?" The mean number was 124.3 connections.

2.2.2. Total co-worker social media connections

Participants were asked the following question: "How many coworkers (including your supervisor) do you have as contacts on your preferred social networking site?" The mean number was 7.3 co-worker connections with the number ranging from 0 (21.7% of the sample) to 80.

2.2.3. Percentage of co-worker social media connections

The total of co-worker social media connections was divided by the total number of social media connections to create this variable. The mean percentage was 12.5%.

2.2.4. Perceived organizational support

POS was measured using the 6 item scale developed by [Eisenberger et al. \(2001\)](#). Each item was rated on a 5-point scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The alpha for this scale was .914.

2.2.5. Organizational spontaneity

Organizational Spontaneity was measured using 3 items developed by [Eisenberger et al. \(2001\)](#). Each item was rated on a 5-point scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Alpha for this scale was .796.

3. Results

All hypotheses were tested in the SPSS statistical program using simultaneous linear regression. A correlation matrix for all study variables can be found in [Table 1](#).

Hypothesis 1 predicted that the percentage of co-worker social media connections relates positively to perceived organizational support. This hypothesis was supported based on a regression model that included number of co-workers connections as a covariate. There was a significant relationship between percentage of co-worker social media connections and perceived organizational support, $B = 1.39$, $p < .05$. Participants that had a higher percentage of co-worker connections tended to have higher levels of perceived

Table 1
Correlations between study variables.

Variables	1	2	3	4
1 Total social media connections				
2 Co-worker social media connections	.322			
3 Percentage of co-worker social media connections	–.262	.211		
4 Perceived organizational support	–.025	.143	.314	
5 Organizational spontaneity	–.343	.006	.217	.256

Note. N = 106 Correlations significant at $p < .05$ are in bold.

Table 2
The relationship between co-worker social media connections, percentage of co-worker social media connections and perceived organizational support.

	B	SE	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.839	.118		24.065	.000
Co-worker social media connections	.008	.009	.081	.845	.400
Percentage co-workers social media connections	1.394	.448	.297	3.114	.002
F	6.030				.003
R ²	.105				

organizational support. See Table 2 for more information.

Hypotheses 2 predicted that the number of co-worker social media connections relates positively to perceived organizational support. This hypothesis was not supported based on a regression model that included percentage of co-worker social media connections as a covariate. There was a non-significant relationship, $B = .01$, $p > .05$. See Table 2 for more information.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that the strength of the relationship between percentage of co-worker social media connections and perceived organizational support would be stronger than the relationship between the number of co-worker social media connections and perceived organizational support. The results here offer support for such an idea, with a significant regression beta weight for percentage of co-worker social media connections while total co-workers social media connections does not have a significant relationship. See Table 2 for more information.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that the percentage of co-worker social media connections relates positively to organizational spontaneity. This hypothesis was supported, based on a regression model that included number of co-worker connections as a covariate. There was a significant relationship with organizational spontaneity, $B = .79$, $p < .05$. Thus, participants with a higher percentage of co-worker social media connections had higher levels of organizational spontaneity. See Table 3 for more information.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that the total number of co-worker social media connections relates positively to organizational spontaneity. This hypothesis was not supported based on a regression model that included the percentage of co-worker social media connections. There was a non-significant relationship with organizational spontaneity, $r = .00$, $p > .05$. See Table 3 for more information.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that the strength of the relationship between percentage of co-worker social media connections and organizational spontaneity would be stronger than the relationship

between the number of co-worker social media connections and organizational spontaneity. This hypothesis received support with a significant regression coefficient for percentage of co-worker social media connections while total co-worker social media connections does not have a significant relationship with organizational spontaneity. See Table 3 for more information.

4. Discussion

Our findings here support the idea that co-worker social media connections relate to important workplace concepts and this research is one of the first to look at such social media connections within a sample of unionized workers. In an interesting finding it is percentage of co-worker social media connections of total contacts that has a significant relationship with perceived organizational support and organizational spontaneity, while total number of co-worker social media connections was not related. These results provide partial support for hypotheses 3 and 6, which predicted stronger relationships between percentage of co-worker social media connections and organizational support and organizational spontaneity. However, rather than just a weaker relationship between total co-worker social media connections and the two DVs, a lack of relationship was found between the variables. A larger sample size in future research may assist in further investigating the relationship between total co-worker connections in social media and organizational outcomes.

For workers that feel they have strong organizational support social media connections to co-workers might be one way they reciprocate such support. In such a case their intentions in social media use might be to connect with many different co-workers, which potentially is shown through high percentages of co-worker connections. A higher percentage of co-worker connections might also help a person to feel more supported and see examples of co-worker support through social media. Future research

Table 3
The relationship between co-worker social media connections, percentage of co-worker social media connections and organizational spontaneity.

	B	SE	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	3.951	.091		43.513	.000
Co-worker social media connections	–.003	.007	–.042	–.428	.669
Percentage co-workers social media connections	.793	.344	.226	2.301	.023
F	2.649				.000
R ²	.049				

should more directly examine the work-related characteristics of workers with a higher percentage of co-worker social media connections to see if significant relationships exist with other constructs related to connection with an organization, such as affective organizational commitment and job embeddedness.

Longitudinal research would also be valuable in determining direction of causation. A high percentage of social media co-worker connections might lead an individual to perceive stronger organizational support, or social media connections might primarily be part of the reciprocity engaged in by employees with high POS (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Measurement at multiple time points or tracking a sample of new hires at an organization would help us explore how people become embedded in an organization and how they use social media with work connections.

For organizational spontaneity, percentage of co-worker connections had a positive relationship. This could be in part due to greater visibility of co-worker requests for help on social media, as a significant portion of the content a user sees on social media is from co-workers. This idea is supported somewhat by the fact that there is a significant negative correlation between total number of social media connections and organizational spontaneity ($r = -.343$). Content and requests from non-co-workers may drown out co-worker requests, such that a worker deals with those requests instead, or co-worker requests get missed among the larger amount of other social media content. As discussed before, employees looking to engage in organizational spontaneity, such as helping co-workers, may make social media connections with co-workers in order to facilitate such behaviors. Social media offers a medium for such workers to become aware of co-workers who need help as well as a medium for such workers to spread organizational goodwill. Future research should look more directly at the motives behind co-worker friending behavior as well as more in depth at the types of organizational spontaneity in which co-workers engage. It may be that percentage of social media connections impacts certain organizational spontaneity extra role behaviors more than others.

Total number of co-worker social media connections was not found to relate to either perceived organizational support or organizational spontaneity. This is somewhat surprising as it would seem reasonable that generally having more co-worker social media connections might help a worker to feel more supported by his/her organization and would give greater opportunities to engage in more organizational spontaneity.

There are certainly a number of potential reasons why no relationship was found. One major reason is the signal-to-noise issue discussed briefly in the rationale for the hypotheses. When a user has a very large number of social media connections interacting with the content of a particular connection or even a sub-set of connections like co-workers might be more difficult. The ties to co-workers could be very weak ties, barely stronger than latent ties. In such a situation co-worker social media connections are less an indication of connection to the organization or desire to help co-workers rather just a preference by an individual to “friend” on social media anyone they interact or have interacted with. Future research might look to examine the frequency of social media interactions with co-workers as a factor that might moderate how total number of co-worker social media connections relates to perceived organizational support and organizational spontaneity. It may be that a certain level of interaction is needed for the positive effects of co-worker social media connections we find for percentage of co-worker connections.

4.1. Limitations/future research directions

This research study does have some potential limitations. The

data used for hypotheses here is all from self-report measures and thus has a potential for report bias. Despite the use of self-report, we did find relationships that vary in strength and direction. Future studies on this topic might consider examining organizational spontaneity using peer or supervisor ratings to avoid common method bias concerns. While all measures were self-report, total number of co-worker connections and percentage of co-worker connections were not attitudinal variables, thus the study results are less likely to be influenced by common method bias.

A strength of this study is that a significant percentage of participants (58.5%) were working full time and many have significant tenure in their current jobs. Despite these strengths of the data set, our sample size is still relatively low at 106 participants. Future research may want to examine these relationships in a larger sample, and using different industries and different countries could help in determining the generalizability of the results found here. Different results might be found as well in workplaces where more or less employees are social media users.

Future research may also want to look more deeply into how co-workers interact through social media and see if particular types of behaviors impact the results found here. For example, if a worker makes numerous help requests through social media but receives no offers of support, despite many co-worker connections, the workers connection to the organization might be damaged. The value of percentage co-worker connections might be weakened or strengthened by the actual interactions between co-workers on social media.

4.2. Conclusion

With the majority of workers having social media connections to co-workers (Duggan et al., 2015; Weidner et al., 2012) it is importance to understand the work-related implications of such connections. This research examined the impact of number of co-worker social media connections and percentage of co-worker social media connections on perceptions of organizational support and organizational spontaneity. Percentage of co-worker social media connections had a significant positive relationship with both variables of interest, while total number of co-worker social media connections had no significant relationships. This begins to suggest that the density of social media connections to co-workers matters more than the overall number. Co-worker social media connections do relate to important organizational constructs. Future research can build on these results to even better understand the nature of co-worker social media connections and the impact such connections can have on modern day organizational life.

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