

Social media as a supplementary tool in enhancing the teaching practices of elementary school teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the use of social media as a supplementary tool in enhancing the teaching practices of elementary school teachers. Specifically, it sought to identify the social media platforms most commonly used by teachers, determine how these platforms are integrated into teaching practices, investigate their role in improving student learning, recognize the benefits and challenges encountered, and propose a capability program to support effective utilization. The study used a qualitative research approach, with semi-structured interviews as the primary method of gathering data. Respondents consisted of fifteen elementary school teachers. The acquired data was examined using thematic analysis, which involved transcribing, coding, and categorizing themes based on patterns related to the research objectives. According to the data, teachers frequently use YouTube, Facebook, and Messenger since they are easily accessible and have educational resources available. Social media is integrated in teaching through video presentations, motivating activities, sharing of learning resources, and interaction among pupils and parents. The study also found that social media improves learning by enhancing students' comprehension, motivation, and active participation. Furthermore, social media offers benefits such as reduced workload, convenient access to instructional resources, and improved communication. However, issues such as poor internet connectivity, a lack of gadgets, and limited access to technology were identified. Based on the findings, the capability program was proposed that emphasized ICT integration, ethical social media use, digital privacy, and technical support. The study concludes that social media is an excellent supplementary tool for improving teaching practices, provided proper training and resources are available.

Keywords: Social media, teaching practices, elementary education, ICT integration, pupils' engagement, phenomenology, qualitative research.

Date Submitted: March 11, 2026

Date Accepted: March 18, 2026

Date Published: April 8, 2026

INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of digital technology in the twenty-first century has fundamentally altered how education is conceived and delivered. Social media, as one of the most consequential technological developments of recent decades, has transformed patterns of

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DOI: <http://doi.org/10.69651/PIJHSS0502908>

Recommended citation:

Onnagan, M. B. (2026). Social media as a supplementary tool in enhancing the teaching practices of elementary school teachers. *Pantao (The International Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences)* 5 (2), 315-330.
<http://doi.org/10.69651/PIJHSS0502908>

communication, connection, and information exchange across diverse sectors of society. Although these platforms were initially associated with entertainment and interpersonal networking, educators have increasingly recognized their potential for academic and professional development (Manca & Ranieri, 2017). In the context of elementary education, teachers have begun exploring how social media might enhance instructional methods and engage young learners in more dynamic and interactive ways.

This shift is supported by the observation that contemporary students, often described as digital natives, exhibit a natural affinity for visual content and online platforms, a characteristic substantiated in Prensky's work and corroborated by Al-Wasy (2020). This disposition provides teachers with an opportunity to incorporate social media into classroom instruction, rendering lessons more engaging and contextually relevant to students' lived experiences. Platforms such as Facebook enable teachers to share classroom updates, collaborate with peers, and access instructional materials, while YouTube and TikTok offer innovative avenues for distributing educational content (Greenhow & Lewin, 2016). When integrated effectively, these technologies can cultivate creativity, communication, and collaborative skills, all of which are essential competencies for learners navigating the demands of the modern world (Valtonen et al., 2019).

Nevertheless, the integration of social media into elementary school settings is not without its challenges. Issues pertaining to digital ethics, screen time, student distraction, and online safety continue to pose significant concerns (Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020). Moreover, many educators remain insufficiently equipped with the professional development and digital literacy competencies necessary to meaningfully incorporate social media into their instructional practice (Tondeur et al., 2017). These limitations underscore the complexity of implementing social media as a pedagogical tool within primary education contexts.

Within local elementary school settings, observable patterns have emerged in which teachers have begun utilizing platforms such as Facebook and Messenger for class communication, the sharing of learning materials, and engagement with parents and pupils. While certain educators have successfully leveraged these tools to enhance student engagement and participation, others encounter barriers including inadequate training, limited internet connectivity, and challenges in managing online communication channels. These conditions collectively signal a pressing need to examine how social media can be effectively and responsibly integrated into primary school instructional methods.

Accordingly, the present study aims to investigate how social media may serve as a supplementary tool to strengthen elementary school teachers' instructional strategies. It specifically seeks to identify the platforms that elementary teachers most frequently employ for educational purposes and to evaluate how these platforms are utilized within their teaching practices. The study further examines the varied applications of social media in elementary teaching and learning, with particular attention to its role in promoting student participation, facilitating communication, and broadening access to learning materials. Based on the findings generated, a capability program will also be proposed to assist teachers in making effective and responsible use of social media in their classrooms.

This study holds significance for multiple stakeholders within the educational landscape. For teachers, it offers substantive insight into how social media can serve as a practical instrument for fostering student engagement, nurturing creativity, and developing communication competencies, while simultaneously addressing its potential adverse effects. For students, improved implementation of social media holds the promise of more stimulating and learner-centered educational experiences, as a clearer understanding of how these technologies influence motivation and engagement can inform the design of more effective instructional environments. School administrators stand to benefit from the study's findings by drawing on evidence-based guidance in formulating educational programs and institutional

policies that promote the responsible and productive integration of social media in the classroom, including the development of digital literacy initiatives for both educators and learners. For future researchers, the study provides foundational insights that may inform subsequent inquiry into media literacy, digital pedagogy, and technology integration, while opening new research trajectories related to the long-term influence of social media on teaching and learning outcomes.

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge framework, originally proposed by Mishra and Koehler (2006) and subsequently refined by Koehler, Mishra, and Cain (2013). This framework offers a comprehensive lens through which to understand how teachers effectively integrate technology into classroom instruction by emphasizing the interconnection of technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge. It posits that successful technology-enhanced teaching requires a balanced and informed combination of these three domains. Within the context of this study, social media functions as a technological instrument that enables teachers to disseminate content through engaging and interactive educational modalities. The TPACK framework is particularly relevant here because it articulates how educators draw simultaneously upon subject matter expertise, pedagogical strategy, and digital tools to improve classroom learning and student engagement.

Empirical literature, both internationally and within the Philippine context, affirms the growing integration of social media into elementary school teaching. Globally, educators have increasingly turned to platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and TikTok to share digital resources and enrich the learning experience (Aydogmuş, 2023; Nochumson, 2024). These platforms not only supply interactive multimedia content but also facilitate instructional discussions and support teacher-student-parent communication (Prestridge, 2019). Within the Philippine setting, Boholano et al. (2022) documented that basic education teachers predominantly use Facebook and YouTube, particularly in the context of remote and blended learning, where these platforms were used to establish supportive online learning communities while maintaining instructional continuity. Building on this, Felizarte et al. (2025) found that Filipino teachers are increasingly incorporating artificial intelligence and social media to enhance student participation and foster meaningful classroom discussions, further underscoring the expanding role of these platforms in local educational practice.

A phenomenological study of Filipino educators identified as TeachTokerists likewise found that primary school teachers used TikTok to produce and disseminate short instructional videos during the pandemic, reflecting creative approaches to remote teaching (Quinto et al., 2022). Beyond TikTok, YouTube has earned widespread popularity among educators for its accessibility, adaptability, and capacity for resource development (Barry et al., 2016; Chintalapati & Daruri, 2017), while Twitter's character constraints have been found to encourage concise and substantive communication among pre-service teachers (Garcías et al., 2020). Collectively, these studies demonstrate that social media platforms serve diverse and complementary functions in teaching, ranging from content delivery and communication to resource discovery and collaborative learning. Afifa and Astuti (2024) further noted that social media can extend learning beyond the classroom by enabling teachers to provide supplementary resources that allow students to revisit material at their own pace, thereby encouraging independent learning and reinforcing classroom instruction.

Research on the instructional applications of social media reveals a broad range of uses that extend well beyond simple information dissemination. Manca and Ranieri (2020) argued that social media provides a flexible learning environment through which educators can exchange instructional materials and promote collaborative student activity. Teachers can keep students and parents informed of academic requirements and classroom developments through

the timely posting of announcements, reminders, and educational content. Boholano et al. (2024) similarly found that educators use these platforms to communicate regularly with students and parents regarding assignments, projects, and other academic obligations. Felizarte et al. (2023) further emphasized that social media enables the integration of multimedia elements into instruction, with teachers routinely using interactive posts, images, and videos to present lessons in visually engaging and accessible formats, thereby enhancing student comprehension of complex subject matter.

The effects of social media integration on teaching practices and student engagement have been well documented. Ashraf, Akgül, et al. (2021) found that social media strengthens teacher-student interaction by enabling collaborative knowledge sharing and fostering a more dynamic and participatory learning environment. Stevens, Al-Rahmi, and colleagues (2022), examining social media use during the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrated that students' perceived usefulness and ease of use of these platforms were predictive of collaborative learning and heightened engagement, suggesting that when students feel adequately supported in using social media, they are more likely to engage substantively in academic discourse. In the Philippine context, Felizarte et al. (2025) found that elementary teachers regard social media and artificial intelligence as instruments that enhance instructional flexibility and encourage active student involvement. Aragdon et al. (2023) similarly found that social media increased curiosity and motivation among Grade 6 students and improved their study habits, though excessive use was occasionally associated with distraction. A 2025 study published by RSIS International further established that teachers' active use of platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok was associated with more engaging classroom practices, indicating that thoughtful integration of social media into lesson design and classroom management can yield meaningful improvements in instructional effectiveness.

The perceived benefits of social media in education are wide-ranging and well substantiated in the literature. Teachers frequently utilize platforms such as Facebook and YouTube as supplements to their instructional resources, accessing and sharing digital materials including videos, lesson plans, and tutorials to enrich their teaching (Felizarte et al., 2025). Michniuk (2014) identified YouTube and Facebook as particularly favored platforms due to their variety of instructional videos, which support visual learning and increase student engagement. Facebook, in particular, has demonstrated enduring educational value by fostering teacher collaboration, knowledge exchange, and professional community building (Junco, 2012), with its interactive audio-visual capabilities contributing to the development of engaging learning experiences (Bakla & Mehdiyev, 2022). More broadly, social media has been found to enhance creativity, facilitate access to learning resources, and improve teacher-student communication (Prestridge, 2019; Aydogmuş, 2023), while also enabling cross-school collaboration and professional development among educators (Greenhow & Gleason, 2018).

Teacher collaboration and professional growth represent further significant benefits of social media engagement. Tindugan and Baguio (2025) identified a meaningful relationship between teachers' media literacy and their capacity for implementing innovative, trend-informed instructional practices, highlighting the role of social media in sustaining professional development. Mercado and Shin (2024) similarly found, in a comprehensive literature analysis, that K-12 teachers are increasingly leveraging social media not only for resource consumption but also for collaboration, relationship-building, and professional entrepreneurship. In terms of student outcomes, Sivakumar, Jayasingh, and Shaik (2023) found that social media encourages more open and frequent knowledge exchange among students, supporting a participatory learning culture consistent with constructivist pedagogical principles. Darmayanti (2022) further argued that social media enhances student engagement and motivation by facilitating interaction and broadening access to learning materials, attributes that hold particular appeal for elementary-aged learners. Research among younger students also demonstrated that

engagement with social media can improve digital literacy and data agency, as children developed a more informed understanding of how these platforms function and how to manage digital information responsibly (Vartiainen et al., 2025). Internationally, studies have shown that platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook contribute to more equitable classroom participation by providing a comfortable space for reticent students to engage, thereby reducing traditional hierarchical dynamics (Binder, 2019), while simultaneously supporting cooperative learning and shared knowledge construction among students and teachers (Alkis et al., 2021).

Despite these substantial benefits, the literature consistently identifies significant challenges to the effective integration of social media in elementary education. Privacy concerns, data security risks, and exposure to unregulated or inappropriate content necessitate close teacher supervision of students' online activity (Alkis et al., 2021; International Journal of English Teaching and Learning, 2024). Social media also poses risks of distraction, with adverse effects on focus and time management (Teachers Guide, 2023). Many elementary teachers continue to lack the knowledge and skills required to use these platforms as effective instructional tools, and Tondeur et al. (2017) argued that insufficient digital literacy among educators restricts social media's educational potential by impeding the design of curriculum-aligned, student-centered activities. Tindugan and Baguio (2025) corroborated this finding, noting that teachers with lower media literacy experienced difficulty implementing trend-based instructional strategies, thereby diminishing the overall impact of social media in educational settings. With specific reference to TikTok, TeachTokerists acknowledged the platform's risks, including exposure to vulgar content, misinformation, excessive usage, and negative user commentary (Quinto & Cho-oym, 2022). Excessive screen time remains a pervasive concern at the elementary level, with Livingstone and Blum-Ross (2020) warning that young learners are particularly susceptible to distraction and that unregulated social media use may impair attention and reduce engagement with substantive academic tasks. At the structural level, external barriers further complicate integration efforts, including the spread of misinformation, unclear institutional policies, and digital divides (Du Jin, 2024). In the Philippine context, Boholano et al. (2022) identified low internet connectivity, limited device access, and exposure to inaccurate online information as major impediments, while Tindugan and Baguio (2025) found that even teachers with strong media literacy faced consistent integration challenges attributable to policy gaps and technological constraints.

In response to these identified needs and challenges, capability programs have emerged as a critical mechanism for equipping teachers with the competencies required to use social media effectively and responsibly in educational settings. Alkamel (2024) found that professional development programs focusing on social media integration support teachers in refining their instructional approaches, managing online relationships, and designing interactive learning activities, typically through training in educational content creation, multimedia use, and strategies for promoting student engagement online. Boholano et al. (2024) similarly emphasized the value of seminars and training sessions that build teachers' practical capacity to utilize platforms such as Facebook and YouTube for instructional purposes, including the management of online classrooms and the provision of timely academic feedback. Collaborative professional learning communities, facilitated through social media or online platforms, have also been recognized as a form of continuous capability development, enabling teachers to exchange resources, address shared challenges, and disseminate innovative instructional practices (Greenhow & Chapman, 2020). Darmayanti (2021) further argued that capability programs must be tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of elementary teachers, incorporating practical demonstrations, multimedia modeling, and structured guidance on integrating social media tools into lesson delivery. Comprehensive capability frameworks for teachers should therefore address the development of digital literacy

skills, the integration of social media into lesson planning and classroom activities, the promotion of ethical and responsible platform use, and the cultivation of collaborative professional networks. When such programs are effectively implemented, elementary school teachers are better positioned to harness the benefits of social media as a supplementary instructional tool, ultimately contributing to more engaging and effective learning experiences for their students.

Statement of the problem

The study aims to examine the role of social media as a supplementary tool in enhancing the teaching practices of elementary school teachers.

It specifically tries to answer the following questions:

1. What social media platforms are commonly used by elementary school teachers for teaching purposes?
2. How do elementary school teachers use social media as a supplementary tool in their teaching practices?
3. What challenges do elementary school teachers encounter in using social media as a supplementary tool in teaching?
4. What capability program can be proposed to help teachers maximize the effective use of social media in teaching?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to examine how social media is used as a supplementary tool to improve the teaching practices of elementary school teachers. This approach was deemed appropriate given the study's intent to explore teachers' lived experiences, instructional practices, and perceptions regarding social media integration in the classroom. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, which allowed for a rich and nuanced understanding of how social media platforms are incorporated into teaching and learning processes at the elementary level.

The participants of this study consisted of 15 elementary school teachers who actively use social media in their teaching practices. They were purposively selected to ensure that each participant possessed direct and relevant experience in incorporating social media as a supplemental instructional tool in the classroom. Participants were drawn from various grade levels to provide a diverse range of perspectives on how social media supports teaching and learning. Their individual experiences and professional insights served as the primary source of data for understanding the most prevalent platforms used, the social media-supported teaching techniques employed, the perceived benefits and obstacles encountered, and the professional development needs of teachers in this regard.

The primary instrument used for data collection was a semi-structured interview guide developed by the researcher. The guide consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed and substantive responses from participants concerning the social media platforms they frequently use for educational purposes, how they incorporate these platforms into their teaching practices, the various applications of social media in the teaching and learning process, the perceived benefits and difficulties associated with its use, and their professional development requirements for improving its effective integration. The questions were adapted from the works of Chen and Bryer (2010), Farwa and Saeed (2025), and Sağar and Özçelik (2025). The semi-structured format was deliberately chosen to afford the researcher flexibility in probing deeper into participants' experiences and exploring emerging ideas while maintaining focus on the study's central research objectives. Individual interviews were

conducted and audio-recorded with the full consent of participants, after which the recordings were transcribed in preparation for thematic analysis.

The data gathering process was initiated by securing the necessary institutional permissions. The researcher first obtained authorization from the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, adhering to the required protocols governing the conduct of the study. Upon receiving approval, the researcher then sought permission from the respective school principals before proceeding with participant engagement. Once all requisite approvals were in place, the researcher conducted individual interviews with the selected elementary school teachers at times convenient to them, ensuring that each participant was afforded sufficient opportunity to provide thorough and reflective responses. All data gathered were handled with strict confidentiality and were carefully processed, evaluated, and interpreted in direct alignment with the study's stated objectives.

The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. The researcher began by transcribing all recorded interviews and conducting a thorough reading of the transcripts to develop a comprehensive understanding of the participants' responses. Key concepts, phrases, and recurring patterns connected to the research objectives were systematically identified and coded. Related codes were subsequently grouped together to construct themes that captured the breadth of teachers' experiences, instructional methods, and perceptions regarding the use of social media as a supplemental teaching tool. The themes derived from this process were then interpreted in relation to the study's objectives, yielding substantive insights into the most commonly used social media platforms, the ways in which these platforms support teaching and learning, the benefits and challenges perceived by teachers, and the professional development needs that emerged from the data.

Throughout the conduct of this study, strict ethical standards were observed to safeguard the rights and welfare of all participants. The anonymity and confidentiality of individual responses were maintained at every stage of the research process. Prior to the conduct of the interviews, informed consent was obtained from all selected teachers, ensuring that each participant had a clear and complete understanding of the study's purpose, procedures, and significance. Participants were likewise informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time and without consequence, thereby ensuring that participation was entirely voluntary and that the autonomy of each respondent was fully respected throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This Results and Discussion chapter presents the findings generated from the qualitative inquiry conducted with 15 purposively selected elementary school teachers who actively incorporate social media into their instructional practices. Using a descriptive qualitative research design, data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and subsequently subjected to thematic analysis. The process of coding and pattern recognition yielded eight major themes that collectively address the study's core objectives, namely the identification of social media platforms commonly used by elementary teachers, the manner in which these platforms are integrated into teaching, their effects on student learning, the benefits and challenges associated with their use, and the professional development needs of teachers in this domain. The discussion that follows presents these themes as an integrated narrative, interpreting each finding in direct relation to the study's objectives and situating the results within the broader scholarly literature on social media in education.

Social media platforms used by elementary teachers

The data revealed that elementary school teachers rely predominantly on YouTube and Facebook, including its Messenger feature, as their primary social media platforms for educational purposes. YouTube emerged as the most widely utilized platform due to its extensive library of educational videos that support instructional delivery across various subject areas and grade levels. Teachers consistently identified it as a dependable and accessible resource that simplifies complex concepts and facilitates more dynamic lesson presentations. Facebook and Messenger were likewise prominently cited as tools for distributing learning materials, sharing assignments, posting announcements, and maintaining communication with both students and parents beyond regular classroom hours. These findings indicate that teachers tend to gravitate toward platforms that serve dual functions, supporting both administrative communication and instructional delivery, while remaining accessible and resource-rich in practical classroom contexts.

These findings align with Boholano et al. (2024), who identified YouTube and Facebook as among the most widely used platforms for instructional purposes in Philippine basic education settings, attributing their popularity to accessibility and the availability of diverse learning materials. Afifa and Astuti (2024) similarly found that teachers prefer platforms offering substantive instructional content alongside communication functionality, reinforcing the observation that platform selection among educators is driven by the capacity of these tools to address both pedagogical delivery and relational communication demands simultaneously.

Integration of social media in teaching practices

The findings demonstrated that social media is integrated into elementary teaching in a variety of strategically purposeful ways. The most frequently reported practice involved the use of educational videos sourced from YouTube during the motivational phase and the lesson proper, serving to introduce new topics, arouse learner interest, and concretize abstract concepts. One respondent noted that YouTube videos are used specifically for video presentations during the motivation portion of lessons, while another affirmed that these videos help learners understand lessons more effectively. Beyond video presentations, teachers also reported using social media platforms to facilitate storytelling, distribute worksheets, share visual materials such as photographs and graphics, and support group discussions. Messenger, in particular, was cited as a tool for coordinating group activities, with one respondent noting its use for group discussions especially when learners are engaged in collaborative tasks.

These practices collectively suggest that social media functions not merely as a content delivery mechanism but as a dynamic environment through which learners are encouraged to communicate, collaborate, and engage actively with instructional material. By incorporating tools such as messaging applications, collaborative group features, video sharing, and real-time feedback capabilities, teachers are able to foster more learner-centered instructional settings in which students can interact, share ideas, and learn from one another. The interactive character of these platforms supports the development of critical 21st-century competencies, including communication, critical thinking, and collaboration. Furthermore, the integration of social media extends the reach of instruction by enabling learners to access materials at any time and from any location, thereby transcending the temporal and spatial constraints of the conventional classroom environment. This flexibility also enables teachers to differentiate instruction through the provision of varied resources suited to different learning styles, particularly those of visual and auditory learners.

Darmayanti (2021) supports these observed practices, noting that teachers leverage social media to facilitate interactive learning and make instructional materials more widely available. Felizarte et al. (2023) similarly emphasized that social media enables the integration of multimedia resources into lessons, rendering them more engaging and conducive to deeper comprehension. Together, these perspectives affirm that social media serves as a versatile and effective tool for both instructional delivery and meaningful communication in elementary education.

Enhancement of learning through social media

The findings indicated that social media contributes meaningfully to the enhancement of student learning by improving comprehension, motivation, and active participation. Teachers consistently observed that the use of videos and visual materials facilitated better understanding of lesson content, as these resources provide concrete representations of concepts that may otherwise be difficult to convey through text alone. One respondent noted that learners understand lessons more easily when videos are incorporated, while another observed that students comprehend material more readily when images are used as compared to reading-only approaches. Teachers also reported observable increases in motivation and engagement, with one respondent noting that the use of videos and pictures resulted in learners who were more motivated, active, and inquisitive throughout the duration of the lesson.

In addition to motivational effects, social media was found to promote realism and contextual relevance in learning. One respondent observed that the use of videos makes learning more realistic because learners are able to see and observe phenomena as they would appear in real life, while another noted that social media helps pupils relate lesson content to real-life situations and current events, thereby making learning more meaningful. The accessibility of supplementary materials through social media further enables students to pursue independent learning beyond scheduled class hours, reinforcing classroom instruction and broadening their exposure to subject matter content.

These findings support the position that social media can significantly enrich students' overall learning experiences by rendering lessons more engaging, interactive, and contextually grounded. Multimedia resources such as videos, photographs, and collaborative online discussions are particularly effective for making abstract or difficult concepts more accessible to young learners. Greenhow and Chapman (2020) identified social media as a platform that enhances student engagement through interactive and multimedia learning experiences, while Manca and Ranieri (2020) found that social media fosters collaborative and active learning environments that support deeper comprehension of lesson content. These perspectives reinforce the conclusion that the effective use of social media in elementary classrooms can produce more meaningful and lasting learning experiences for students.

Social media as a facilitator of visual and experiential learning

The data revealed that social media functions as an effective facilitator of visual and experiential learning among elementary learners, with teachers frequently using videos and photographs sourced from YouTube and Facebook to present lesson content in more concrete and engaging formats. Respondents consistently reported that visual materials support learner understanding of concepts that are difficult to convey through verbal or textual instruction alone, with one noting that learners understand lessons more readily when videos or images are presented, and another affirming that students comprehend material more effectively when pictures accompany the lesson rather than reading alone. These observations point to the

particular utility of visual media in addressing the diverse cognitive and sensory needs of young learners at the elementary level.

Beyond comprehension, social media was found to facilitate experiential relevance by enabling learners to connect lesson content to real-world situations and contemporary contexts. One respondent noted that the use of videos and images makes the learning experience more realistic, while another reported that learners are able to connect to lesson content by engaging with current trends. This capacity for real-world connection enhances not only the immediate comprehension of lesson material but also its long-term retention, as learners are more likely to internalize and recall content that is presented in relatable, engaging, and meaningful ways. The visual and interactive dimensions of social media therefore serve a dual function in instruction, improving both the accessibility of new knowledge and the durability of learning over time.

Benefits of using social media in teaching

The study identified several significant benefits associated with the use of social media as a supplementary teaching tool in elementary education. One of the most prominently reported benefits was the reduction in teachers' workload and preparation time. One respondent stated that working became lighter after learning to use YouTube and Facebook in teaching, reflecting a meaningful decrease in the time and effort required for lesson planning and material development. Teachers also highlighted the availability of ready-made instructional resources, with one respondent noting the existence of ready-made worksheets that can serve as a basis for learner activities, and another observing that a lesson material is already available with just one click. These observations underscore the practical utility of social media platforms as repositories of accessible and immediately usable instructional content.

Enhanced communication with parents and students was likewise identified as a notable benefit. One respondent noted that social media provides easy access to parents, eliminating the need to summon them to the school or visit their homes to relay updates about school events or concerns regarding their child, while another emphasized that social media enables the quick provision of updates and notifications. These testimonies reflect the platform's capacity to streamline and sustain regular communication between teachers and the broader school community.

Taken together, these findings suggest that social media enhances the efficiency, accessibility, and overall effectiveness of teaching by equipping teachers with readily available instructional materials, efficient communication tools, and flexible methods of lesson delivery. The reduction in preparatory demands allows teachers to devote greater attention to instructional quality, while improved communication channels strengthen the partnership between home and school. These outcomes collectively contribute to a more organized, responsive, and adaptive instructional process. Afifa and Astuti (2024) affirmed that social media provides teachers with accessible tools that assist in lesson preparation, while Boholano et al. (2024) similarly highlighted the communicative and instructional efficiency benefits of social media integration, collectively supporting the conclusion that these platforms improve both productivity and pedagogical effectiveness.

Limited internet connectivity and technical infrastructure

Despite the recognized benefits of social media in instruction, the study identified a number of substantial challenges that impede its consistent and effective use. The most pervasive obstacle reported by participants was poor internet connectivity. This concern was raised by nearly all respondents, with participants from R1, R2, R4 through R15 collectively

identifying poor internet connection as the primary challenge encountered in integrating social media into teaching. One respondent explicitly identified the availability of the internet as the central problem, while others linked unreliable connectivity to recurring power interruptions that further destabilize access to online platforms and communication tools.

The data demonstrate that unstable internet connectivity and power outages materially disrupt teachers' ability to share instructional materials, communicate with parents and students, and implement technology-enhanced lessons in a consistent manner. When connectivity is unavailable or intermittent, the instructional continuity that social media is intended to support is compromised, reducing its reliability as a pedagogical tool. This condition undermines teachers' confidence in planning social media-based lessons and limits their capacity to implement technology-integrated strategies systematically and effectively within the elementary classroom environment.

Lack of access to digital devices and resources

Compounding the connectivity challenges identified above, the study also found that limited access to digital devices and resources constitutes a significant barrier to equitable participation in social media-supported learning. Teachers reported that not all students and parents possess smartphones or other gadgets capable of accessing social media platforms, with one respondent noting that some students have no cellphones or gadgets, and another observing that some parents similarly lack access to mobile devices. These observations highlight a digital divide that extends beyond the school environment and into the homes of learners, creating disparities in the degree to which students can engage with instructional materials and online communication channels.

This inequity in device access produces a learning gap in which some students are able to participate fully in social media-supported instruction while others are excluded due to the absence of necessary technological resources. Such exclusion affects students' ability to access learning materials, complete technology-based tasks, and engage in online collaborative activities, with potential downstream consequences for academic performance and overall learning engagement. These findings underscore the importance of developing inclusive strategies and institutional support mechanisms designed to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all learners have equitable access to the educational opportunities facilitated by social media.

Digital literacy and technical difficulties

The study further identified digital literacy deficiencies and technical difficulties as interconnected challenges affecting the effective use of social media in elementary teaching. Teachers reported difficulties in managing and maximizing the potential of social media tools for instructional purposes, with one respondent acknowledging that despite having a stable internet connection, technical concerns such as power interruptions still arise, and another noting difficulty in locating reliable and credible sources of instructional content online. These challenges reflect not only infrastructural limitations but also gaps in teachers' technical competencies and their capacity to critically evaluate the quality and appropriateness of digitally sourced materials.

The collective weight of these technology-related constraints, encompassing poor connectivity, limited device access, and insufficient technical proficiency, constitutes a formidable barrier to the consistent and effective use of social media as an instructional tool. These limitations disrupt lesson delivery, reduce learner participation, and constrain the overall

effectiveness of technology-enhanced teaching practices in elementary education. Darmayanti (2021) acknowledged technological limitations as a fundamental barrier to the meaningful use of social media in education, while Alkamel (2024) identified internet connectivity and device access as critical determinants of successful social media integration. These perspectives reinforce the conclusion that structural improvements in infrastructure and targeted investments in teacher capacity are essential prerequisites for realizing the full pedagogical potential of social media in elementary schools.

Training needs for effective use of social media

The findings revealed that elementary school teachers recognize a substantial need for structured training and professional development to enhance their capacity to use social media effectively in instructional contexts. The most widely expressed need was for training in information and communications technology integration in teaching, with one respondent explicitly stating a continued need for ICT integration training, and another expressing the desire to further develop existing knowledge about the integration of social media in teaching practice. These responses reflect an awareness among teachers that their current level of digital competence, while functional, requires deliberate expansion to meet the demands of technology-enhanced instruction at an optimal level.

In addition to technical skills, respondents identified training in digital ethics and online privacy as equally important areas of professional development. One respondent called for training focused on the ethical use of social media, while another emphasized the need for education in digital privacy, specifically citing the importance of practicing safe cyber habits, protecting personal information, understanding digital footprints, and avoiding the sharing of sensitive data. Training in netiquette and the responsible use of social media was similarly highlighted, with one respondent recommending seminars focused on netiquette and another calling for training on the proper and appropriate use of social media platforms. Several respondents also noted the need for technical and financial support to address persistent barriers related to internet access and device availability.

These findings collectively indicate that teachers require comprehensive capability programs that address technological skills development, ethical and responsible digital behavior, and the establishment of structural support systems capable of sustaining effective social media integration in the classroom. Felizarte et al. (2023) underscored the centrality of professional development in advancing digital teaching practices, while Greenhow and Chapman (2020) emphasized the critical importance of targeted teacher training in supporting effective technology integration in classroom instruction. These perspectives affirm that well-designed and contextually responsive capability programs are indispensable for equipping elementary school teachers with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to maximize the educational value of social media.

The findings of this study collectively affirm that social media holds substantial potential as a supplementary instructional tool in elementary education, while simultaneously revealing the conditions and constraints that determine the extent to which this potential is realized in practice. Across all eight themes, a consistent picture emerges of teachers who are resourceful and willing adopters of social media platforms, particularly YouTube and Facebook, and who employ these tools to enhance lesson delivery, foster student engagement, facilitate visual and experiential learning, and maintain communication with students and parents. The benefits they report, including reduced workload, access to ready-made instructional resources, and improved home-school communication, are tangible and directly relevant to the instructional demands of the elementary classroom. At the same time, the challenges identified, most prominently poor internet connectivity, limited device access, and

gaps in digital literacy, represent systemic and structural barriers that must be addressed through coordinated institutional responses rather than individual teacher effort alone. The expressed need for comprehensive capability programs covering ICT integration, digital ethics, netiquette, and online privacy further underscore that effective and responsible social media use in instruction requires sustained professional development support. Together, these findings respond directly to the study's objectives and contribute meaningfully to the growing body of literature on technology integration in Philippine elementary education. The results provide an evidence-informed foundation for the proposed capability program that is developed and presented in the subsequent chapter of this manuscript.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study establish that social media serves as an effective supplementary tool in enhancing the teaching practices of elementary school teachers. The results demonstrate that teachers are able to integrate various social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Messenger into their instructional processes to deliver educational content, facilitate communication with pupils and parents, and extend learning opportunities beyond the classroom setting. This integration contributes positively to student learning outcomes, as evidenced by improved comprehension, heightened engagement, and increased active participation among learners. These outcomes affirm that when utilized appropriately, social media can function as a valuable extension of traditional pedagogical approaches and support more interactive and learner centered instruction.

Despite these benefits, the study also reveals that the effective implementation of social media in teaching is constrained by several technological limitations. In particular, issues related to unstable internet connectivity and limited access to digital devices hinder the consistent and efficient use of these platforms in educational contexts. These challenges affect not only the delivery of instruction but also the equitable participation of learners, thereby underscoring the need for improved technological infrastructure and resource allocation. Furthermore, the findings highlight the necessity of strengthening teachers' competencies in the use of social media through structured capability programs and continuous professional development initiatives. Such programs are essential in equipping teachers with the required knowledge, skills, and ethical awareness to integrate digital tools responsibly and effectively in their teaching practices.

In light of these findings, the study emphasizes the importance of sustained and collaborative efforts among key stakeholders to maximize the potential of social media in education. Teachers are encouraged to continuously incorporate appropriate social media platforms and strategies into their instructional practices to further enhance student engagement and learning. At the same time, school administrators play a crucial role in supporting this integration by ensuring access to reliable internet connectivity, adequate digital resources, and appropriate technological tools within the school environment. The Department of Education is likewise urged to design and implement comprehensive competency based programs that focus on information and communication technology integration, ethical use of social media, digital privacy, and responsible online behavior. In addition, parents are encouraged to actively support this initiative by providing learners with access to suitable devices and by guiding and monitoring their responsible use of technology at home.

Overall, the study provides meaningful insights into the role of social media as a supplementary instructional tool and highlights both its potential and its limitations within elementary education. The conclusions drawn from the data suggest that while social media can significantly enhance teaching and learning processes, its effectiveness is largely

dependent on the availability of resources, institutional support, and the preparedness of teachers and learners. Finally, the study recommends that future researchers further explore the long term effects of social media integration in education, examine a wider range of digital platforms, and involve larger and more diverse populations to validate and extend the present findings, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of its impact on educational practice.

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