

An Exploration of Nebraska Agricultural Educators' use of Social Media to Promote their Local FFA Chapters

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Abstract

Strong stakeholder relations are particularly important for FFA, and research has demonstrated the utility of social media for enhancing these relations for the National FFA and state FFA programs. However, not much information is available for how local FFA chapters utilize social media to communicate with stakeholders. Therefore, this study sought to explore agricultural educators' experiences with social media. An online survey was distributed to a census of agricultural educators through the Nebraska AGED listserv (N = 269), and there were 73 (n = 73) complete and useable responses. Respondents most frequently used Facebook to post about their FFA program and identified Facebook as the most effective platform for stakeholder communication. Additionally, respondents possessed positive perceptions of the benefits associated with using social media but did identify barriers, including how much time social media can take to promote their chapters. While the respondents in the study did use social media and identified it as an effective tool for communicating with community members, there are opportunities to further improve the use of social media to ensure messages reach and resonate with the intended audience. Teacher educator programs should partner with agricultural communicators to develop professional development programming and resources to assist teachers with using social media to promote their programs. Additionally, this research should be replicated in other states to provide a holistic understanding of agricultural educator's experiences with social media.

Introduction

In 2022, there were 735,038 National FFA Organization members, aged 12-21, in 8,817 chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (Our Membership, 2022). Educating and advising these students is approximately 12,000 agricultural educators in middle and high school level programs (What is Agricultural Education, 2022). These agricultural educators possess personal qualities and characteristics to be effective in leading their FFA chapters through contests, community service projects, career development through supervised agricultural experiences (SAE), and chapter activities (Eck et al.,

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2019). The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. This is accomplished by developing interpersonal skills in teamwork, communications, human relations, and social interaction (FFA Mission and Motto, 2019). FFA has the opportunity to highlight and showcase the personal growth and career success of its members through social media to further strengthen stakeholder support in their communities and elevate their chapter. Stakeholders are those invested in the success of an organization, either directly or indirectly (Donato, 2021), and would include teachers, staff, families, community members, and civic leaders for FFA chapters to name a few. In order to be successful in engaging with these groups, FFA, including the national organization and local chapters, need to consider ways to strengthen stakeholder connections and identify the role social media plays to help FFA accomplish its mission (Lawson et al., 2021; Rogers-Randolph et al., 2018).

Social Media in Education

Approximately 70% of Americans use social media to engage with others, interact with content, and keep up with local and global news (Social Media Fact Sheet, 2021). Teenagers specifically have reported social media allows them to feel more connected to others with only a minority of teens reporting that social media has had a mostly negative effect on them (Anderson et al., 2022). With approximately 4.9 billion social media users in 2023, and an estimated 5.85 billion users by 2027 (Wong, 2023), many businesses have invested resources into creating teams of social media experts to focus on developing communication with their stakeholders (The Future of Social Media for Business, 2023). Social media provides a digital way for individuals to communicate with one another (Lewis, 2010; Russo et al., 2008) and learn from that communication (Pfeil et al., 2009) by creating content and connecting with others in an online medium through a bounded system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Russo et al., 2008). Additionally, social media allows organizations to share issues and movements salient to their stakeholders (Graybill-Leonard et al., 2011; Telg & Barnes, 2012; White et al., 2014).

Businesses have found using social media as a communication tool to be successful due to how often Americans check their social media accounts, which is approximately seven times more a day than they check their email (The Future of Social Media for Business, 2023). Despite this successful integration of social media into business and marketing communication, there has been limited research on how social media has been integrated into K-12 education (Greenhow et al., 2020). When exploring the way social media has been used in education, scholars have expressed concerns related to social media use, including a lack of support from administrators or school districts (Pan & Franklin, 2011), how to include social media in a meaningful way (Crook, 2012), and the potential of receiving negative or antagonizing comments on posts (Bowen, 2022).

Despite these concerns, researchers have concluded social media offers a wide range of benefits to educators, including but not limited to, increased collaboration amongst teachers (Wenger et al., 2011), facilitating communication and interaction with students (Mazman & Usluel, 2010), and increased support for course content and resource sharing (DiVall & Kirwin, 2012; Mazman & Usluel, 2010). Yet, there is a need for greater research of social media use in K-12 educational settings to best understand how teachers can use these platforms to their advantage (Greenhow et al., 2020). Greenhow et al. (2020) stated, “To advance the field of education research, we must keep up to date about and critically evaluate new perspectives, findings, and methodologies arising from [social media],” (p.1).

Youth leadership organizations, like FFA, can capitalize on social media by creating connections in social, creative, and critical practices, while sharing agricultural issues and enhancing youth leadership skills (Hayes & Duncan, 2012; Kagay et al., 2015; Mullins & Weeks, 2006; Rutherford et al., 2002). Service-learning programs, like what FFA fosters, have a strong relationship with the community in which it serves because it improves not only the youth’s civic engagement but the community in general (Lin, 2015). Examples of community support of FFA chapters are demonstrated through contributions and

volunteering by community members (Hunt, 2015), and social media provides the avenue for organizations to reach those in their community with whom they interact and serve (Mains et al., 2013). Innovative agricultural programs seek to unify youth with communities (Rayfield et al., 2012), and social media once again has the potential to be a unifying platform. One of the most powerful approaches to building community between students, parents, and alumni is the use of social media combined with traditional concepts in agricultural education (Bates & Murphrey, 2015).

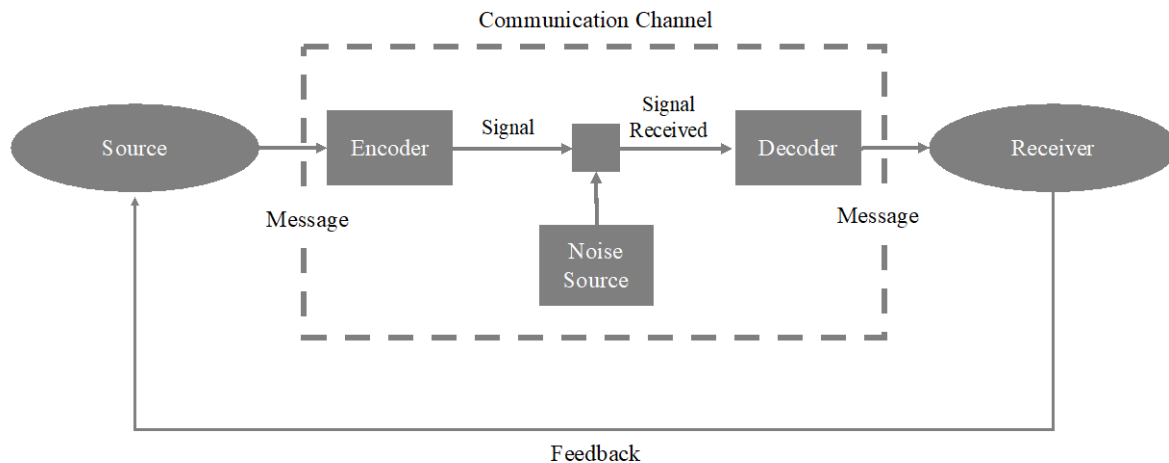
Studies have been conducted to understand the role of social media for FFA activities at the national and state levels (Lawson et al., 2021; Rogers-Randolph et al., 2018; Rogers-Randolph et al., 2021), but there is a gap in knowledge about the role social media plays on smaller, local levels for FFA. Therefore, there is a need to understand local FFA chapters use social media to connect with their key stakeholder groups. In accordance with the American Association for Agricultural Education's National Research Agenda, Priority Area 5: Efficient and Effective Agricultural Education Programs (Thoron et al., 2016), the purpose of this research was to explore Nebraska agricultural educators' experiences with and perceptions of using social media to promote their local programs. Identifying agricultural educators' current use of social media, along with perceived benefits and barriers for implementation, will be useful for tailoring professional development materials around the subject to ensure strong connections between local FFA programs and community stakeholders.

Theoretical Framework

The Shannon and Weaver Model of Communication was used to guide this research (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). This linear communication model (seen in Figure 1) demonstrates how a message moves from a source of information to a final destination. The model starts with the sender of information who encodes a message to transmit through a communication channel to the receiver, who will then decode the message. The communication channel refers to the infrastructure through which the information is transmitted to the receiver (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). The effectiveness of this communication process also depends on "noise" which can serve to distract the receiver from the message. Noise can be physical (auditory distractions, hunger, fatigue, etc.) or psychological (bias, attitude, prejudice, etc.), but communicators should aim to minimize noise in their communication (Yashima & Kubota, 2012). Feedback is then transmitted from the receiver back to the source, thus indicating to what degree the message was correctly interpreted (Shannon & Weaver, 1949).

Figure 1

Shannon and Weaver Model of Communication



The Shannon and Weaver Model of Communication (Shannon & Weaver, 1949) was initially introduced during a time prior to multimedia or interactive technology, but it remains a universally accepted model for describing the communication process (Lee et al., 2015) and has since been applied to explore modern communication channels, like social media (Northfell et al., 2016). Some scholars have argued the model only captures how information flows from a source to a receiver and does not accurately represent the nuances of modern communication (Foulger, 2004). However, Flensburg (2009) supported use for the theory to “provide a vocabulary for discussing certain issues about communication” (p. 39) and to identify the steps in the communication process to achieve effective communication.

For the purpose of this study, we were interested in examining the flow of information between agricultural educators and community stakeholders through social media platforms. Following the Shannon and Weaver Model of Communication (1949) we were interested in identifying the types of social media channels agricultural educators (senders) are using to send messages to their community stakeholders (receiver), including teachers, parents, students, community members, etc. We also chose to examine what messages were being sent to understand what information was being transmitted according to the Shannon and Weaver Communication Model (1949). Additionally, we were interested in understanding how agricultural educators perceived using social media to promote their FFA chapters because negative perceptions would likely impede transmission of information if teachers were not using social media.

Currently, agricultural educators are using social media for various practices. Shoulders et al. (2017) found agricultural educators were using social media to communicate directly with students and the agricultural industry. One of the researchers’ recommendations was that every post should reflect the audience and the goal in order to deliver an effective message (Shoulders et al., 2017). However, deciding between one of the many social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, can provide a challenge for educators depending on the goal and audience for their communication. The type of social media chosen by an educator should match the receiver’s preferred social media platform for the content to be an effective learning and communication tool (Settle et al., 2012).

In 2021, 69% of the adult U.S. population used Facebook, followed by Instagram (40%), Snapchat (25%), and Twitter (23%): (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Additionally, younger Americans were more likely to use social media compared to older generations, and those younger than 30 were most frequently using Instagram and Snapchat (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). In Beattie et al.’s (2019) study, 4-H leaders only used Facebook as a form of communication with their stakeholders, while other agricultural educators have opted to use Instagram to share about students’ SAE projects (Bates & Murphrey, 2015). More research is needed to understand through what platform(s) are most effective for communicating with local FFA stakeholders though.

Researchers have established that social media is viewed as a positive delivery method for communication of information to an organization’s stakeholders within the broad agricultural education discipline (Beattie, 2019; Bowen et al., 2013; Rogers-Randolph, 2018). However, more information is needed regarding agricultural educators’ experiences with using social media, including what platforms they are using and what content they are sharing, following a linear communication model (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). It will also be critical for agricultural teacher educators and agricultural communicators to understand what benefits agricultural teachers see from engaging in social media and what barriers they have encountered, thus providing a holistic understanding of their experiences with social media. This information can guide the development of professional development programs and resources to best support agricultural educators sharing content via social media.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this research was to examine Agricultural Educators' experiences with and perceptions of using social media to promote their FFA chapters. The following objectives guided this study:

1. Identify what social media platforms agricultural educators use to share program information;
2. Describe how agricultural educators perceive the effectiveness of different social media platforms for sharing program information;
3. Describe what type of content agricultural educators share on social media; and
4. Identify agricultural educators' perceived benefits and barriers related to using social media to promote their programs.

Methods

In order to fulfill the purpose of this study, quantitative data were collected using an online survey instrument. The population of interest for this study was high school agricultural educators ($N = 269$). The online survey software, Qualtrics, was used to distribute a survey via email to the Agricultural Education (Nebraska AGED) listserv in May of 2020 – this listserv was current with the emails of the 269 agricultural teachers in the state ($N=269$). A universal link to the online survey was shared through the Nebraska AGED listserv with an invitation to participate in the research. The universal survey link was active for three weeks, and following Dillman's tailored design (Dillman et al., 2014), three follow-up emails were sent to respondents requesting survey completion during the time of data collection. After data collection closed, a total of 82 respondents had started the survey. Incomplete responses were discarded, and there were a total of 73 complete and usable responses in the sample (27.1% response rate).

Instrument Development and Analysis

The survey instrument consisted of 16 different questions asking about demographics, current social media practices, and perceptions of social media. These questions reflected concepts from the Shannon and Weaver (1949) Model of Communication to understand what social media channels teachers were using, what messages were being shared, and how effectively teachers perceived these channels to be for delivering their messages. Five questions were analyzed for this study related to current social media practices: *social media use*, *perceived effectiveness of social media platforms*, *social media content*, *perceived benefits for using social media*, and *perceived barriers to using social media*. Respondents were first asked to indicate what social media platforms they used to share content related to their FFA program – platforms included Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter. Following this question, respondents were asked how effective they perceived each platform was for sharing information on a 3-point, Likert-type scale with the following labels: *not effective at all*, *slightly effective*, and *very effective*. A *not applicable* option was also available for those who did not use the platform to communicate about their program. While 5-point scales can capture more nuanced responses from respondents compared to 3-point scales, researchers have found limited differences in test-retest reliability between 5-point scales and 3-point scales (Johnson et al., 1986). Additionally, because we were interested in perceptions of each platform opposed to calculating an aggregate mean for perceived effectiveness, this 3-point scale was deemed acceptable. Frequency for sharing social media content was measured with an 8-item, 3-point Likert-type scale with a stem asking about what type of content is posted to their chapter's social media. Items included contest results, service projects, chapter announcements, student projects, SAE visits, alumni news, holidays/birthdays, and other. Scale labels included: *never posted*, *sometimes posted*, and *always posted*.

Benefits to using social media was measured with a 5-item, 5-point Likert-type scale with the following labels: *1 = strongly disagree*, *2 = disagree*, *3 = neither agree nor disagree*, *4 = agree*, and *5 = strongly agree*. The scale included the stem, "As an ag teacher, social media has..." and included items like "made it easier to communicate with community members" and "allows your administration to see what your chapter is doing." The scale was created by averaging the score across the five items and was found

to be reliable with a post-hoc Cronbach's alpha of .93. Barriers to using social media was measured with a 7-item, 5-points Likert-type scale with the same labels as benefits to using social media. Examples of items in the scale included, "I would waste too much time posting material on social media," and "Engaging in social media could lead to potential problems with my chapter." The scale was created by taking the average of the items (post-hoc Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$)

Before the survey was distributed using the Nebraska AGED listserv, it was reviewed by a panel of experts for content validity. This panel included an assistant professor of agricultural communications, associate professor of agricultural education, and an associate professor in livestock production and management who had experience in survey design. Revisions included rewording the phrasing of questions on the survey and modifying the answers to more accurately reflect the objectives of the research. After data collection, all data were imported into SPSS version 26 for analysis. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations were used to fulfill objectives one through four.

Description of Respondents

A full description of the respondents and their agricultural programs are located in Tables 1 and 2. The majority of the respondents described their gender as being female (58.9%, $n = 43$). The age of the respondents varied, with majority of the respondents age being between 31-40 (37.0%, $n = 27$), followed by the age ranges 20-25 and 26-30 (17.8%, $n = 13$ each). The number of years in education from the respondents varied with most results being less than 10 years of teaching experience. The greatest number of respondents had 6-10 years (31.5%, $n = 23$) of experience, followed closely by those with 1-5 years (26.0%, $n = 19$).

Table 1

Description of the respondents

	%	<i>n</i>
Gender Description		
Male	38.4	28
Female	58.9	43
Other	1.4	1
Prefer not to answer	1.4	1
Age		
20- 25	17.8	13
26- 30	17.8	13
31- 40	37.0	27
41- 50	13.7	10
51- 60	8.2	6
60+	5.5	4
Years in Education		
Less than 1 year	6.8	5
1-5	26.0	19
6-10	31.5	23
11-15	11.0	8
16-20	6.8	5
21-25	5.5	4
25-30	6.8	5
30+	5.5	4

Table 2 includes the descriptions of the respondents' agricultural programs, including the number of chapter members and how long the chapter has been established. The greatest number of respondents had chapters with 55 members or more (23.3%, $n = 17$), followed by 36-45, and 45-55 (20.5%, $n = 15$ each) member categories, which shared equal number of respondents. The respondents taught in relatively established programs with approximately half of the respondents indicating their chapter was at least 40 years old (52.1%, $n = 38$).

Table 2

<i>Description of respondent's agricultural programs</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>
Number of Members in FFA Chapter		
Less than 15 members	2.7	2
16-20	2.7	2
21-25	13.7	10
26-35	16.4	12
36-45	20.5	15
45-55	20.5	15
55+	23.3	17
Number of years Chapter has had Charter		
Less than 1 year	1.4	1
2-5 years	20.5	15
6-10 years	13.7	10
11-20 years	4.1	3
21-30 years	1.4	1
31-40 years	6.8	5
40+ years	52.1	38

Results

Objective 1: Identify What Social Media Platforms Agricultural Educators use to Share Program Information

Facebook was the social media platform most commonly used by agricultural educators in this study, with the majority of respondents (94.5%, $n = 69$) reporting using this platform more than once a month. Instagram (52.1%, $n = 38$) was the next most commonly used platform, followed by Twitter (47.9%, $n = 35$) and then Snapchat (17.8%, $n = 13$).

Objective 2: Describe How Agricultural Educators Perceive the Effectiveness of Different Social Media Platforms for Sharing Program Information

The largest majority of respondents identified Facebook (59.2%) to be very effective when sharing program information, followed by Twitter (34.2%), and Instagram (20.0%). Snapchat (11.1%) had the smallest percentage of respondents reporting it as very effective, and approximately one-third of respondents believed Snapchat to be not effective when sharing program information (33.3%; Table 3).

Table 3*Perceived Effectiveness of Social Media Platforms to Communicate with the Community*

	Very Effective	Slightly Effective	Not Effective
	%	%	%
Facebook	59.2	38.0	2.8
Twitter	34.2	52.6	13.2
Instagram	20.0	65.7	14.3
Snapchat	11.1	55.6	33.3

Objective 3: Describe what Type of Content Agricultural Educators Share on Social Media

Respondents reported posting a myriad of information on social media platforms (Table 4). The largest majority of respondents reported always posting about contest results (73.5%), community service projects (58.9%), and chapter announcements (58.9%). Respondents indicated they never posted about SAE visits (52.1%), alumni news (59.7%), and seasonal posts (63.9%).

Table 4*Types of Content Shared through Social Media*

	Always Posted	Sometimes Posted	Never Posted
	%	%	%
Contest Results	75.3	21.9	2.7
Community Service Projects	58.9	38.4	2.7
Chapter Announcements	58.9	37.0	4.1
Student Projects	22.2	63.9	22.2
SAE Visits	12.3	35.6	52.1
Alumni News	9.7	30.6	59.7
Seasonal Posts	2.8	33.3	63.9
Other	2.7	8.2	16.4

Objective 4: Identify Teachers' Perceived Benefits and Barriers Related to Using Social Media to Promote Their Programs

Most respondents in the study agreed or strongly agreed there were potential benefits related to using social media. Nearly all of the respondents strongly agreed/agreed that social media made it easier to communicate with community members (93.2%) and would allow their administration to see what their chapter was doing (93.1%). A full description of the results can be found in Table 5.

Table 5*Perceived Benefits to Using Social Media*

<i>As an Agricultural Teacher, social media has...</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	%	%	%	%	%
Made it easier to communicate with community members.	52.1	41.1	4.1	1.4	1.4
Allowed administration to see what the chapter is doing.	45.2	47.9	1.4	4.1	1.4
Allowed for better communication with chapter members.	31.5	41.1	13.7	12.3	1.4
Efficiently allowed for alumni to stay in contact with the chapter.	28.8	35.6	32.9	1.4	1.4
Made it easier to collaborate with another chapter.	19.2	49.3	27.3	1.4	2.7

Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with a list of statements related to potential barriers to using social media to promote their chapters. The barriers respondents most commonly strongly agreed/agreed would be of concern included that using social media with their chapter could lead to potential problems (30.2%) and would take time away from their job responsibilities (26.1%). A full description of responses can be found in Table 6.

Table 6*Perceived Barriers to Using Social Media*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	%	%	%	%	%
Engaging in social media with my chapter could lead to potential problems.	1.4	28.8	20.5	46.6	2.7
Engaging in social media will take time away from my job responsibilities.	1.4	24.7	21.9	38.7	13.7
Posting on social media could have negative effects on the students involved in the post.	0.0	8.2	32.9	49.3	0.0
I would waste too much time posting material on social media platforms.	0.0	6.8	19.2	53.4	20.5
Reaching out for professional advise on social media causes me to lose credibility.	0.0	4.1	13.7	56.2	26.0
Using social media requires technology beyond my comfort level.	1.4	2.7	6.8	45.2	43.8
I will not be successful in learning how to post on platforms of social media.	0.0	1.4	8.2	56.2	34.2

Discussion & Implications

The purpose of this study was to examine agricultural educators' experiences and perceptions of using social media to promote their FFA chapters. The Shannon and Weaver Model of Communication (Shannon & Weaver, 1949) was used as the guiding framework for this study, and this model provides

context for how a message is transmitted from a sender to a receiver through a channel. The majority of respondents in the sample were using Facebook as their social media channel to communicate about their chapters, which is why it is unsurprising they also identified Facebook to be the most effective platform for communication. In fact, the perceived effectiveness of each of the platforms appeared to reflect how often these platforms were used. These findings aligned with past research indicating Facebook and Instagram were commonly used in agricultural education to connect with stakeholders (Bates and Murphrey, 2015; Beattie et al., 2019). Additionally, the social media channels used in this study reflected American's use of these sites as well (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Based on the Shannon and Weaver Model of Communication (Shannon & Weaver, 1949), it can be concluded that Facebook is the primary social media channel of choice for agricultural educators in this study. Yet more information is needed regarding whether their intended audience is actually receiving those messages.

When examining the types of messages being shared, respondents in the study indicated they were most often posting about contest results, community service projects, and chapter announcements. These types of posts likely focused more on chapter outcomes rather than developing connections by spotlighting individuals through SAE visit posts and alumni news, which could be a missed opportunity for using social media to build those community connections. The commonly used channel in the case of this research was Facebook, which respondents identified as effective; however, more information is needed to understand if the messaging these teachers currently use is the most effective when engaging stakeholders.

When asked about the perceived benefits to using social media to communicate about their chapter, the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with all the presented benefits. Most notably, the respondents believed social media made it easier to communicate with the community and allow administration to see what their chapter was doing. While these positive perceptions of social media are promising, the 27.1% response rate should be considered. The respondents in this study may have chosen to complete the survey because of their strong perceptions and use of social media, which would skew the results. Additionally, the data for this research were collected at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic when all teachers had to pivot to find alternative ways to communicate with stakeholders during a time of remote learning. Therefore, the timing of the study may have also inflated these positive perceptions of social media for communicating about local FFA chapters.

Despite positive perceptions toward social media, respondents did share concerns related to perceived barriers. Most of these concerns centered around how social media use could lead to potential problems with their chapter and how engaging in social media would take too much time from their job responsibilities. However, respondents did not agree that posting would be a waste of time or that they did not have the skillset needed to successfully use social media. The majority of the respondents were younger than 40 years old and likely frequently using social media (Auxier & Anderson, 2021), which may explain their comfortability and confidence with using social media.

While the findings from the study provide valuable insight into how Nebraska agricultural educators are using social media to promote their chapters, it should be noted these findings cannot be generalized due to the low response rate. As mentioned previously, the respondents may have elected to participate in this study due to their own interest and use of social media, which would cause a non-response bias and potentially skew the results. Additionally, the data were collected at the height of remote learning during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, which could also influence the findings. Regardless of these limitations, these findings still provide a baseline for how agricultural educators in Nebraska are using social media to help guide future trainings, resources, and professional development programming.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, there are a number of recommendations that can be made for both practice and for research. Agricultural teacher educators should partner with agricultural communications faculty and practitioners to create professional development for teachers to learn how to effectively use social media to promote their local FFA chapters. The majority of respondents in the study use Facebook to communicate about their programs, but not all stakeholders will necessarily be on that platform (Auxier & Anderson, 2021; Settle et al., 2012). For example, younger generations are most commonly on Instagram (Auxier & Anderson, 2021), but only half of the respondents reported posting to this channel at least once a month. Therefore, there is a need to help educators understand when to use other channels, like Instagram and Twitter, to reach certain audiences. Additionally, because respondents did report concerns about the time it takes to post to social media and there was not consistent use across the different social media channels, including resources on how to use 3rd party platforms to help schedule posts across platforms would be beneficial for educators. Understanding how to better schedule and automate postings may help address teachers' concerns related to how much time social media would take away from their other responsibilities.

Lesson plans related to social media could also be provided to teachers to integrate social media into the classroom to have students start running their chapter accounts (under the management of the teacher) to help address concerns related to time. This experience would not only relieve some of the burden teachers take on when using social media to promote their chapters but would also give students portfolio-building opportunities. Additionally, since the majority of the respondents posted about contest results and chapter announcements as updates, there is an opportunity to develop more engaging content focused on student-spotlights and SAE projects. To help increase interest and engagement in these types of trainings, recruitment material should focus on the identified perceived benefits in this study, including how social media allows teachers to connect with their local community and showcase to their administration the work their chapter has been doing.

This study focused on how Nebraska agricultural educators used social media to communicate with their community stakeholders, but the findings only reveal half of the story. Conducting research with community FFA stakeholders to understand their communication needs and preferences would help guide future professional development and resources for teachers using social media. Additionally, this research was conducted right when TikTok, a video-based social media platform, was gaining traction in the U.S., so it was omitted from the study. Replicating this study to include this platform would be helpful in understanding current practices. Additionally, COVID-19 and remote learning pushed many educators to embrace virtual learning opportunities, so it would also be interesting to see how these results have changed since 2020.

Due to the threat of non-response bias in this study, it would be important to survey those teachers who may not frequently use social media to promote their chapters to better understand barriers that could be addressed through training. Additionally, questions should be included that ask about who the intended audience is for the social media posts and if the audience changes depending on the platform. In-depth interviews or open-ended responses would also provide a more nuanced understanding of agricultural educators' use of social media to promote their chapter and how effective they perceive different social media channels to use for communicating about their chapter. This information would help researchers and practitioners better understand what strategy, if any, is being used by educators when posting about their local FFA chapters on social media. This study should also be replicated across the nation and periodically to develop a holistic understanding of agricultural educators' experiences with and perceptions of social media to ensure effective and efficient communication with stakeholders in the future. This effective communication will help to foster community support for agricultural educators' local FFA chapters.

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