"Social media, interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills"

by

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Abstract

Current high-tech improvements have had a radical influence on the way people communicate. In this study, former researches have been considered and the premise is that social media networking sites are fast becoming very popular means among college students as a consequence of the extensive usage of SMS- social media sites by college learners, but the interpersonal communication with others will not be replaced by social media networking sites. It is fair to say that social media has become universal within our culture and daily lives. In despite of persons´ consciousness of the decline of face-to-face communication as a result of technology, with 1.59 billion daily users on Facebook (July 2019).

The aim of this dissertation involving communication, is definitely the use of Facebook- social media site (SMS), and its influence on communication and conflict resolution skills. In this study, the researcher administered an online survey to determine the level of commitment students have about the social media site Facebook, and their inclinations in the areas of communication and conflict resolution. Twenty-three college students enrolled in a master degree program answered to an anonymous survey addressing their daily activities in social media as well as general attitudes regarding communication and conflict resolution. The results of this research advise that people reflect face-to-face communication the most preferred and effective way to resolve conflict and communicate with others.

Conversely, the findings also show that individuals intervene in everyday social media activities at a greater rate that has been established in previous researches. Further, respondents stated using talking in person, talking on the phone and social media to communicate and resolve conflicts in their daily routine. A future study is essential and encouraged to analyze in what way social media relates to the means of communication and conflict resolution and its influence on interpersonal running.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction

Knowing that technology is a vital part of today´s lifestyle, it is our statement that social media continue to grow in popularity. At present, social media has stood an important part of everyone's life from shopping online, teaching and commercial means. "Social media is performing a dynamic role in changing people's life. (Coyne, et al., 2011, p. 150)". Social media contains blogs and social networking sites and individuals can easily connect. Since their occurrence, social media sites like Facebook have got important tools for college students so they are the digital generation.

Social media allows the conversation and construction of content made by several users. At present, the popular sites that offer personalized interaction and plenty networking are Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp. It is important to highlight that usage for social media can be measured through the frequency of postage, updates, interactions and logins. Social networking sites like Facebook enhances 500,000 new users daily and six new profiles per second. Thirty percent of internet users use Facebook more than once a day and individuals spend an average of twenty minutes per day on this site. Monthly, the average user makes four comments, likes ten posts, and clicks on eight advertisements. Allowing recent statistics (July 2019), 26.3% of the online community use Facebook (worldwide).

The traditional communication model has been reformed by the achievement of the innovative media forms which contain text messaging and social media websites. According to Coyne (2011), social media affects the interpersonal communication thus influencing satisfaction. This study analyses the literature accessible concerning how social media can either improve or minimize gratification in the way people communicate. Also, it recognizes that in cause of social media usage, other communication skills may either be established or lost. Conflict handling is

one of the key social interpersonal skill, it is trusts seriously on communication. This research focuses on this as well.

The modern culture and digital generation have observed communication being turned into a common interchange by social media users. Agreeing with Qualman, (2009), the connectivity throughout the globe has thus been rising and social media usage is valued as the number one use of the Internet which is a continuously increasing percentage. Consequently some individuals meet through the Internet. Addiction on social media sites has similarly been increasing. Looking at why individuals are demonstrating the consent for social media, the influence it has on users is increasing. The literature studied give the impression to be centering on how bad habit to social media usage relates to face-to-face interactions.

The researcher expects to identify the benefits and effects of social media-related interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills, and why the students have a preference for expending time in a social media site instead of the face-to-face communication.

This chapter includes the research questions, research problem and objectives, and the hypothesis of this dissertation.

Formulation of the research question

For the researcher, this research is based on the following question: is social media helpful in our interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills?

Research problem and objectives

The researcher has identified that the research problem area surrounding her dissertation will be as follows: Interpersonal communication: would social media have an influence on our interpersonal and conflict resolution skills?

Considering the starting question described above, the study itself has a general objective to research the influence of social media activities, Facebook on communication and conflict resolution means.

The explicit objectives of this study are as follows:

- Define the extent of usage of social media and face-to-face communication among the population studied

- Determine and characterize the students' perspective regarding social media on communication skills

- Determine and characterize the students' perspective regarding conflict resolution

- Determine and characterize the students' perspective regarding face-to-face communication

Hypothesis of Dissertation

Knowing that social media activities continue to develop in acceptance, it is our idea that a vital part of today´s student lifestyle is the technology. There is no contradicting the point that social media networking sites are fast becoming very popular means among college students as a consequence of the extensive usage of social media by college learners, but the interpersonal communication with others will not be replaced by social media. In particular, this study will investigate whether Facebook usage is not the most important way to express conflict among college students.

CHAPTER II.

Literature review

The literature review is an important component in all study when we have settled upon a topic or subject that interests us, we need to read further to define the theories and concepts that have been applied to the topic, realistic pieces of evidence and the key contributors to research on the topic (Bryman, 2012).

The researcher mentions important concepts such as communication definition and levels, then defines interpersonal communication, social media and the benefits of using interpersonal communication. The research has been explored in books, academic journals and academic websites then all the information was summarized in this literature review.

Communication and interpersonal communication

One definition of communication in the simplest sense, "is the diffusion of idea or message from the sender to receiver. The sender may be a group of persons or a person, who devolve ideas or opinions to a destination". Who receives the messages may also be an individual or a group, it is the final destination. (Slater, 2004, pp. 1-6).

Moreover, communication is a progressive process that allows exchanging information between individuals through a mutual structure of signs, behavior and symbols.

Communication is based on interactions with our environments, social life requires permanent and systematic forms of communication. "Communication is both speaking and listening" (Turkel, 2004, p. 22). Whether that talk is with someone or we send a letter to a friend those are communicative forms and we want to be received (read or heard) to be understood (Stanton, 2009), to be accepted and to get action (change of behavior).

The communication process has basic elements which we are going to recognize with an example: the sender refers messages with a purpose. Then the receiver of those messages efforts to interpret and understand the message sent. This person gives response to the original sender,

who in turn deduces the response. This process repeated constantly, establishes communication (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2017).

Communication can achieve diverse levels, depending on the quantity and nature of persons involved and in some cases needs some technologies. The communication has five levels; intrapersonal communication, interpersonal, group communication, public communication, and mass commujication.

- Intrapersonal communication that is also called intrapersonal message. The individual roles as both receiver and sources, some examples are meditation and interior monologues.

- Interpersonal communication is an interchange among or between individuals to exchange feelings and ideas; it is intimate, two-way and typically face-to-face, therefore the most operative one. In this form of communication, two or more persons or a small group might be involved. Interpersonal communication contains a direct face-to-face relationship between the receiver and sender, who are in a mutually supporting relationship. There is also mediated interpersonal communication, it is involves technology that links or helps the sender and receiver of messages. Examples of mediated interpersonal communication are telephone conversation, video talk and internet chatting.

- Group communication occurs among group members. It is intimate and active and has room for adequate criticism. Group communication is effective when systematized with a specific schedule and enough assignment.

- Public communication involves speaker, who attend a reasonably great audience within a relatively continuous dialogue or intervened circumstances.

- Mass communication involves the use of mass media. It is distributing ideas, attitudes and information to a massive audience. Mass media can comprise to the channels of communications such as magazines, television, radio, magazines, newspapers, television, radio, and film.

Regarding interpersonal communication, it is important to address that any social procedure supposes a communication process and all social interaction is essentially communicative.

Another perspective concerning communication, is the one according to Hartley; he assumes that communication is universal, anything individuals do with others might involve a process called *communication*. There is a lot of information on the Internet, we will discover a range of descriptions which highlight diverse concepts if we read some books on communication. There are two premises that people find important to consider that the essence of communication as write properly and *being able to speak*, or a good communicator is a *good listener* (Hartley, 1999, p. 17).

For Hartley, interpersonal communication is enclosed in the next seven suggestions:

- Interpersonal communication is contained by face-to-face interactions between two participants and there is not a mediated communication. Telephone conversation is example of mediated communication which carries the conversation among participants.

- Roles between participants are significant. It is concerned that people should communicate with one another in a precise way to develop personal relationships because interpersonal communication includes two people in variable roles and interactions to one another.

- Always two way. This model of communication advises that participants should not have interferences or noises along their communication process. (Hartley, 1999, pp. 24-27).

- This form of communication is involved by the interchange of meaning and not only by messages.

- Participants do have aims or purposes because they demand to communicate intentions, it means that interpersonal communication is intentional. Alternatively, it is every so often problematic to have in practice a distinction between communicative and informative intention.

- This form of communication is an ongoing process, it is not involved by a single event. It means that interpersonal communication is based on continuous improvement process.

- In interpersonal communication, communication is cumulative over time. People need to take into account the history of their interactions because it might affect how they have interpreted before if you are trying to understand communication between people who have communicated before.

Social media

Social media has been certainly defined as websites and computer programs that people consent to use in order to share information and communicate with others con the internet using a mobile phone or computer. Social media contains applications and websites that enable users to share content or to participate in social networking, they are electronic communication whether users can create online groups with the purpose of to share ideas, personal messages, and videos. Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and blogs are examples of social media networking sites. Those social media sites allow users to generate their social network, content-sharing and discuss things of interest via virtual communities.

Another definition states that social media sites (SMS) is an online platform (Internet-based services) where individuals construct a profile (public or semi-public) within an enclosed system, it can frame a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and outlook and go across their list of contacts and those made by others within the platform. "The nature and classification of these networks may vary from site to site" (Boyd & Ellison, 2008, p. 210).

A few authors are agreed that currently social media such as Facebook and Twitter have become approximately some of the most influential communication tools. Individuals might choose to post on other users' walls, send secretive messages, keep informed about other users' daily activities, and organize social activities. Conversely, "all users can limit themselves on what information they would like to share freely with others" (Khan, et al., 2016, pp. 534-567).

In the following figure 1, based on Boyd and Ellison (2008), we will see the timeline of some social media sites from 1997 to 2006.
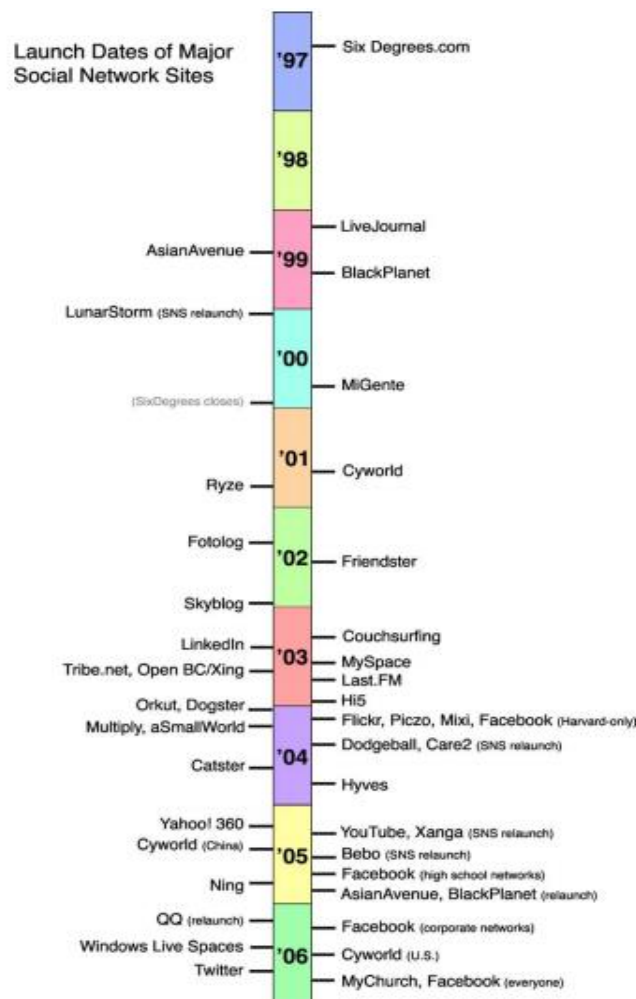
Figure 1. Timeline of social media sites SMS from 1997 to 2006

Most of the people know how to create a profile and fill out forms or an account and then they join Facebook or My space, for example. But it is relevant to describe some features of SMS.

The strength of social networking sites consists of profiles that display an organized list of contacts who are called *friends*, they are also users of the platform. It means that social networking sites have been executed a large range of technical structures. Every social media platform is different, it means that profiles can be created in short time and they are unique pages. Subsequently, if a user create a profile in a SMS, then he/she is asked to fill in information.

"Beyond profiles, friends, comments, and private messagin, SMSs vary greatly in their features and user base. Some have photo-sharing or video-sharing capabilities; others have built in blogging and instant messaging technology" (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). The author mentions that there are mobile specific SMSs (e.g., Dodgeball)," but some web-based SMSs also support limited mobile interactions (e.g., Facebook, MySpace, and Cyworld). Many SMSs target people from specific geographical regions or linguistic groups, although this does not always determine the site's constituency. Orkut, for example, was launched in the United States with an English-only interface, but Portuguese-speaking Brazilians quickly became the dominant user group. Some sites are designed with specific ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, political, or other identity-driven categories in mind. There are even SMSs for dogs (Dogster) and cats (Catster), although their owners must manage their profiles. While SMSs are often designed to be widely accessible, many attract homogeneous populations initially" (Boyd & Ellison, 2008), so "it is not uncommon to find groups using sites to segregate themselves by nationality, age, educational level, or other factors that typically segment society, even if that was not the intention of the designer" (Boyd & Ellison, 2008, pp. 210-230).

Social networks are now so well established, "the most popular social media sites vary a lot by level of usage in different countries and demographics. Understanding these differences in popularity of different social networks is important when targeting specific audiences. When comparing the most popular social networks it is best to review them by active account usage, not just the number of user accounts. We also see in this summary that some social networks are growing more rapidly than others while some are now in decline" (Chaffey, 2019). Some statistics describe global social media summary "for context, as of May 2019, the total worldwide population is 7.7 billion, the internet has 4.4 billion users and there are 3.499 billion active social media users. On average, people have 7.6 social media accounts, the average daily time spent on social is 142 minutes a day" (Smith, 2019). Therefore, the number of social media users grew by

202 million between April 2018 and April 2019; that works out at a new social media user every 6.4 seconds. "91% of retail brands use 2 or more social media channels, 81% of all small and medium businesses use some kind of social platform" (Smith, 2019). This means that "Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp handle 60 billion messages a day" (Smith, 2019).

According to a survey made by Pew Research Center (Smith & Anderson, 2018), statistics show that northern, western and southern Europe and North America have the largest internet penetration with between 88%-95% internet users compared to the total population. Of these, southern Europe has seen the biggest increase in internet penetration, with a year-on-year increase of 11%.

The global increase in social media usage since January 2018 is 9%. Saudi Arabia has the largest social media penetration in 2019 at 99%, which is well above the global average of 45%. Other countries with the largest social media penetration include Taiwan, South Korea, and Singapore. Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria have the lowest levels of social media penetration. Also, Smith and Anderson (2018) found that "with Facebook having the most daily active users compared to other social networks it's important to know how your content may potentially perform and what features to use to optimize the reach of content. There is an 8% average post reach vs page like (down by 2.7% year-on-year) and 27.1% average paid post reach vs total reach. Facebook is a great social platform for organic and paid opportunities with a huge potential reach, although recent algorithm updates have seen organic opportunities decline. It is now more important than ever to target Facebook content to business personas to gain quality leads" (Chaffey, 2019) .

As was true in previous Pew Research Center surveys of social media use (2018), there are substantial differences in social media use by age. Some 88% of 18- to 29-year-olds indicate that they use some form of social media. That share falls to 78% among those aged 30 to 49, to 64% among those aged 50 to 64 and to 37% among Americans 65 and older.

At the same time, there are pronounced differences in the use of various social media platforms within the young adult population as well. Americans ages 18 to 24 are substantially more likely to use platforms such as Snapchat, Instagram and Twitter even when compared with those in their mid- to late-20s. These differences are especially notable when it comes to Snapchat: 78% of 18- to 24-year-olds are Snapchat users, but that share falls to 54% among those aged 25 to 29.

With the exception of those 65 and older, Facebook is used by a majority of Americans across a wide range of demographic groups. But other platforms appeal more strongly to certain subsets of the population.

Influence of social media on Interpersonal Communication

Nowadays, Facebook and LinkedIn have many users around the world. Thus Facebook is "accessed by more than 500 million users and LinkedIn was originally intended to connect employers and job seekers, but has, intentionally or unintentionally, broadened its scope and now has more than 75 million members. Everybody that is anybody tweets on Twitter. It is the in thing to do" (Lyncheski, 2010, pp. 32-35).

"Social networking sites such as Facebook are one of the latest examples of communication technologies that have been widely adopted by students and, subsequently, have the potential to become a valuable resource to support their educational communications" (Mushtaq, 2018).

In Vinod's research (2017), impact of Social Media on Interpersonal Communication, it was found that even though "a majority (51%) among the 100 respondents declare that they use social networking sites just to keep away from boredom, they peep into their social media accounts whenever a new notification appears, no matter whether they are having their meal or engaged with their busy schedule. According to the survey, it is a common opinion (67%) that, for meeting their relatives or friends, someone should invite them for a family function or get together"

(Vinod, 2017, p. 137). Correspondingly, findings have shown that the "popular (62%) belief among the respondents is that they are addicted to social media" (Vinod, 2017).

According to Vinod (2017), the best benefit of interpersonal communication is face-to-face communication so the "majority (41%) of the respondents strongly agree that even though social media has many positive aspects, it affects the way they converse with each other face-to-face" (Vinod, 2017).

The young generation is more likely to use social media for education topics and leisure. In a research by (Karlin, 2007), more than one in five students aged 9-17 with online access post comments on message boards every day. In addition those students have used social media tools for different purposes so the results were that 41 percent post messages, 32 percent download music and 30 percent download videos. With respect to how often students have enjoyed SMS the conclusions were that "24 percent post photos at least once a week and twelve percent update their website or online profile every day, and 25 percent do so at least weekly. Thirty percent of students have blogs and 17 percent update their blogs at least once a week. Nearly 60 percent of students discuss education-related topics online such as college planning or learning outside of school" (Karlin, 2007).

Mostly we expect that the young generation will be more probable to use social media at work and therefore satisfaction will be more marked. The research is agreed with one finding, in which "only 13% acknowledged using the media during work hours solely for work-related activities compared with 42% using it just for personal activities" (Hollanda, et al., 2016, p. 2621).

For mutual gain in education, social media has been used in a new way. University students should be taught to use this tool in a superior way. In the last conclusive research (Khan, et al., 2016, p. 567), the researchers have found that in the educational classes, instead of using media just for messaging or texting, they should rather learn to figure out how to use these media in a good way. Social media has improved the quality and rate of collaboration for students. With the

help of social media, learners can without difficulty communicate or share information rapidly with each other "through various social sites like Facebook and Instagram. It is also important for students to do some practical work instead of doing" (Samuel & Shamili, 2017) paperwork. They can write blogs for teachers as well as for themselves to enhance their knowledge and skills. Social networking sites also conduct online examinations which play an important role in enhancing students' understanding.

"Although, providing a detailed perspective on social media use among university students and underscoring that such use can produce both positive and negative consequences, according to a Nielsen Media Research study in June 2010, almost 25 percent of students' time on the Internet is now spent on social networking websites (Jacobsen & Forste , 2011). Facebook is the most used social network by college students, followed by YouTube and Twitter. Moreover, Facebook alone reports that it now has 500 active million users, 50% of whom log on every day". Also, according to a study by Online Ph.D. (Jacobsen & Forste , 2011), "students spend roughly 100 minutes per day on Facebook. In 2007, the number of students who used Facebook was already enormous: 92 percent of college students had an account. By 2008, 99 percent of students had an account on Facebook. That is quite a large amount considering the service was only opened in 2006 to everyone" (Wang, et al., 2011).

On the one hand, the positive aspect of online communities is that youths can utilize them for academic assistance and support (Lusk, 2010). Due to the ability of social media to enhance connections by making them easily accessible, social media can yield many benefits for the youth, including providing virtual space for them to explore their interest or problems with similar individuals, academic support, while strengthening online communication skills and knowledge. Students who may be reluctant to speak up in class are participating in book discussion blogs and writing for real audiences. "New web tools are emerging all the time that are enhancing learning" (Brydolf, 2007, pp. 4-8). On the other hand, our findings indicate that electronic media use is

negatively associated with grades. "We also find that about two-thirds of the students reported using electronic media while in class, studying, or doing homework" (Jacobsen & Forste , 2011). This multitasking likely increases distraction, something prior research has shown to be detrimental to student performance. As social media websites, such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter gain popularity, they are also becoming increasingly dangerous as they create modes of procrastinating while trying to complete homework. Hence, in a survey of 102 students, 57% stated that social media has made them less productive. "Students commonly commented that connecting should be invaluable for making friends and supporting each other, especially within the first few weeks after arriving at the university" (Wang, et al., 2011).

For some authors, interpersonal communication will not ever be replaced by social media tools. Moreover, we should not underestimate the difference between social media and what is the real meaning of interpersonal communication. The tone of voice, body language, facial expression, and other nonverbal cues can be as important as the words you choose, and they help build the kind of understanding that brings people closer together. You can get a general impression of someone from Facebook status updates, but it may or may not reflect who they are, and it's never more than skin-deep.

Nowadays, a commitment to interpersonal contact can be difficult to sustain on a global scale. According to Monserrat AI (2011), who has mentioned a biggest frustration these days is that there are 2,500 people on my team, 6,000 at Citrix as a whole, and thousands more at our partner organizations. The author has stated that is hard enough to remember the names of the people we meet, much less form deep relationships with them. Cultural differences in overseas markets add new challenges, as you need to learn new sets of social cues and customs to show proper respect. Growing up in some places overseas, the author have learned that everyone is different, everywhere you go in the U.S. or abroad. "If you learn one unique thing about each person you meet, you can not only remember them better but also start a conversation that leads

you to that next level of connection" (AI, 2011). In a second affirmation, this researcher has said that "tools like LinkedIn can provide a quick, easy way to share or gather information and support collaboration. The key is to recognize the limits of this role and to make sure social media does not overstep these bounds, displace real interaction, and lead you to neglect the kind of human relationships that drive real business value" (AI, 2011). Summarizing his statement, if we trust in technology it means also the need for social connection is fundamental, the more important face-to-face interaction will become so technology is not a replacement for a face-to-face meeting. The social network offers people great convenience for social networking as it allows people to keep in touch with friends, reconnect with old friends, meet new people, and even conduct business online. Even pioneers of technology and social media advocate in-person meetings, "technology enhances but doesn't replace, live meetings" (AI, 2011).

College student´s social media use

Social media use by undergraduate university students has increased rapidly in the past 10 years. Among adults living in the United States of America (USA) aged between 18 and 29 years, social media use has grown from 12% in 2005 to 90% in 2015, consistent with the adoption of smartphone technology (Perrin, 2015). A research study conducted across 15 countries identified students in higher education as being responsible for increasing the use of mobile computing devices, such as tablets and smartphones, with 67% attributing the technologies as being a factor in their academic success. Facebook is the social media platform most commonly used by university students. A study of 3000 university students found that 90% used Facebook.

"Facebook's popularity with university students was further confirmed in a 2015 study in the United Kingdom by the Joint Information Systems Committee (Jisc) that reported 85% of students used the social networking platform" (Parr, 2015). Sharma, Joshi and Sharma (2016) highlighted that the most influential determinants of Facebook usage by university students was resource sharing followed by perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment, collaboration, and social

influence. While research has explored adoption rates and motivations behind social media use by undergraduate university students, Parr (2015) also underlined that there is limited information about how students use social media to facilitate offline engagement within higher educational communities. The study also discovered that teachers found Facebook and WhatsApp to be the most effective social media tools due to the popularity and versatility of Facebook, and the easy-to-use communicative abilities of WhatsApp. In a university setting, social media is a valuable tool in terms of keeping staff members engaged and informed. They can use their Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram profiles to spread awareness about a particular news incident related to the university, broadcast important information, and share anecdotes or videos about the institution. Creating a strong university community as both a prompt and product of student engagement has been recognised as both a priority and a challenge for educational institutions (Krause, 2005) . Social media has also been identified as being used to build and strengthen the campus community by actively encouraging student involvement and participation in university activities. McGowan and Partridge (2014) suggested that students can make greater sense of their educational environment by forming links with the wider university community through membership of peer groups. Yet, previous research has suggested that student participation is low in offline university community events, diminishing the development of a community with a high level of social capital (McGowan & Partridge, 2014). Consequently, social media is now seen as an integral part of the building of university campus communities, strengthening social capital and increasing opportunities for student-to-student interaction (Goode & Woodward, 2016.). Some aspects of social media have been compared to a well-functioning educational community such as facilitating peer feedback, providing similar learning and social contexts, and enabling the formation of groups with shared interests which, in turn, create online knowledge communities (Selwyn, 2007). Unofficial (or student-initiated) social media spaces, such as Facebook, can provide students with opportunities for casual engagement and community building (Woodward

& Goode, 2016). Goode & Woodward (2016) suggested that, because students are spending more of their time online, universities need to engage more with what is a digital extension of their campuses.

Conflict resolution skills and communication

Interpersonal conflict occurs when an expressed struggle occurs between two or more individuals who perceive incompatible goals, scare resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals. Interpersonal conflict may take place in love relationships, family relationships and friend relationships, also, in the workplace.

Effectively going through life requires attaining a set of skills, for example, the ability to communicate with others and work through conflicts that are acquired through different avenues during a person´s developmental journey. From the early days of mainframe computers to the present, computers have been mostly used for communication (Sproull & Kiesler, 1991, p. 115).

In fact, in terms of meaning, "communication is the most important use of the Internet for students" (Greenfield & Yang, 2006, p. 391). Regarding conflict resolution, Kuss and Griffiths (2013) have argued that responses to hypothetical situations involving conflict are similar to responses observe during real life conflict.

This highlights the value in presenting opportunities to practice these skills to prepare for real-life situations. However, these hypothetical situations were presented face-to-face to a group by a facilitator and did not include a technological or social networking component. With an overwhelming trend among college students and young adults toward the reliance on technology for communication, it is speculated that the analyzing data from a study of youths with close online relationships, it showed that a disproportionate number reported high amounts of conflict with their parents as well as low levels of communication with their parents (Wolak & Mitchell, 2003, p. 105).

In another study, students who engaged in online communication and felt frightened or they were in significant trouble did not reach out and communicate with their close relatives (Mishna, et al., 2009). Empirical data in social work literature, as well as other professional journals, on the effects of school-based conflict resolution programs have been positive, suggesting that teaching conflict resolution skills to students increases their knowledge of how to resolve conflict using non-violent means (Selfhout, et al., 2009). Although some research exists that examines the activities of social networking and the potential effects, both positive and negative, on its users, there is a gap in the empirical literature. Social networking relies on technology and is conducted over specific devices with no presence of face-to-face interaction, which results in an inability to access interpersonal behavior and signals to facilitate communication. Adding the possibility that relationships can become volatile and unpredictable, no current research addresses how social networking affects the ability for users to resolve conflicts in their daily lives. A concerted effort to focus on how social networking impacts the ability to perform the functions of communication and conflict resolution in real-life relationships would be highly beneficial. The available research did not speak to these particular issues, hence the impetus for this quantity study. Then, this researcher proposes the following research question: What is the impact of social networking on interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills?

The most important use of the Internet for the young generation is communication (Greenfield & Yang, 2006). Responses to hypothetical conflict situations in the social media industry are similar to the responses in real life. The decline observed in face-to-face interaction would imply that there is decreased potential in the handling of real-life conflicts. To support this, Mishna, et al. (2009) found that in their research, youths recorded high cases of conflicts with parents in addition to communication levels that were still low with their parents. Besides, the research indicated that adolescents who frequently used online communication and were in significant trouble or were frightened failed to reach out and have face-to-face communication

with their parents. At this point, it is key to note that such learners miss out on a psychological development in which they should receive education on handling conflicts from parents. For social media, just like face-to-face communication, a relationship may turn to being volatile and unpredictable.

In adopting the social exchange theory, psychologists indicate that the principle of maximizing benefits while minimizing costs is prominent in social behaviour. This is applicable in conflict resolution. One must give to receive. For maximum satisfaction, the degree of expected rewards has to be greater than the degree of expected costs expended during an interaction. For the social exchange theory, Gefen & Ridings (2002) maintain that the six major rewards are both intangible and tangible. They include information, services, goods, status, money, and love. The social exchange theory is influenced by the role of psychological, social, political, economic and historical factors. Technologically, therefore, exchanges between individuals should capture a mutual cost-benefit structure (Drussell, 2012). The energy and time that one spends in texting, comments' posting and Facebook updates directly perceive rewards of responses and likes.

The sense of power can be endured in social media especially with a high number of followers, friends, likes, comments, and shares. While that may exist, the opposite may occur for which an individual has minimal of the above. It would thus mean that fear and rejection grows in them. Also, Objects Relations Theory applies to this scenario. Psychologists differentiate this theory from the rest on the basis that it pays attention to how needs are not met or are met in a relationship. This contrasts the idea of impulses and drives. In this theory, external needs should be met by other people. The external needs are inclusive of being valued and viewed as individual by others, being accepted for both negative and positive qualities and being given protection, love, and care (Gefen & Ridings, 2002). Internet-based communication and texting facilitate a virtual relationship world. It allows users to internalize other people's mental representations. With the absence of face-to-face communication, the participants rely on constructions to incorporate

meaning and imagination to such relationships. As a result, therefore, users' internal worlds may be vastly different from the facts that they present in the social networking environment. The conflict resolution process is complicated and communication as well as, the real facts may be hidden in the interactions.

According to Drussell (2012), texting and Facebook have failed at improving the ability to resolving conflicts. In the study, it was identified that despite the fact many individuals adopted social media and used it frequently, in most cases they did not turn to it when solving conflicts. The study deduced the fact that most young adults deemed it wise to solve conflicts through face-to-face communication. However, there were concerns in which case social media users did not personally know each other and had a considerable distance between them. For such cases, when conflict arose, it was probably never revisited. Such a relationship would be difficult to mend through social media and a large proportion would prefer to abandon it entirely.

They have a natural affinity towards the Internet and their conspicuous Internet literacy has been linked to Internet addiction. Furthermore, they typically have (1) free and unlimited access, (2) flexible schedules, and (3) freedom from parental interference. Additionally, their online activities are not externally controlled; university bodies expect that they make use of the technology, and university settings can foster social intimidation and alienation (Kuss & Griffiths, 2013). Moreover, psychological and developmental factors associated with young adulthood may contribute to the allure of the Internet for students. They do not only find themselves in the process of developing their identities, but they also start to establish intimate relationships at that particular stage of their lives. To develop one's identity means to become detached from one's parents to a certain extent leading to internal conflicts which are repeatedly resolved by the escape into addictions of all sorts, including Internet addiction. Allied to this, the forming of online relationships is more facile than doing the same in real life. On the Internet, people disclose personal information more readily because of the anonymity of the medium. By the same token,

young students may be hampered in the processes of forming an individual identity and establishing real, meaningful and intimate relationships outside of the arena of the virtual world. In addition to this, students are likely to create a new student culture which necessitates the Internet as a tool for communication, information sharing, and community formation. Some studies have shown that as many as six in ten students jeopardize their academic and professional performance because of their Internet habits and that to cope, they engage in Internet activities excessively (Drussell, 2012).

Conceptual framework

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory has been developed by the sociologist George Homans in 1958. Homans has defined Social Exchange Theory as the interchange of activity between at least two individuals. It is intangible or tangible and more or less gratifying or pricy. This theory indicates that individuals base their attitudes on coherent intentions designed to maximize individual profit.

For most of the people; loyalty, acceptance, affection, companionship, and financial support, are appreciated and so people may find it gratifying to be in a relationship with a person who enhances our social status. This can be categorized as a reward (Emerson, 1976).

Moreover, when there is a negative cost for an individual and prices arise. For example, in a relationship all the changes we sort to organize with another person that cost us money, effort and time. There is a final result which is equal to rewards and these rewards do not take costs.

Interpersonal communication is enriched by Social Exchange Theory because it develops from narrow relations to friendly relationships. According to Gefen and Ridings (2002), individuals are not simply conscious of what is around them but also conscious of their consciousness. Social Exchange Theory mentions that human beings are aware of each other's needs and concerns thus this enhances efficient communication between individuals.

Interpersonal interactions are viewed in the Social Exchange Theory from a cost-benefit perspective, much similar to an economic exchange. We can say that a social exchange deals with the interchange of intangible social costs and benefits; such as respect, honor, friendship, and caring. It is not governed by explicit agreements or rules. Social exchange accepts that people take part in exchange simply when they expect their rewards from it to justify the costs of taking part in it, like a commercial exchange. The major difference between a social and commercial exchange is that a social exchange gives no guarantee that there will be reciprocal rewards in return for the costs invested, because, unlike in commercial exchange, there are no procedures or rules that manage the interaction. The unique *warranty* in social exchange is the assumed supportive intents of the other party. This trust in the supportive intents of the other party is essential to social exchange because the lack of explicit procedures and rules means that individuals have to trust on their belief in the supportive intents of the other party to explain their estimated remunerations from the exchange. In fact, explicitly asserting the motivation behind a social exchange, such as "somebody will support you if you will regard," is barely likely to create a social bond or result in respect, As a consequence, individuals taking part in a social exchange must have faith in the cooperative intentions of the other individuals with whom they are engaging due to the lack of a mechanism that could enforce an equal exchange. The belief in the cooperative intentions of the other party taking part in the social exchange is so important that without the belief that the other party will reciprocate fairly, people are less likely to voluntarily take part in social exchange. These principles of social exchange (Gefen & Ridings, 2002)—a cost/benefit analysis of intangibles, the need to believe in the intentions of the other party, and the social message a social exchange conveys—have been used to understand many phenomena in business interactions, including the interaction between users of a new digital age and its online interactions.

When applying Social Exchange Theory to the phenomenon of social networking, it can be assumed that the technological exchanges between individuals capture a mutual cost-benefit structure. The amount of time and energy one designates to texting or posting comments and status updates on Facebook relate directly to perceived rewards, such as a number of "likes" or responses. In other words, given the ability to disperse information efficiently to a mass audience with little time and effort, the potential for rewards in social networking are unrestricted (Drussell, 2012). This drastically differs from conventional face-to-face interaction where more effort and calculated thought is needed for mutually beneficial social exchanges.

Further, it may be that the greater the number of people within one's social network, including cell phone contacts, viewers of videos, and online friends, the greater the amount of perceived status and power the person has by self and others. This power can be exerted over those who are dependent on acceptance and the desire that their cyber social exchanges produce rewards, resulting in potential atypical thoughts and behaviors from the person seeking affirmation (Kuss & Griffiths, 2013). Fear of rejection can be a powerful influence on altering one's actions and the perceived costs of such rejection are intolerable. Another display of power exists in social networking when an individual makes a conscious decision to ignore or deny attempts from others seeking social exchanges. The receiver of such exchanges may perceive limited or no cost to not responding. However, the initiator may perceive a high level of costs and even make multiple attempts to conduct social exchanges (Drussell, 2012), continuing to receive zero rewards.

Social Exchange Theory proposes that social behavior is the result of an exchange process. The purpose of this exchange is to maximize benefits and minimize costs. Also, this theory mentions (Blau, 2017), that people weigh the potential benefits and risks of social relationships. When the risks outweigh the rewards, people will terminate or abandon that relationship. In

economics, it means minimizing transaction costs and thereby increases adaptability and economic stability. People develop patterns of exchange to cope with power differentials and to deal with the costs associated with exercising power. One of the crucial patterns is reciprocity. The process begins when at least one participant makes a move, and if the other reciprocates, new rounds of exchange initiate. Once the process is in motion, each consequence can create a self-reinforcing cycle (Cialdini, 1993) . Reciprocity is crucial for all exchanges because humans keep score, assign meaning to exchanges, and change their subsequent interactions based on a reciprocity balance. Online social networks provide forums for information exchange in open communication networks. Social Exchange Theory grew out of attempts to formalize the study of interpersonal relations and social processes such as power and the exercise of influence (Cook & Rice, 2002). A key development in Social Exchange Theory was the incorporation of a network perspective with the view that exchange relations form network structures. To support the development of a general "structural theory of power and dependence in networks" (Cook & Rice, 2002), Network Exchange Theory complements Social Exchange Theory through formal investigation of individual and group behaviors in networks. Also, other authors report (Faraj, et al., 2011) online communities are built on the dual aspect of online interactions: they are social exchanges that take place between participants but they occur within a network context. With a focus primarily on an individual position in the network and availability of alternative ties among actors, network exchange theorists have used this approach to study the status and relative power of individuals in a network. In online social networks, social exchange is based on written and graphical communication between users. Before we relate our hypothesis directly to the reciprocity we should understand the interactions between users. It seems to be obvious that reactions from the audience should be positively related to the strength of the actor broadcasting activity. Most online social networks users were happy to put on public exhibition a broad range of photos (Amichal-Hamburger & Vinitzky, 2010), including those sent to them by others, mostly

of themselves in the context of their friends and mostly showing happiness and enjoyment. In an experimental study (Tong, et al., 2008), the authors examined the relationship between the number of friends a Facebook profile featured and observers' ratings of attractiveness and extraversion. A curvilinear effect of popularity and social attractiveness emerged, as did a quartic relationship between friends count and perceived extraversion; it shows that Facebook is perceived as a feeling of popularity, power and dependency in networks.

CHAPTER III.

Research Methodology

According to CR Khotari (2004, p.7), "there is a methodical way to solve a problem, it is called *research methodology*. The purpose is that this discipline of studying explains how the research will be carried out". Fundamentally, the actions and techniques by which academics go about their work of relating, clarifying and explaining phenomena are called research methodology. It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained. It aims to provide the work strategy of the study.

In this chapter, we present the objectives that we intend to achieve with the accomplishment of this research work, as well as the methodology used in the pursuit of them. This paper presents the research question, the methodological basis for this study, and the options taken in the data collection and analysis process.

Research question and objectives

The theoretical discussion previously carried out broadly demonstrates the interest of the present study, that is, the pertinence of investigating empirically the effect that social media can introduce on interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills.

The present research is centered on the subsequent question: what are the effects on interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills on social media usage?

Considering the starting question described above, the study itself has a general objective to explore the effect of social media activities (Facebook), on communication and conflict resolution skills.

The four explicit objectives of this dissertation are as follows:

- Define the extent of usage of social media and face-to-face communication among the population studied.

- Determine and characterize the students' perspective regarding social media on communication skills.

- Determine and characterize the students' perspective regarding conflict resolution

- Determine and characterize the students' perspective regarding face-to-face communication

Research method: a quantitative method

Research projects are undertaken for different purposes, and an investigation design focuses upon turning a research question and objectives into a research project. It contemplates the research method, strategy, and time horizons (Saunders, et al., 2009).

According to Saunders, et al. (2009, p. 141), what is most important is not the view that is committed to a particular approach, but whether it will allow you to answer your specific research question(s) and meet your aims. It is important the choice of research strategy because it will be guided by our research question and aims, the amount of time, the extent of existing information and other resources that researchers have available.

Regarding the methodology chosen for the development of this research, it is important to define the diverse methods that can be used. The methods of social research are divided into two types: quantitative methods and qualitative methods. Both have their specificities and, consequently, strengths and weaknesses.

Quantitative method is centered on the measurement of amount or quantity. In this method a process is described or expressed in terms of quantities and data collection techniques (such as interviews and questionnaires) or an analysis procedure (like as statistical analysis or graphing) that uses or generates data numbers. On the contrary, the qualitative method is not numerical, applies to reason and uses words, and the data collection techniques (such as observations, interviews, survey) that generate non-numeric data (Kothari, 2004, p. 3). In this way, quantitative

data deal with numbers, and qualitative data deal with meanings and describe situations which cannot be graphed (Loewen & Plonsky, 2016, p. 154).

Essentially, these methods diverge from one another in three ample points. Numerical data are centered on meanings resulted from numbers, and their findings derived from standardized and numerical data. Diagrams and statistics are conducting the analysis. Alternatively, the qualitative method is based on word meanings, its results are derived from data that is not standardized, it requires grouping into categories and, finally, the analysis is conducted through the use of conceptualization (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 482).

Usually, the qualitative methods collect multiple forms of data, such as observations, interviews, and forms, rather than trust on a particular data source. At that point, the researchers review all of the information, define objectives at determining the primary desires and motives, using in-depth discussions for the purpose. Qualitative methods provide comprehensions into the setting of a problem, making ideas and hypotheses (MacDonald & Headlam, 2011, p. 8).

The quantitative methods use the data collection technique of the questionnaire surveys to collect numerical data and the output received (information) is in the form of statistics and numbers, and provides outcomes from a sample of the population of interest (MacDonald and Headlam, 2011, p. 9). Through the study of a characteristic sample of a population, this method checks the objective theory by analyzing the relationship between variables, variables that can be measured by standardized data collection instruments that allow data to be evaluated through statistical procedures (Creswell, 2009). It seems that the core quantitative methods used in social research have research techniques (such as a survey) that are used to collect quantitative data (MacDonald & Headlam, 2011), this data that can be measured, classified, and sorted.

Survey

A strategy commonly used and popular in the social sciences is the survey. The general range of survey strategy includes any measurement techniques that involve requesting questions of participants and is most regularly used to answer; what, who, where, how much and how many questions. Surveys enable the collection of a huge amount of data from a significant population in a very reasonable way. Frequently achieved by using a questionnaire administered to a sample, these data are consistent, enabling simple comparison. Besides, people in general perceive that the survey strategy is authoritative by them because is both comparatively easy to explain and to understand (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 144).

A survey strategy enables you to gather quantitative data that researcher can analyse quantitatively. Also, there is a maximum to the number of questions that any survey can contain if the helpfulness of the participant is not to be recognized. Surveys may consist of closed option questions, in which participants must respond by selecting one of several possibilities. For example, yes/no, multiple selection, or *Likert scale* questions all provide participants with a limited number of response options. As a rule, the use of a Likert scale has a numeric scale that is used to assess the strength of participants´ responses to specific questions or statements (Loewen & Plonsky, 2016, p. 99).

The quantitative method was chosen in this case for the reason that this method is more practical to collect results through an online survey of a specific group of people through a Likert scale because it is easily understandable for participants to respond to, and the data are easy to analyze. In addition, a survey strategy gives the researcher total control over the research process and makes conclusions that are representative of the entire population at an inferior cost than collecting the data for the total population.

Online survey: Advantages

In the past, collecting research information through traditional methods (such as a paper survey) was time-consuming and more costly. It used to involve visiting institutions (field work) to ensure that data collection has done adequately. In some cases, it demanded that the researcher has accessed to control and trainees who could help gather the data. At present, the choice is to make online surveys. These appear to have the potential, and indeed are used worldwide, to collect large amounts of data efficiently and economically within relatively short time frames. Also, another author (Lefever, et al., 2007) highlighted that online surveys are easy to create and user kindly. Frequently inexpensive than non-electronic surveys.

There are advantages in the application of online surveys (Fielding, et al., 2017): online survey is less time-consuming method because they have easy of participation and can reach out to our target audience. In this new age technology-oriented world, a range amount of people can access to the Internet. It seems that participants prefer receiving the survey over email. The alternative is that the participants can answer questions in a friendly way. It involves that participants can select an appropriate place and time, according to their suitability to register their answers.

According to Wright (2005) there are some advantages for a researcher using an online survey strategy; in this study, the researcher is agreed with:

In contrast to the others techniques (such as survey papers), online surveys are exceptionally fast in obtaining feedback from respondents.

Online surveys are cheaper than another survey method, for example; telephonic survey and paper surveys, it is less cost and very efficient technique because it does not require a lot of resources. Also it is convenient to understand for participants: online surveys are usually very easy to answer as they either come to the email inbox or social media; it can be answered with a click.

Online surveys are quick to design and send and due to the simplicity, they have a tendency to save researchers' time.

Due to the anonymity involved in online surveys, respondents feel more confidents and they are more truthful in their answers. The sense of anonymity can help to the researcher to get valuable answers.

Research design

In this study, the research design that was used by the researcher is the survey and it has gathered quantitative data. The survey was a questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions that generated respondents attitudes and manners about using social media networking sites and Facebook. The survey was created in Google forms platform which is the practical online way to respond to the participants and get answers fast and collect the information properly.

Sample

The target population in this study were college students who were enrolled in a master's program, Level 9 Award. The researcher used a purposive suitable sampling method; master's students enrolled at Independent College, MA in Dispute Resolution, were chosen due to their practical contact and their possible involvement of research and conflict resolution matters. Further, this population is considered as adults by the researcher, this sample can participate by their clear judgment and choosing. Students from 25 years old were the target population on this study because the researcher considered that from 25 years old is the age of students in a MA program. It has been the goal of this study to precisely represent social media experiences and contribution in college learners. But, to address interest in social media activities among the college students population, an approach of asking respondents to answer survey interrogations based upon their college involvements was initially considered for a range of reasons. First, it may be mutual practice for master's students who have moved away to college to continue in contact

with family and friends through the comfort of technology. Also, their participation in social media may be suddenly intensified and not true to their usual use. To more honestly find the possible influence of social media, in this regard the researcher sensed it could be more demonstrative to measure practices and attitudes of social media during the time participants have lived in their established and nearby familial and social atmospheres in college.

Second, knowing college can possibly increase an individual's social media significantly, both in factual life and in the new digital generation. The college experience might not affect the dramatic increase in social media activities and opportunities, as not everybody look for higher education and is familiarized to such a direct expansion of their social networks. Interactions and connections among college learners are supposed to be more established and expected.

Lastly, the aim of this study was to investigate the influence of social media performs on the ranges of communication and conflict resolution skills. Consequently, since master's students enrolled in the MA in Dispute Resolution are in a progressive time and in the course of learning and achieving skills, it also enables consideration of the influence of social media during the student´s formative phase.

The researcher preferred recent data that more surely showed social media among the master's learners in this research. To have the goal of evaluating social networking among master 's students and the need for true information, the researcher decided to focus on learners who attended the Independent College and were enrolled in a master's program- MA in Dispute Resolution from 2017-2019. This was the most achievable option due to the access and contact this population.

Ethical issues

Ethical issues arise at a variety of stages in social research, according to Bryman (2012), ethical issues cannot be ignored, as they relate directly to the integrity of a piece of research that is involved. It is important to know there are four areas in which ethical concerns particularly arise: whether harm comes to participants; informed consent; invasion of privacy; and confidentiality (Bryman, 2012, p. 130).

In this study, the researcher only has had the participation of master's learners attending the Independent College. Also, all participant in this study continued fully anonymous and no identifying information was met.

Actually, after the researcher sent the online survey. The anonymity restrictions were placed in the course of the survey. It means that there was no opportunity of detecting a completed survey back to a specific participant. Also the researcher had no way to identify who decided to contribute in this study. The fact is that participants have chosen to participate in the online survey, they have had the alternative of answer. Given the fact that the survey is online, participants had the choice of leaving at any time the process or avoiding questions in case they do not feel comfortable, it was without penalties.

The participation in the survey was entirely voluntary for all the participants. There were not risks and any actual benefits for taking part in this study. After informed about the purpose of the study through a form, participants accessed to the survey (clicking on the link to the survey). The researcher stated at the beginning of the survey that their participation in the study was completely voluntary and the answers will be kept reserved and confidential. There is no doubt that any personally identifiable data would be connected with the answers to any reports of these information (Annex 1).

Data collection

The survey (Annex 1) was sent to all students enrolled in the MA Dispute Resolution from 2017-2019. The online survey was live from July 16, 2019 till August 3, 2019. The online survey involved of some items containing Likert scales (five-point scale). Likert scales are mainly used in researches, in the present study, it consisted asking participants to rate their opinions on some statements involving areas of social media activities. Referring the estimated time spent in social media activities, interactions ending using social media sites were another aspects involved on the online survey, and in the areas of conflict resolution and communication, a few questions requested participants to rank their inclinations and preferences. There was one demographic data that was collected; in this study, it was the gender of the participants. Most of the questions involved social media activities using Facebook. The researched has estimated five minutes per participant for completing the survey.

CHAPTER IV.

Data analysis/Findings

The researcher has used a tool to analyses the data in this research. The tool was IBM SPSS software (Subscription Trial; August 3, 2019-August 17, 2019). In this section, the use of descriptive statistics by the researcher was important to describe the outcomes of the survey. Measures of central tendency and frequency distributions were used by the researcher to report the gender of respondents and the amount of time spent on Facebook, these are considered nominal variables.

In Drussell (2012), we found the use of the 5-point Likert scales, he has developed his analysis using two formats. One scale ranged from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" and the other scale ranged from "Never" to "Always" for asking questions regarding communication and conflict resolution. Two ranking questions there were also in the survey.

There were two ranking questions in the survey; for the statements "I prefer to keep in touch with others" (first ranking question) and "I prefer to let someone know that I am mad at them by"(second ranking question). Both statements had five choices where participants were requested to response. The final five-point Likert scale involved five statements, its five items were inquired about some attitudes related to social networking activities, respondents replied from -Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

The researcher has divided the data analysis/findings in six points; demographics, social media accessibility, time spent in activities, communication, conflict resolution, and attitudes towards social media, the researcher develops the six points in this chapter.

Demographics

With the demographic information collected, the results indicated that a total of 23 master's students attending Independent College responded to the survey. There were 19 (83%) females and 4 (17%) males included in the sample.

We can notice in **Figure 2** the master's students by age, where the majority 48% are between 30-34 years old and 30% are between 25-29 years old, while the minority 4% of the population surveyed are between 40-44 years old, it appears that respondents are mature persons and they are enrolled at Independent College.
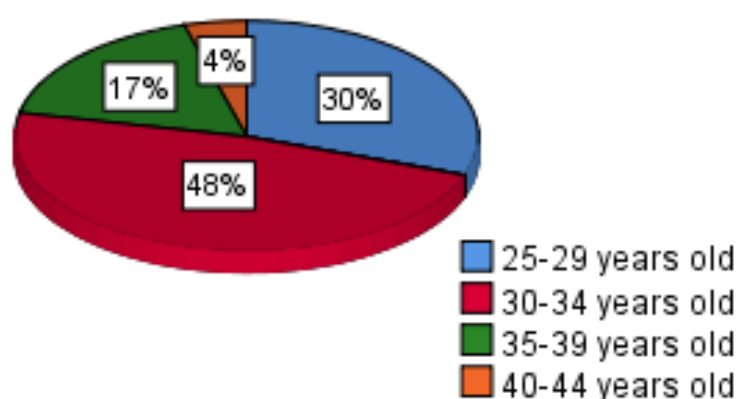

Figure 2. Master students by Age Independent College

Social media accessibility

Respondents were asked one closed-ended question regarding whether they have profiles on the social networking site Facebook. This outcomes in easy access and the appropriate option to participate in social media. Further, **Table 1** shows that all 23 participants also specified they have a profile on Social Networking Facebook.

Social Networking Facebook

Count	Percent
23	100

Table 1. Social media accessibility

Time spent in activities

In this section, all participants were requested to report the time spent in activities each day (hours per day). The focus of this study were the participation in social media activities. Table 2 indicates respondents´ estimates of the total of time in hours respondents participated using Facebook, as well as face-to-face interaction with others. Doing a clarification, the survey specified face-to-face interaction as being social time with others. Knowing that the target population consisted of college learners, enrolled in a MA in dispute resolution, the researcher clarify that time spent in activities, such doing homework and attending classes, was not considered as interpersonal interaction. **Table 2** illustrates that 35% of the students spent at least 1 hour a day on Facebook, and 5% spent 5 hours a day using Facebook. Only three responders spent between 5-20 hours daily in social networking activities. The mean score was 3.52. Also the participants reported that only 4% spent 10 hours a day in face-to-face social/leisure activities, 5 % spent 8 hours, 9% spent 6 hours and 8% spent 4 hours, while 35% spent 5 hours, 13% spent 2 hours and 17% spent an hour in face-to-face interactions a day; the mean score was 4.09.

Facebook	Frequency	%	Face-to-face	Frequency	%
1	8	35	1	4	17
2	4	17	2	3	13
3	5	22	3	2	9
4	2	9	4	2	8
5	1	5	5	8	35
8	1	4	6	2	9
9	1	4	8	1	5
20	1	4	10	1	4
Total	23	100	Total	23	100

Table 2. Average daily hour in social networking Facebook and face-to-face activities

Communication

Regarding to communication, respondents were requested to rate they level of engagement to declarations regarding their use of social media Facebook to communicate with individuals. **Figure 3** shows that the main common response to the statement "Facebook friends, I have never met are as important to me as real friends " was strongly disagreed with; twelve respondents (44%) made this choice, and four respondents (17%) disagreed with this statement. In response to the declaration, "I have improved my ability to communicate by using Facebook", eight participants (35%) strongly disagreed, while two participants (9%) strongly agreed. For the statement, "I rely too much on Facebook to stay in touch with others", eight participants (35%) were neutral. This statement was the most common response, followed by (9%) two of the participants have reported they strongly agreed with the statement. As seen in the results, the majority of the respondents felt that their ability to communicate has not improved due to Facebook. Also, some respondents strongly found that Facebook friends cannot be as important as real friends.
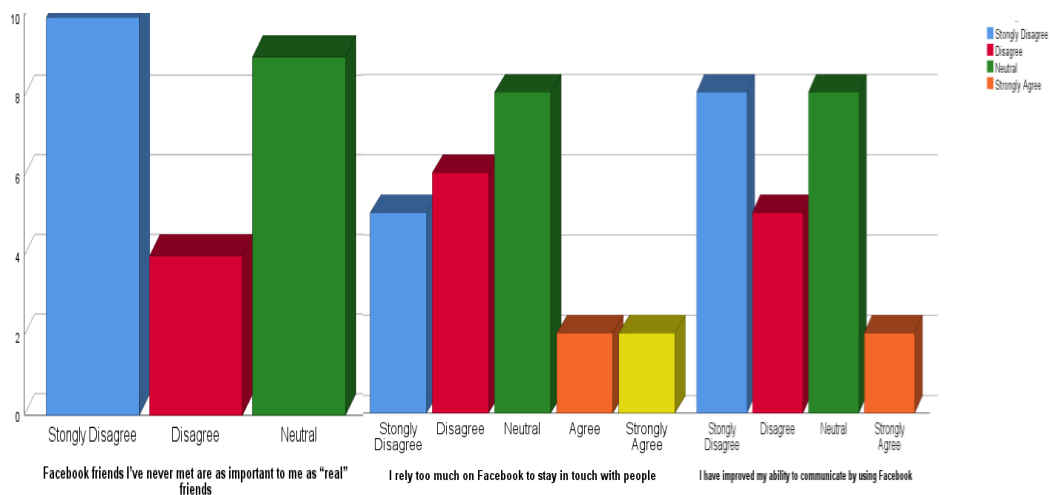

Figure 3. Influence of social media on communication skills

Continuing with the communication point, **Figure 4** shows the rank of preference in communication mediums, the most preferred statement was talking in person with eight participants (35%), followed by phone with six respondents, and Facebook with six respondents too, while email had three respondents (13%) the least, the results were in response to the declaration "I prefer to keep in touch with others by".
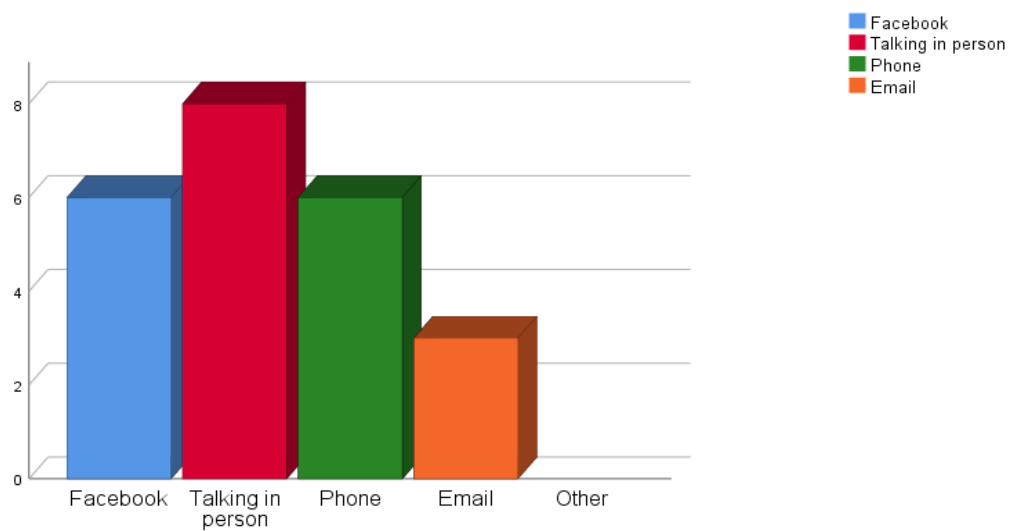

Figure 4. Preference in communication Forms

Conflict resolution

Figure 5 illustrates the apparent influence of social media site Facebook on conflict resolution manners; participants were asked to rank their level of agreement to a statement regarding their use of Facebook to resolve interpersonal problems. In response to the statement "I have improved my ability to work out interpersonal issues by using Facebook", nine (39%) of the respondents disagreed, while eight respondents (35%) strongly disagreed, and six respondents (26%) were neutral with this statement. As seen in the results, this two responses; "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were the most common for the statement. Therefore, it can be supposed that participants noticed their conflict resolution skills were not enhanced in cause of Facebook.
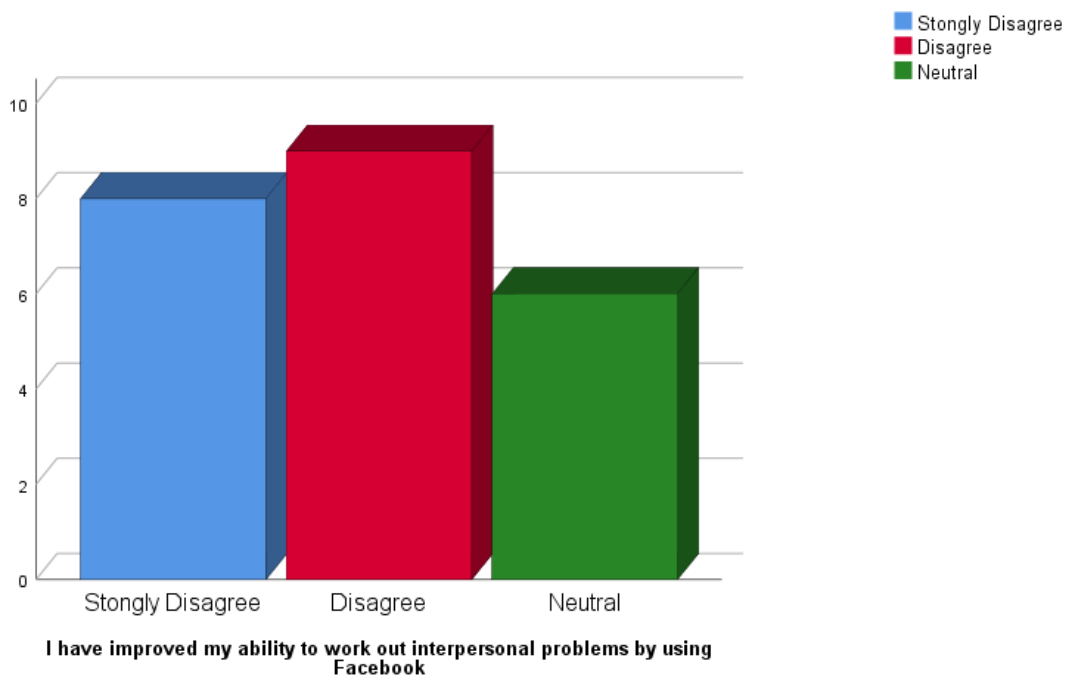

Figure 5. Influence of social media Facebook on conflict resolution skills

Figure 6 shows the occurrence of using social media on conflict resolution areas, respondets were asked to respond to two declarations regarding conflict resolution. In response to the declaration "I carry on conversations on Facebook rather than talking to someone", 8 of the 23 respondents reported never doing this, while 4 of the 23 respondents replied very frequently. For the statement "I have unfriended someone on Facebook instead of trying to first resolve the issue face-to-face about it", eight respondents (35%) reported never using Facebook in this manner, seven respondents reported sometimes, while two respondents (9%) replied always. The remaining six participants were divided between reporting often and very frequently pleasing in using Facebook. According to the results, most of the respondents have not expressed conflict or tried to resolve conflict using social media sites such as Facebook. Conversely, there was a small amount of participants who have used Facebook in this means.
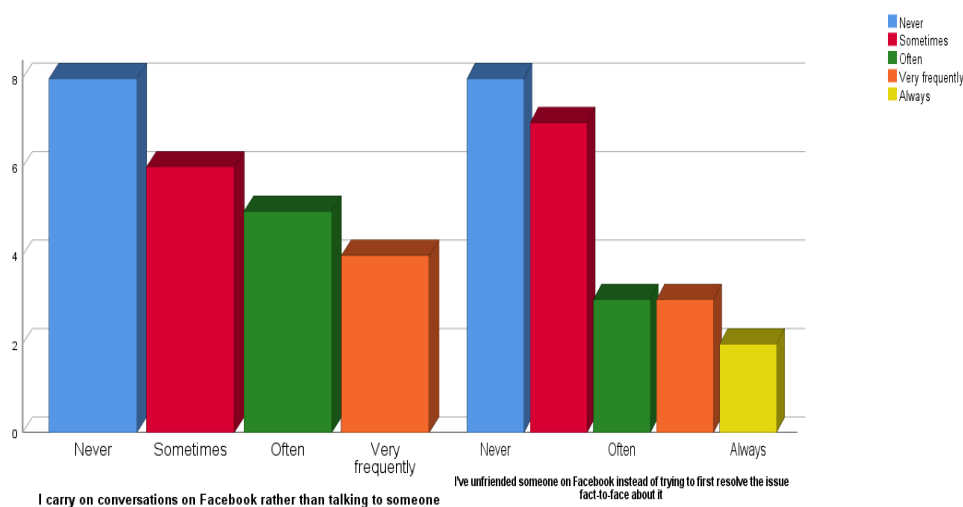

Figure 6. Social networking usage for conflict resolution

Continuing with conflict resolution section, **Figure 7** shows the level of preference in the manifestation of conflict, respondents were requested to respond the statement "I prefer to let someone know I am upset by" and rank their possible actions and preferences. 11 of the 23 respondents indicated talking in person (48 %), 2 of the 23 respondents indicated sending an email (9%), 3 of the 23 respondents showed not doing anything (13%), the remaining seven respondents were split between posting a comment on Facebook and talking on the phone.

As perceived in the findings, the most preferred was talking in person between participants to express conflict while not taking actions have been ranked subsequent for the most chosen statement. Consequently, it seems that participants prefer to demonstrate their feelings of fury in conducts where the participants are able to have more individual contact and a direct conversation during conflict rather than waiting for an email.
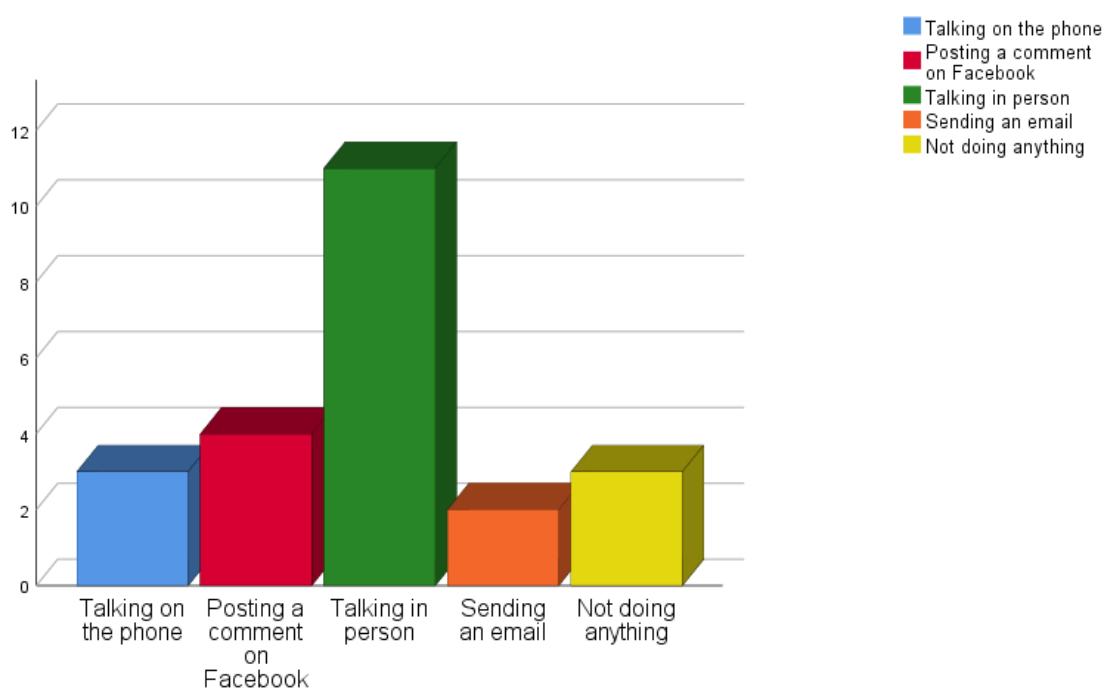

Figure 7. Level of preference in the expression of conflict by college students

Figure 8 illustrates the occurrence of face-to-face communication having the purpose of communicating and resolving conflict, respondents were asked to respond to some statements "I solve problems with friends face-to-face" and "I make an effort to spent time with friends". 5 of the 23 participants indicated that they often have solved problems face-to-face with their friends, while the remaining 18 respondents (the majority) were split between reporting very frequently (39%) and always (39%) solving problems face-to-face. In the same way, the majority of the respondents (35%) and (30%) have made an effort to spend time with their friends always and very frequently respectively. So, it appears that respondents prefer to solve their problems with friends face-to-face very frequently and always, and also they make the effort to spend time with their friends always and very frequently.
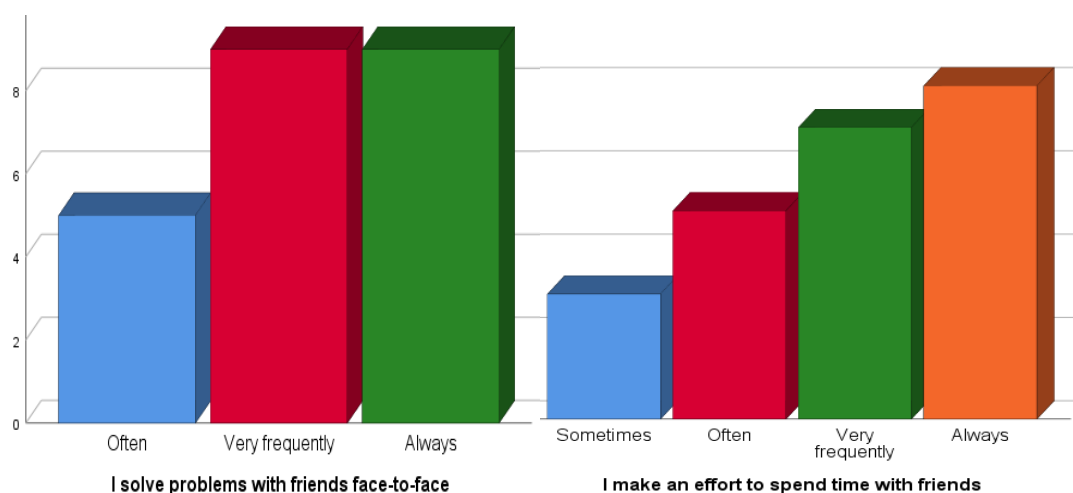

Figure 8. Face-to-face interaction by college students

Attitudes toward social media

Figure 9 illustrates the level of agreement on attitudes toward social media. Participants were requested to rate their level of agreement to some statements regarding to the influence of social media on conflict resolution and communication means. In response to the declaration that social networking makes friendship stronger, there were 7 of the 23 respondents that were neutral, and only one respondent who strongly agreed, and the remaining 15 respondents were split between reporting they agreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed with this declaration.

In response of the statement that people who rely on social networking are losing the ability to talk with others, there were 7 of the 23 respondents who agreed and 6 were either in agreement or disagreement with this statement, and 4 respondents strongly agreed. The remaining 6 respondents were split between reporting they disagreed and strongly disagreed. As for the last statement that people cannot effectively solve problems using social networking, 7 of the 23 respondents strongly agreed, 7 respondents indicated they either agreed or disagreed with this statement, and only 3 agreed, while 5 of the 23 respondents disagreed and one respondent strongly disagreed with this statement. So, it appears that respondents were either in agreement or disagreement with the statements. They also showed their attitudes toward social media sites; people cannot solve problems effectively, social media does not make friendship stronger and individuals are losing ability to talk with others using social media networking sites.
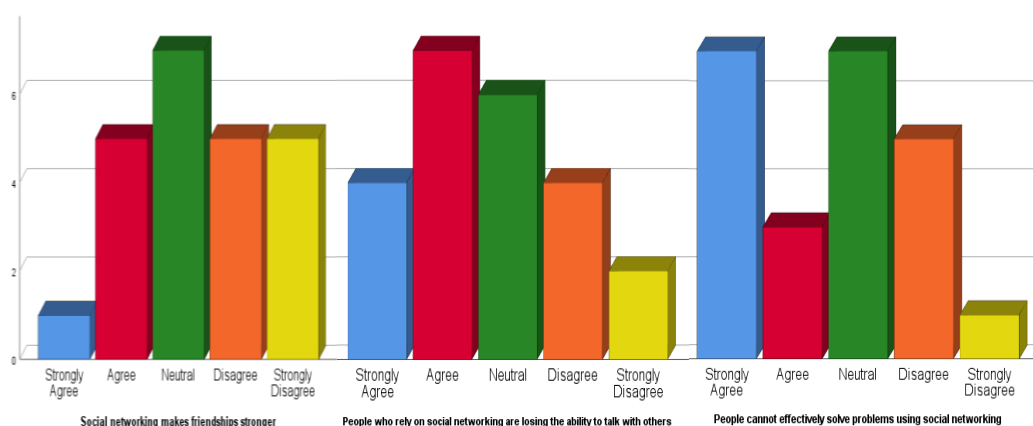

Figure 9. Attitudes toward social networking sites

CHAPTER V. Discussions

This study aimed to explore the influence of social networking activities and the use Facebook on communication and conflict resolution skills among college learners. The trend of using social media among college learners seems to be increasing day by day and a large number of them is relying on its usage for interactions and communication.

In the past, communicating and resolving issues with others was commonly performed in person, one example is written correspondence, or by talking on phone. For decades, communicating and resolving conflict with others was mostly performed in-person, through written correspondence, or by talking on phone line. At present, with a variety of technological improvements, individuals have more options with which interact with others.

In this study, the participants were asked to respond on their activities of social media as well as to answer to some statements made to measure their perspective on the topic. It was supposed that participants would indicate high participation in social media activities, as showed in previous studies, as well as report an influence on their communication and conflict resolution skills. This influence has been demonstrated in empirical study and the information from this study will add further insight into the social media phenomenon and its potential influences on today´s society.

Social networking sites were used by all college learners. This is important since all college students were using some form of social networking website. This is significant since Lenhart (2010) found that 71 percent of young adults have a Facebook account. The results of this study advise that social media is very popular among college learners, mainly students in their early adulthood. As showed in the results, hundred percent of the participants had profiles on Facebook. A study found that 71% of students have a Facebook account, these findings concurred with research by Lenhart (2010) which found that Facebook is the most common form of social media among college students.

Time spent in activities

Participants in this research showed that they prefer Facebook as social media networking and they spent at least 1 hour daily on Facebook. This finding is supported by Zuckerberg the chief executive of Facebook, that fifty minutes (nearing an hour) is the average amount of time that users spend each day on its Facebook (Stewart, 2016). In another research, Alsaif (2016) found that the majority of the students spend at least two to five hours on social media every day.

However, the average time a day of 4.5 hours spent on face-to-face social time with others shows that respondents preferred face-to-face social interaction with others instead of that social networking Facebook. It seemed that college students were spending time with others to communicate openly through face-to-face interactions.

Communication

Sponcil and Gitimu (2010) found that students prefer face-to-face communication over communication via the Internet and networking sites. As seen in this research, the majority of the participants felt that their ability to communicate with others has not improved due to Facebook. Also, more participants strongly felt that their Facebook friends were not as important as their real friends. These results are consistent with Baym (2004) who indicated that most college learners preferred to communicate face-to-face rather than over a computer; this indicates that the respondents are not submerged in the social networking world of communicating through social media and Facebook and not considered that these activities are impacting their lives (Sponcil & Gitimu, 2010).

As shown in the ranking of communication, the first preference was talking in person, followed by Facebook and phone, and the email. The results are consistent with Sheldon (2008) who found that students use Facebook to pass time, be entertained, and not maintain existing relationships with others. This could be explained by Social Exchange theory that sustains the idea that the potential for rewards in social media networking are unrestricted, and the use of

Facebook needs little time and effort. Therefore, talking in person is the first communication form and Facebook is the second form of communication due to talking has less effort and spend less time. Vevere (2015) found that students recognize the influence of social media on their everyday communication patterns, including the situation and perceive it as a new natural environment of communication.

Conflict resolution

Another interesting finding from the current study was that the participants felt their conflict resolutions skills were not improved due to Facebook. As Sponcil and Gitimu (2010) indicated, college students were interested in posting pictures about what is happening in their lives, but they may not be trying other purposes. Colby Itkowitz (2016) has identified that some posts on Facebook could not be true: you will react, and the story could make you angry. It is probably a good idea to keep reading about the topic via other sources to make sure the story you read was not purposefully trying to make you angry (with potentially misleading or false information) in order to generate shares, conflicts, and ad revenue.

The current study also found that the majority of the respondents do not express conflict or attempt to resolve conflict using Facebook; it seems cutting back to moderate, healthy levels of Facebook usage could help reduce conflict, particularly for maintaining relationships with others.

Attitudes toward social media

Regarding participants feeling that "social networking makes friendship stronger" (Cummings, et al., 2000), the authors found that computer mediated communication, social media is less valuable for building and sustaining close social relationships than other means, such as face-to-face contact. The implications of their findings depend, however, on whether interaction online adds to or substitutes for offline interaction and relationships.

Gupta (2013) has found that youth is using these new technology aids in their education as well as for social interaction. The current study also found that the attitude toward social networking

sites varies. For the most part, respondents admitted that people who rely on social networking are losing the ability to talk with others. Unlike past research, the current study found that user attitudes (how most internet users divide their time online; the time users interact with content and the time users actually share something) seem to be increasing. It is important to highlight that social networking sites have become an integral part of education, entertainment and social life of college students.

Another attitude related to ¨social networking makes friendship stronger¨ was also an interesting finding, the current study found that 30 percent were neutral with this statement. It may suggest that the students are rather careless with this statement. It seems that there is an increase in the positive attitude of college students towards the effect of social networking sites. Gupta (2013) has found that social networking sites assist users in building up social relationships with people who share similar interests and/or activities. Social networking provides a virtual environment for lonely people to interact with others, and is one of the best and cheapest tools for social interaction, and helps in bringing social change by interacting on environmental and societal issues.

Further, participants reported that "people cannot effectively solve problems using social networking" but 7 of 23 respondents were neutral with this statement: it could suggest that students are rather careless with solving problems using social networking.

Finally, the agreement to the statement that "people cannot effectively solve problems using social networking" seems to coincide with the results of this study. However, there was some minor disagreement with this statement. Isik (2013) found that socializing and making new friends are the most common reasons among students. They use Facebook to communicate and resolve conflicts in their everyday life.

Is Social Media influencing our Face-to-Face Interactions and conflict resolution skills?

Students are active users of social networking sites, as we found in this research, Facebook is the most popular but the students maintain their point of view in accepting that a face-to-face interaction is the main form to communicate and express conflict. Based on these findings, the researcher determined that individuals recognize a clear distinction between social interaction and social media, and that face-to-face conversations remain the predominant form of socializing and maintain relationships. Most interactions are face-to-face, and most of what we consider social interaction is face-to-face. Perhaps most importantly, the study participants deemed face-to-face significantly valuable and irreplaceable by social media. The researcher mentioned the Social Exchange Theory as a perspective making relationships and socializing.

In chapter 3 the researcher defined the Social Exchange Theory, this theory implies that all human relationships are formed by the use of a subjective cost-benefit analysis and the comparison of alternatives and has its roots in economics, psychology and sociology.

The social exchange perspective argues that people calculate the overall worth of a particular relationship by subtracting its costs that can be time, money, effort etc., from the rewards it provides. While costs are the elements of relational life that have negative value to a person, rewards have positive value, like a sense of acceptance, support, and companionship.

The social exchange theory assumes that the major force in interpersonal relationships is the satisfaction of both people's self-interest. Self-interest is not considered necessarily bad and can be used to enhance relationships. Interpersonal exchanges are thought to be parallel to economic exchanges where people are satisfied when they receive a fair return for their expenditures.

People feel a sense of relatedness when they are interacting face-to-face, but using social media does not make them feel connected. This concept is actively in use in our everyday life, as it influences us in choosing to end or to continue relationships, it will depend on how willing people are to encourage solving their conflicts with friends; it makes clear that social media is not

impacting face-to-face contact but is a mechanism of expressing feelings, in this case anger and conflicts.

It is now socially acceptable to talk to four other people online while in real-life conversation with one. It is acceptable to be late because you can let the person know by text. You can notify them, so it's okay. But texting allows us to bypass the guilt we would feel if we heard their voices. And we can apologize by text too but is it really an apology if we can't see their face, and they can't hear our voice? Is there empathy in that exchange? We live in a new, uncharted world where we can take the easy road out. And we do. In so many simple ways, we are forgetting whom we are communicating with, which is to say people and not texts or posts on Facebook, trying to use these mediums to build conflict resolution skills.

To conclude, social media is undoubtedly changing the manner in which people communicate and collect information in their lives. It is a way to connect but the students have made it clear that social media should not replace face-to-face contact altogether. From the researcher's perspective social media is a powerful tool to maintain relationships. Social media is not a tool to express anger because it does not create opportunities for an open discussion, which is a powerful way to use social media.

CHAPTER VI.

Conclusion

The use of social media has been rapidly rising during the last few years. It is not only being used by working people but also there is a heavy increase in the use of social media by students and people in education society. With such broad acceptance, there is no surprise that social media have affected the way people communicate and socialize. Social media has impacted various facets of modern life and it has a profound influence on interpersonal communication.

The effects social media usage has on interpersonal relationships is changing the way the world population communicates and forms face-to-face relationships while decreasing human social and behavioral skills. If the trend of social media and online interactivity and communication continues to rapidly grow and increase in the future, the more time the population will spend interacting on social media, which means the more face-to-face human contact skills, as well as interpersonal relationships, will diminish.

The arrival of new technologies will completely transform the way we communicate and social media is not meant to be the main source of communication and personal exchange, but its ease and accessibility can embolden people to use Facebook before going directly to the source of conflict.

According to the data obtained in this dissertation, the percentage of people who use Facebook is 100% (table 1), regardless of the face-to-face communication, 35% (table 2) of the students spend 5 hours a day with others, while only 17% does it one hour daily (table 2).

Another important fact to highlight in this research is that the respondents feel that their ability to communicate does not improve due to Facebook (n=8). Also, more respondents strongly feel their Facebook friends are not as important as their real friends (n=12) 44% (Figure 3).

Communication is crucial in solving a conflict. Individuals should talk to the other person about the problem maturely instead of bashing each other on Facebook. Knowing the importance

of communication in resolving conflicts because approaching conflict resolution through social media is harmful to interpersonal relationships, in this study students do not perceive their conflict resolution skills to be improved due to Facebook (Figure 5); the majority of the respondents do not express conflict or attempt to resolve conflict using (Figure 6).

It is possible to conclude that face-to-face communication is more effective than other forms because it allows for an active exchange of information, in this research students prefer talking in person instead of posting on Facebook (Figure 7) and email should be avoided, if possible, to resolve conflict or to discuss sensitive topics. It is too impersonal and indirect and increases the risk of miscommunication and misunderstanding.

Another aim in this study was characterizing students´ perspective regarding face-to-face communication, the respondents preferred a face-to-face interaction to solve problems with their friends and most of the time they made an effort to spend time with their friends (figure 8).

It is possible to conclude that the use of social media among college learners has not impacted their communication skills. As demonstrated in the survey carried out, almost 5 hours a day the students are using their time to have interaction with others and 1 hour to use social media, it cannot affect their interaction with others.

This study proved the hypothesis that the use of social media is increasing and getting more popular. Social media is attractive, and Facebook is the most accessible social media platform among students but it is not replacing their choice to spend time with friends and meet them thought face-to-face interactions. However, this study also showed that the rank of preference on the expression of conflict though Facebook is not the first option among college students.

In conclusion, we can say that the investigation tells us that the use of social media among the population studied and the ability to resolve conflict through social media sites are centered around the following important points;

- This research study offered insight into the possible influence on how college students are incorporating social networking into the ways they communicate and resolve conflicts with others.

- By far, the most common and preferred method of interaction is face-to-face, as stated by most of the respondents.

- The results of the study also show that participants are adding technological communication to this traditional method of contact and using the social networking activities for various purposes.

- The majority of study participants agreed that social networking helped them to open up to the world and to improve communications skills. This was not true for using these mediums to build conflict resolution skills. It should be a point to mention that even though the majority of respondents disagreed or were neutral that Facebook has improved their communication and conflict resolution skills, the results do not suggest nor imply that these skills were hindered. Because college students still develop and create the ability to attain and implement communication and conflict resolution skills on an interpersonal level, it may important that their participation in social networking activities be observed.

Reflection and limitations

This study was very interesting for the researcher because social media is an important platform for driving shared issues, and as was addressed in this study, the ability of social media sites to spread information beyond the capacity of traditional communication makes them attractive tools for organizations and individual professionals.

The researcher has found some strengths and implications during this study. A main strength is that participation on the survey was anonymous, and voluntary, participants were not identified. Their responses were kept confidential and no personally identifiable information was captured.

The researcher found a challenge to get answers from the respondents, the process took almost three weeks and the survey got twenty-three responses of master's students enrolled in a MA in Dispute Resolution from three academic years (2007-2009).

A few limitations can be identified for this research project. First, there could have been a more equal gender distribution. There were only four males included in this sample. Second, the study was led with a small group of subjects under study selected from only one master's course and this may restrict the generalizability of the discoveries to the entire colleges. Bigger studies including students overall college and year levels can lead to empowering speculation. The focus of the current research work is, however, not generalization but rather activity research and analyses of the impacts of social media on this particular group of students. The low number of students who took the survey resulted in the inability to conduct inferential statistics to look at any statistically significant relationships between variables.

Finally, the use of Facebook between genders and the impact on the identified interpersonal skills was not reported on, therefore is open to be explored in future research. Looking into similarities and differences in how males and females use social networking to communicate and resolve conflict seems like a worthwhile effort.

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Annex 1.

Survey

Hi all,

I am conducting a study about the impact of social media on interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills among college students

I invite you to participate in this study if you are registered in the MA in Dispute Resolution at Independent College

The survey is very brief and will only take about 5 minutes to complete.

Your participation in the survey is completely voluntary and all of your responses will be kept confidential. No personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses to any reports of these data. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Social media, interpersonal communication & CR skills

As social media sites continue to grow in popularity, it is our premise that technology is a vital part in today's lifestyle. At the present time, social media has been an important part of one's life from shopping to electronic mails, education and business tool. Social media is playing a vital role in transforming people's lifestyle. Social media includes social networking sites and blogs where people can easily connect with each other. Since their emergence, the social networking sites like Facebook have become key tools for college students so they are the digital generation.

Social media allows exchange and creation of content generated by various users. Currently, the major sites that provide ample networking and more personalized interaction include Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp. Usage for social media is measured through frequency of logins, postage, updates and interactions. Facebook adds 500,000 new users every day; 6 new profiles every second. 30% of internet users use Facebook more than once a day and users spend an average of 20 minutes per day on the site In a month, the average user likes 10 posts, makes 4 comments, and clicks on 8 ads. Allowing recent statistics (July 2019) Worldwide, 26.3% of the online population use Facebook.

Looking at why so many individuals are growing the approbation for social media, the impact it has on users is critical. how addiction to social media relate with face to face interactions.

The researcher expects to know the effects and benefits of social media related our interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills, and why the students prefer social media instead of the face to face communication.

This questionnaire is using to collect information about students enrolled at Independent College and all the information collected will be kept confidential.

Do you voluntarily agree to participate in this survey?   Yes ☐   No ☐

Gender: Male ☐   Female ☐   Prefer not to say ☐

Age group: 25-29 years old ☐   30-34 years old ☐   35-39 years old ☐   40-44 years old ☐

1. Do you have a profile on Facebook? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

2. What is the average amount of time per day you spend on Facebook? ☐ hours

3. What is the average amount of leisure/social time per day you spend face-to-face with others?
hours [ ]

Please read each statement and mark the number that most applies to you using the following scale:

1-Stongly Disagree   2-Disagree   3-Neutral   4-Agree   5-Strongly Agree

4. Facebook friends I've never met are as important to me as "real" friends | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

5. I've improved my ability to work out interpersonal problems by using Facebook | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6. I rely too much on Facebook to stay in touch with people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

7. I've improved my ability to communicate by using Facebook | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please read each statement and mark the number that most applies to you using the following scale:
1-Never   2-Sometimes   3-Often   4-Very frequently   5-Always

8. I make an effort to spend time with friends | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

9. I solve problems with friends face-to-face | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

10. I've unfriended someone on Facebook instead of trying to first resolve the issue fact-to-face about it | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

11. I carry on conversations on Facebook rather than talking to someone | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please read each statement and mark the number that most applies to you using the following scale:
1-Strongly Agree   2-agree   3-Neutral   4-Disagree   5-Strongly Disagree

12. Social networking makes friendships stronger | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

13. People who rely on social networking are losing the ability to talk with others | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

14. People cannot effectively solve problems using social networking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please read the statement and select the option you prefer. You can select more than one option

15. "I prefer to keep in touch with others by"

☐ Facebook

☐ Talking in person

☐ Phone

☐ Email

☐ Other

Please read the statement and select the option you prefer. You can select more than one option

16. "I prefer to let someone know I'm upset by"

☐ Talking on the phone

☐ Posting a comment on Facebook

☐ Talking in person

☐ Sending an email

☐ Not doing anything

Thank you very much for your time and for participating in this survey!