TWEET OR FIRED:

AN ANALYSIS ON THE PRACTICE OF MANAGING

PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES THAT ENGAGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my village which aided in my development. I especially honor my last living grandparent, Arthur B. Kemp who planted the seed for me to continue my education. In 2001, after my fourth week enrolled at North Carolina A&T State University, he told me to go right into graduate school to get my doctorate. I despised the idea as a college freshman, but he knew all along this would happen.

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Desmond L. Kemp

TWEET OR FIRED: AN ANALYSIS ON THE PRACTICE OF MANAGING PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES THAT ENGAGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

This study explored the perspectives of six public sector human resource professionals on social media policies and how it maintains the behavior of employees that engage on social media. The expansion of technology in the public sector allows personnel to build relationships with the people they serve and participate in public forums. As more legislators and professionals use social media for work and personal matters, they are more likely to face public humiliation and disciplinary punishment over uncivil behavior. This research shows the public sector institutions in the Indianapolis area have lenient social media policies. In addition, this research argues that work policies, i.e., social media, should be modernized and relevant for all cultures.

This dissertation analyzes how social media policies are established and executed within local government organizations using a multi-method approach. The first phase of this study surveyed and interviewed human resources professionals. While social media issues are still relatively new, progressive disciplinary procedures are most likely to be implemented when an employee engages in uncivil behavior on social media. The Logic of Appropriateness as the framework for the content analysis of social media policies from eight local agencies explores how the organizations direct employee behavior. The analysis findings determine certain public sector institutions in the Indianapolis area have social media policies for legal protection but place ethical value on respect as an expectation for employee conduct. This study backs the development of transparent

social media policies in public sector agencies, especially since there is a recurring shift in the generational and cultural background of public representatives.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES xv
LIST OF FIGURES xvi
CHAPTER ONE 1
Social Media and Consequences 1
Research Background 2
Statement of the Problem 6
Significance of Study 11
Research Questions 12
Limitations 13
Definition of Terms 14
CHAPTER TWO 17
Literary Review 17
The Development Process for the Literature Review 18
Literature Review 25
Social Media Culture and the Public Sector 27
Social Media in the Public Sector- Education 32
Education-Based Social Media Management Research Alignment 34
Federal Rules and Regulations in America for Local Workers 36
The Case for Social Media Policies for Local Governments 41
Conclusion 43
CHAPTER THREE 44
Research Design and Methodology 44
Theoretical Framework for Research 46
Scientific Management 48
Bureaucracy 49
Administrative Management 50
Research Questions 55
Hypotheses 56
Research Method 56
Locale 62
Recruitment Process 62
Preliminary Study Methods 64
Preliminary Instrument Development 65
Preliminary Study Results 67
Research Ethics 69
Chapter Summary 70
CHAPTER FOUR 71
Research Data and Analysis 71
General Job Description of the Human Resource Representatives 72
Explanation of Character Selection 73
Government Location for Content Analysis 74
Data Collection 75
Survey Data 76
Survey Data Interpretations 78

Interview Data 80
Interview Data Interpretations 89
Mixed Data Conclusion 90
Content Analysis Data 91
Content Analysis Interpretation 95
Triangulation 96
Chapter Summary 97
CHAPTER FIVE 98
A Push for Advanced Social Media Policies 98
Discussion 99
Summary of Research Findings 102
Limitations 104
Explanation of Unanticipated Findings 105
Implications for Future Research 105
Conclusion 106
APPENDICES 108
Appendix A: Dissertation Survey Questions 108
Appendix B: Follow-Up Interview Questions 114
BIBLIOGRAPHY 115
CURRICULUM VITAE 125

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2-a: Student Research 31

Table 2-b: The Four Levels of Ethics in Public Administration 36

Table 4-a: Survey Respondents 81

Table 4-c: Social Media Policy Enforcement 97

Table 4-d: Behavioral Expectations Statements 100

Table 4-e: Organizational Representation 100

Table 4-f: Disciplinary Actions 101

Table 4-g: Technology Integration 102

Table 4-h: Appropriateness: Indy v. Orson County (Test I) 102

Table 4-i: Appropriateness: Indy v. Orson County (Test II) 103

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3-a Appropriateness Framework Design 52

Figure 3-b Sequential Explanatory Design Process 58

Figure 4-b Survey Data- Termination 78

CHAPTER ONE

Social Media and Consequences

Since 2010, a growing number of public workers, primarily educators, have been terminated for incivilities on social media (Tagami 2016; Pagones 2018). Employees fired 'at-will' over their actions on social media are increasingly becoming an issue for human resource managers and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB-Social Media 2018). All states in the United States of America except Montana employ at-will laws[1], meaning employers or employees can terminate employment without reason. In Indiana, public sector workers are held under at-will conditions. Social media technologies have shifted the norms of organizational practices. The growth of social media utilization in the workplace comes with many barriers. For instance, it affects how the organization is represented on social media (Mergel 2013). In terms of adopting and merging technology in daily practices, each organization has the freedom to take on its protocols and create policies on how its employees can utilize social media applications.

In January 2021, I imagine one of your mobile texts resembled the one I received from a friend: "Oh sh*t, Trump is suspended from posting on Twitter." During his presidential term (2016-2021), Donald Trump, the 'infamous' forty-fifth president of the United States of America, often engaged with the public through social media. It is not rare for a public leader to engage on social platforms in this era; however, his Twitter page was frequented with misinformation and what could be deemed as hate speech

[1] Guerin, Lisa, and Amy Del Po. "Chapter 2: At-Will Protections." Create Your Own Employee Handbook, May 2021, 27–34. https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.ulib.uits.iu.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=b9h&AN=150481835&site=ehost-live.

(Robinson and West 2020; Cheng 2017). Social media in the public sector provides an opportunity for public sector officials to foster relationships with the people they serve and engage in public forums. Recent technologies and social media have affected individual lifestyles and have reshaped the broader social context of the meaning or interpretation of free speech in the workforce. The right to free speech protects workers who complain about their job and work demands but does not promote conduct that threatens or harms anyone. Let's question if our former leader really understood those terms prior to his tenure as US President.

The news media depicts a constant struggle to discipline American citizens engaging on social media as public sector workers for their actions on social media (Carter 2022; Kane 2021; Palmer, Bender, and Roebuck 2021). It seems that public employees are unaware of the consequences of utilizing microaggressions or opprobrious language on social platforms. This research examines the process of managing public sector workers of local public agencies within a 60-miles radius of Indianapolis that engage on social media. Through the lens of the Logic of Appropriateness conceptualized by James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, this study aims to identify if each agency, specifically county and city public entities, defined the acts that would result in termination within the policy. The terms of appropriateness should be transparent in the organization's social media guidelines.

Research Background

As a peculiar Black teenager in the '90s, the development of social media piqued my interest. From noon to midnight, I spent hours engrossed on social media platforms. Connecting with nonlocal citizens on my favorite applications like America Online

(AOL) Instant Messenger, Yahoo! Groups and Messenger, and College Club were among the first social media platforms that allowed users to communicate with people across the globe. In the early days of the internet, social media was limited to individuals with access to computers, generally at home. As an avid social media user, I did not imagine that social media would be as accessible today. In the era of COVID-19, social media is now an essential tool for regular activities in our personal and professional lives.

Let's revisit the context of social media. Personal and public engagement takes place simultaneously on social media. Users of social media platforms copy and disseminate public messages every day, altering and recontextualizing news, music videos, comedy media, commercials, and political speeches (Meikle 2016). Social media culture allows the creative space to become the focus of attention, allowing people to build their own identities. Social media provides the tools to simplify sharing through platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter. Individuals can express their feelings in these public sharing places to escape the things that bind them, whether work, social fears, or personal health issues. Users must construct public profile pages on social networking sites. However, many adults are hesitant to share personal information on social media because they do not know who has access to it. Social media organizations realize this and give users the option of making their pages private. Sharing is an essential networking and online communication skill.

The motivations for posting are frequently linked to how social media users increase their 'visibility' or use a more familiar term, popularity. Silverman (2015, 206) argues that the trend fosters an understanding that visibility is a necessary counterbalance to the risk of becoming irrelevant. He compares it to bailing water from a leaky boat: it is

a never-ending cultivation process. You'll drop out of sight if you don't keep up this level of performance if you don't keep bailing water. Social media users getting noticed and popular is not the only factor regarding exposure. Political leaders now have a new opportunity to be seen on a scale as never before. The closed courts and assemblies, in which the public only gets access to what the media releases, restrict the views of public officials. Social media platforms allow public officials to share themselves openly for people to view (Thompson 2013; Jue et al. 2010).

The idea for this study was derived after a conversation with a Dekalb County Judge, identified as Judge Maybelline, based in Atlanta (ATL), Georgia, in 2018. To provide the context of the environment in Georgia that year, I would like to include that at that time in the Atlanta Metro Area, the general assembly was voting on a new city, Greenhaven. The ATL Metro Area had six suburban cities incorporated by the state government between 2012 and 2018 (Smith Broady 2020). In addition, Stacy Abrams, a Black woman, was campaigning for governor of Georgia. Members of the various governments had their thoughts, some hate speech, about Abrams's potential election, and they carried those gripes to their social media (Padgett 2018).

I reached out to Judge Maybelline after hearing her speak at a conference about identity protection and federal laws in cybersecurity. Before our conversation, she informed me that she had a small claims court case for a public official sanctioned for misconduct on social media. She noted that a challenge of ruling in these cases is that lawyers and judges must hear both sides of the issue and make their rulings based on the First Amendment or as led in Georgia, based on opprobrious or abusive language. Why? Because the local governments did not have social media policies for their employees.

With the knowledge from the conversation, I began searching for cases of public sector employees and elected officials terminated for opprobrious, microaggressions, or hate speech across the United States. On the first Google search, I generated a returned search of thirty-two public sector employees who were terminated and publicly scrutinized in the media. Thirty of those employees were public school teachers and members of an education board primarily based in the southern region of the United States of America (US).[2] The officials below had an enormous response from the public and media.

Jimmy Morris, a former fire captain, sued the city of Columbia, South Carolina, in January 2018 after being fired for a social media post he made in 2016, threatening to run over protesters if they were blocking the road. His case claims he was fired because of his race, and his free speech rights were infringed (WLTX 2018). Jeremy Spencer, a former assistant superintendent of the Georgia Board of Education, resigned in August 2017 after state executives demanded his dismissal after comments on Facebook regarding Blacks, Muslims, and other subjects (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution,* 2017). These two government employees have been part of many social media-related layoffs since 2016.

Jimmy Morris's and Jeremy Spencer's public termination inspired me to review what order of protections American citizens have within the First Amendment. In brief explanation, the right to free speech, as proposed in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, is not a right to all types of free speech on social media

[2] Desmond Kemp, "Termination of Teachers for the Display of Microaggression on Social Media from 2000-2018" (presentation, Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA, April 9, 2018).

(Hudson 2017). The US Constitution generally protects freedom of expression. State statutes protect the rights of employees who act as whistleblowers. The National Relations Labor Act has been enforced to protect workers who criticize their employment conditions to encourage collective action for change (Andrews 2012). In some cases, public employees may be more limited than those working in the private sector based on the US Supreme Court decision in P*ickering v. Board of Education*, 391 US 563 (1968). I will discuss this case in-depth in my review of the literature.

When elected officials, like Morris and Spencer, decide to engage online, they are expected to maintain their presence as representatives of their agency, either by the public or in good faith by the government. The official risk of using internet platforms is that social media traffic moves quickly. A lousy story or opposing claim can gain steam instantly, as does the temptation to respond with equal speed.[3] If government agencies do not enforce policies for engaging on social media, unwritten rules should not regulate how their employees engage.

Statement of the Problem

Based on the 2020 Financial Reports for Indianapolis[4]-4,452 and Marion County[5]- 2,483, these two governing systems employ close to 7,000 full-time workers. The revolving door concept identifies a challenge in retaining public sector employees; I guess it reflects the workplace climate in which policies are enforced. Now that internet technology, whether email, instant messaging system, or social media are daily tools used in the public sector, stakes are high for employees to be punished for misconduct on

[3] Reiman, 2012.
[4] Indianapolis Office of Finance and Management, 2021, 173.
[5] Indianapolis Office of Finance and Management, 2021.

social media, another job retention issue. While this research is a trending topic in the education and law enforcement fields, there is a gap in research that focuses on social media policies and how they are administered to general employees and elected officials of local governments.

In addition, the overall conversation dismisses the fundamental issue of discrimination. When a public sector employee's actions are in question, it is typically due to their response to a minoritized group, predominantly African Americans. Citron (2010) labeled the internet a double edge sword. In one sense, it empowers people who often face discrimination, and in the same instance, it can also be exploited to disenfranchise those same individuals (31). Over the last decade, since Michael Brown, Jr.'s shooting in 2014, online activism has taken the forms of hashtags, ex: #metoo and #BlackLivesMatter. Conversations on public forums about violence or political speech often result in a user "calling out" another individual for their prejudices. Highfield (2016, 26) explains that the callout culture tends to highlight behaviors to draw attention to prevalent or emergent attitudes that lead to individuals being targeted for their personal views or someone publicly humiliated. If a public sector worker is an aggressor, it may be acceptable behavior that public governing organizations tolerate. Then, the relationship between the agency and the public becomes arduous to maintain and could require civil action.

Preliminary data from the IndyStar, Indianapolis Recorder, and Indianapolis local television stations: WRTV, WTHR, and WXIN reported that between 2015 and 2021, the state of Indiana had sixteen public and private workers that were scrutinized by the news media for their actions on social media. According to these findings, three Indiana

workers were fired, and all others were sanctioned. Seven of these workers were based in Indianapolis. Of the six, four were employed in the public sector. Out of twenty-one cities within the Indianapolis area, three of the governing systems did not have a social media policy implemented in 2019 when this research took its current form. These numbers may not seem alarming; however, government workers may function in roles not covered by social media policies. This could result in a negative impact on the workplace culture and the community at large. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the expectations of organizations that employ public-serving individuals engaging on social media.

In developing this study, a preliminary internet data search was done to determine how often public sector employee sanctions or terminations for uncivil actions on social media are made public. As I began to search for employee data, I was met with challenges to get information about the employee after their termination or once the organization adopted a social media policy. One day, I discovered the employee policy for Indiana state employees, modified in 2018, does not state under what conditions the employee would be terminated for misconduct on social media. It mentions:

> **Social media** You are expected to adhere to the standards stated in the Information Resource User Agreement (IRUA). Check the IRUA FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) page for clarification on the policy or contact IOT Security or re-read the IRUA. Only individuals officially designated by the state, or an agency have the right and authority to speak on behalf of the state or agency. You must make clear that your blogs represent your own views and opinions, not those of state officials or agencies. You also need to understand that First Amendment rights apply when you are contributing to the debate on matters of public concern but do not apply when you are merely griping about your job, coworker, or superiors (24).
>
> 7. **Disciplinary Action**. I am aware that any inappropriate use of Information Resources or my failure to comply with this agreement may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal from employment, criminal

> prosecution where the act constitutes a violation of law, and an action for breach of contract if applicable (2).

While I applaud Indiana's state government for having this agreement, my concern is the lack of clarity on the expectations for employees outside of their regular work hours, especially when the social media clause mentions personal blogs. This agreement is designed to be applied when the employee utilizes state information resources. In addition, throughout the IRUA, the State Ethics Rules and agency's policies are mentioned to cross-reference for additional protocols.

Before framing this study, I decided to perform a preliminary analysis using subjects from municipal governments across the Midwest in Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio. The selected governments were selected by recommendation to review policies from metropolitan cities similar to Indianapolis to determine whether there are regional trends to watch out for in Indiana. I reached out to twenty-five human resource staff members in municipal governments in the three states mentioned to complete a survey which I later modified for this dissertation to find out under what terms a public worker would more than likely be terminated. Three human resource professionals completed the survey. This process will be further explained in Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology.

A follow-up interview was done on December 10, 2020, with one of the respondents, a public sector human resource representative from a small city in Illinois. These are five major points that were identified for potential use in the study:

1) The social media policy implementation process may not be executed appropriately. Policies concerning social media policies are e-mailed or snail mailed as addenda without review.

2) Some states may require harassment and unconscious bias training at least once a year; uncivil social media issues may be treated as harassment.
3) Non-elected and appointed city workers may be the most vulnerable. Generally, staff positions on the city level may be unionized. Organizations that terminated employees for actions on social media would receive backlash from the union.
4) Terminated employees may have previous write-ups. A write-up is typically strict enough to keep employees straight and narrow paths.
5) Human resource representatives must be fair in the decision to terminate employees. The job requires them to be impartial mediators between the organizations and employees.

Overall, these results illustrate that social media issues are still new but relevant for human resource professionals. As well, some agencies' social media policies may be new. The interviewee recommended adding the perspective of a labor union and employees to get an idea of their personal feelings about social media policies.

The advice of the human resources (HR) professional to involve employees seemed feasible for this research. Through my network, I was connected to an Indiana State employee and Indianapolis resident, pseudonym John Rowland, a white male eager to discuss his experience as a government employee disciplined for social media. In 2018 during the Midterm Elections, John authored a status about the election topics; in his comments, he added, “F*ck*ng Republicans.” John admitted that his relationship with the state government could easily be recognized and that he followed his colleagues from work. Also, he posted on his personal Facebook page using his device after work hours. A day or so later, John was charged by his manager, who was informed about his

Facebook post by a coworker who viewed it the night before. The manager instructed John to remove state agency identification from his personal page and delete the post. In addition, he had to apologize for his Facebook post and state that his personal views did not reflect his employer's. The manager did not involve human resources or reprimand John with a write-up because the post was written off-hours. John noted that he felt threatened and has been on guard since. John also redirected me to the IRUA statement that employees learn on their online training module after hire. At the end of our conversation, John informed me that he knew at least seven public sector workers in municipalities and state governments that dealt with the same issues and received stricter punitive actions.

John's experience was not carried out like other employees in the state of Indiana or even the United States that I have studied. Would you consider this fair practice? I did not. I became more curious to determine why the manager did not include HR when screenshots could have been taken. In addition, what would have happened if John were a Black man? Or a woman? Was there a protocol for employees reporting inappropriate social media posts? These questions are worth exploring.

Significance of Study

My study suggests a need for public agencies to design specific work policies and training regarding social media. This research explores ways in which human resource professionals manage employee behavior on social media by implementing social media policies. The focus of this study examines how social media policies as work policies are adopted, implemented, managed, and aligned within public sector agencies. I review the doctrine as an open policy for terminating employees and its role in dismissing

employees. The issue highlights the requirement for local governments to develop transparent social media policies or acceptable use policies (AUP) for employees who use social media. The implementation of social media policies should be followed by training employees on the policies' application.

Unclear or ill-informed social media-related issues can weaken the government's credibility and undermine citizens' trust. Proper communication systems allow public-facing organizations to maintain legitimacy (Prado-Roman, Diez-Martin, and Blanco-Gonzalez 2020).

Organizational legitimacy is an organization's suitability to a social system in terms of rules, values, norms, and definitions.[6] Employees as stakeholders maintain the organization's legitimacy. For organizations, legitimacy provides a framework for decision-making.

The social climate and environmental health crises in the United States from 2019 to 2022 necessitate human resource managers to revisit technology-based approaches. As the federal government moves toward telework and remote work provisions for federal employees[7], the nature of work shifts along with the emergence of social technologies. The retirement of baby boomers in the public sector opens opportunities for millennials and Generation Z, computer, and social media-driven groups (Mergel 2013; Curry 2017).

Research Questions

The central question is determining the effectiveness of social media policies in terms of implementation and governance within the organization. I use the experimental

[6] Deephouse et al. 2016, 9
[7] Maurer 2021

research process to create an analysis for this investigation. The following questions serve as a basis for the survey and literature review. In comparative studies of public management, human resource perspectives on social media-based issues and policies are unpronounced. I positioned my research through a top-down lens to engage discourse on the overall value of social media policies in local public sector agencies.

Question 1: How are HR professionals managing employees using the social media policy?

Question 2: What is the separation between the agencies' social media policies and a code of ethics?

Question 3: What are the consequences stated for misconduct on social media?

Question 4: Why should public agencies have a social media policy?

Limitations

This topic is relatively current and trending; historical data on the total number of employees terminated for incivility on social media in the Indianapolis area is not yet discovered. However, this research could pilot the development of archives and a collection of these numbers; moreover, the reasons for firing are too broad.

The terminology social media is vast and encompasses more than one platform for examination. Identifying a social media platform would suit an extended study and lessens the subject's ambiguity to narrow the research and develop questions. Although, there may be cases that align with the argument for local institutions to create social media policies on each platform.

Garnering the participation of the human resource professionals was perplexing. The human resource and personnel workers who did not have social media policies or full

involvement in developing the policies were hesitant to participate in this research. In addition, the term research was rather frightening, and many of the potential subjects did not want their names mentioned and connected to the report.

Definition of Terms

Digital media technologies increase the emergence of new tools and contexts for people to express and explore their identities – from social network sites, instant messaging platforms, and video-sharing sites to blogs, vlogs, and virtual worlds. Social media-related research for the public sector explores usage on the most active platforms: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube. The following terms are used throughout this study:

Acceptable Use Policy: a document that outlines a set of rules to be followed by users or customers of a group of computing resources, which could be a computer network, website, or large computer system. An AUP clearly states what the user is and is not allowed to do with these resources. Acronym: AUP (Technopedia 2011)

At-Will Employment: Employees at-will can be refused employment, disciplined, or fired for any or no reason, so long as it is not for a reason prohibited by law (American Bar Association 2006).

Code of Ethics: A statement of professional standards of conduct to which the practitioners of a profession say they subscribe (Shafritz at el. 2013).

College Club: CollegeClub.com was registered on April 4, 1996, and by 2000 had around 3 million registered users. Users accessed this platform to find friends at other colleges online.

Discipline: The purpose of workplace discipline is to alert employees to their behavior and actions and help them understand how these inhibit performance and productivity (Chron 2010).

Elected Official: A government official or functionary is an official who is involved in public administration or government through either election, appointment, or employment (Ballotpedia 2021).

Facebook: Facebook is a website that allows users, who sign-up for free profiles, to connect with friends, work colleagues or people they don't know, online. It allows users

to share pictures, music, videos, articles, and their thoughts and opinions with however many people they like. Users send "friend requests" to people they may or may not know. Facebook has over one billion users (Webwise 2018).

Human Resource Management: A perspective that recognizes that human resources are important assets that must be managed strategically and proactively to improve organizational performance; development of processes for the effective utilization of people in an organization (Berman et al. 2006).

Incivilities: Incivility in the workplace can take subtle forms (rude or unsociable speech or behavior) and is often prompted by thoughtlessness rather than actual malice (Porath and Pearson 2013).

Instant Messaging: Real-time text communication between one or more people via the internet or a mobile device. Acronym: IM (Mergel 2013).

Local Government: Local governments generally include two tiers: counties, also known as boroughs in Alaska, and parishes in Louisiana, and municipalities, or cities/towns. In some states, counties are divided into townships. Municipalities can be structured in many ways, defined by state constitutions, and are called townships, villages, boroughs, cities, or towns. Various districts also provide local government functions outside the county or municipal boundaries, such as school districts or fire protection districts (White House 2021).

Mobile Device: A mobile device is a handheld tablet or other instrument made for portability and is therefore both compact and lightweight. New data storage, processing, and display technologies have allowed these small devices to do anything that had previously been traditionally done with larger personal computers (Technopedia 2018).

Monitoring: See surveillance.

Municipal Government: Another term for local government; those defined as cities, towns, boroughs (except in Alaska), villages, and townships—are generally organized around a population center and, in most cases, correspond to the geographical designations used by the United States Census Bureau for reporting of housing and population statistics. Municipalities vary in size, from the millions of New York City and Los Angeles residents to the few hundred people who live in Jenkins, Minnesota (White House 2021).

Personnel: A collective term for all the employees of an organization but commonly used to refer to the personnel management function or the unit within the organization responsible for administering personnel programs (Shafritz et al. 2013).

Public Sector Employee: A government employee that works for the federal, state, or local government (American Bar Association 2006).

Reprimand: An official warning that a manager or supervisor gives an employee in an attempt to improve unwanted behavior (Srivastava, Ruchi, and Syed Ali Haider, 2021).

Revolving Door: The movement of professionals from government and public sector to private companies or social entities (Riles 2018).

Sanction: See *Discipline*.

Social Media: Peer-to-peer communication and user-generated content made possible through the advent of participatory Web 2.0 tools such as blogs, online social networks, multimedia sites, and text messaging (Mergel 2013).

Social Media Policy: Organizational guidelines for participating in social media (Mergel 2013). A document outlines how an organization and its employees should conduct themselves online.

Snapchat: Snapchat is a mobile messaging application to share photos, videos, text, and drawings. It is free to download the app and send messages using it. It has become hugely popular in a short space of time, especially with young people. One feature makes Snapchat different from other forms of texting and photo sharing: the messages disappear from the recipient's phone after a few seconds (Webwise 2018).

Surveillance: Monitoring an employee's social media usage on the computer they work from (Trotter et al. 2013).

Termination: Also referred to as a separation from employment, a stop can be voluntary (the employee's decision) or involuntary (the employer's decision). When an employer discharges (fires) an employee, it will usually do so for cause (unacceptable performance or behavior) or for economic or restructuring reasons called layoffs or a reduction in force (RIF) (SHRM 2021).

Twitter: Twitter is an online news and social networking site where people communicate in short messages called tweets. Tweeting is posting short messages to anyone who follows you on Twitter, hoping that your words are helpful and interesting to someone in your audience. Another description of Twitter and tweeting might be microblogging (Lifewire 2021).

Unions: Groups of employees who create a formal organization (the association) to represent their interests before management (Shafritz et al. 2013).

Viral: A term used to describe the organic and rapid spread of online content resulting from many individuals engaging in electronic communication (Mergel 2013).

CHAPTER TWO

Literary Review

This study seeks to add to a body of research on how social media policies either limit the voices of public sector employees or increase their termination risk for misconduct on public platforms. Chapter One provides an overview of this research that began with an introduction to the problem under review. Also included are the research questions and the significance of the study which provides an infographic identifying the number of social media-related terminations of Indiana workers highlighted by the news media from 2017 to 2021. To examine the impact of a social media policy in the public sector, literature must be reviewed to identify trends for managing social media engagement in the public workplace and the criteria for employee engagement. The literature research identified key themes that inform the research questions:

1. Is there a distinct separation between an organization's social media policy and the organization's code of ethics? If there is a distinct separation, what is it: and how is it expressed?
2. How does the First Amendment protect public workers?

The answers to these questions and the key themes that were identified to complete this literature review are: a) Social media and political speech, b) Standards for Public Sector Employees, c) Federal Rules and Regulations in America, and d) Digital ethics. To demonstrate how I developed these themes, I will discuss my search process at the beginning of this chapter. After the overview, there is a review of literature that will inform the nature of language and culture with regard to social media. This review will also introduce the term “microaggression” and frame the need for digital ethics, federal

rules and regulations, and standards for local government employees. Furthermore, a theoretical review on the ethical framework for public administration as a motive for the design of social media policies in the workplace. The conclusion of the literature review will lead to gaps found in the literature that are supported within the study.

The Development Process for the Literature Review

This section is a detailed summary of the development process for the literature search of this study. As mentioned in Chapter One, this study is inspired by an assignment I completed for a class project as a public administration student at Clark Atlanta University in 2018. The initial paper focused heavily on public workers that were publicly terminated. Publicly meaning in the public eye via news media or on the terminating employers' social media pages.

I developed an outline that included three common themes found in the first three news articles I read. Those themes were: a) First Amendment, b) Free Speech, and c) Social Media Termination/Fired. Initially, I did not have a single location to study. I searched the following databases through the Woodruff Library Systems in Atlanta, Georgia: Nexis Uni, Newspaper Source (GALEO)-*Atlanta Constitution Journal*, *Washington Post*, *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune*, Google News, and Google Scholar. The themes were included in my search along with these terms: "public worker", "terminated", "Facebook", "government official", and "cyberbullying".

I found news stories of teachers that were terminated and trending through the local and national news media. I recognized that many of the educators were from cities that had a large Black student and teacher population. Typically, there is a snowball

effect of systemic racism in public spaces. To expand my parameters, I inferred it appropriate to add racial terms into my search.

I returned to the AUC Woodruff Library search engine with the terms "social media" and "termination", and I added the words "discriminatory", "bias", and "racist". The first article located in this topic was from the *Journal of Internet Law.* This article helped identify additional terms such as "at-will doctrine" and "torts". The terms "at-will doctrine" and "torts" provided additional links to blogs, research, and cases examined by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), The First Amendment Center/Freedom Forum Institute, and the Free Speech Center at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU).

The MTSU Free Speech Center had a few archives and white papers for review. Also, MTSU had two students whose dissertations seemed to correlate to this study. I found working texts in *"@ Whoever is Listening": How Organizations and Its Members Perceive and Use Social Media During Critical Events in the Workplace* by Brandy Melissa Mmbaga and *Employees' Fairness Perceptions of Workplace Social Media Monitoring: Privacy Invasiveness, Smartphone Ownership, and Employee Work Period* by Melissa N. McCord. Dr. Rico Chapman, Director of Humanities Program at Clark Atlanta University, urged me to do a search on ProQuest for other dissertations that were relevant to this topic. He recommended delving into each study to find a gap to identify the focus for this dissertation.

Utilizing ProQuest, I found sixteen dissertations, three master theses, and two white papers that were complimentary for this study. The eight aforementioned

documents listed in Table 2-a were utilized in the process to find literature and themes for this research.

Table 2-a: Student Research

Title	Author	Paper Type	Year Published
Connections and Perceptions: Policy Recommendations to Guide Social Media Interactions for Public Educators	Stephanie Lois Smith	Dissertation	2012
Into the Tangled Web: K-12 Educators, Free Speech and Social Media	John Andrews	Dissertation	2012
Just One Click- The Eternity Of Social Media: A Legal And Administrative Perspective On The Collision Of Cyber Speech And The First Amendment In Schools	Susan Coleman	Dissertation	2013
P- 12 Teachers' Use of Social Media and the Implications of the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the US Constitution	Gregory Benton	Dissertation	2014
What's Your Status: Employee Fairness Perceptions of Social Media Monitoring	Kelsey Bishop	Thesis	2015
Your Teacher Said What On Facebook? Application of First Amendment Rights To Teacher Cyber Speech	Anthony Crawford Scarseila	Dissertation	2015
The Free Speech Rights of Teachers and Social Media Polices for School Districts	Vicki Younger	Dissertation	2016
School District Social Media Policies	Greenlee Naughton	Dissertation	2017

The body of work focused greatly on the issues in the education system. I realized a trend in the repetition of the usage of the Marvin Pickering case, of which I included in my literature review. The case sets a standard and is utilized to address First Amendment issues for public sector employees in general. However, since Pickering was a teacher, this case often is used widely by the courts, teacher labor unions, and school employees to justify the free speech rights of teachers.

The repetition in research for free speech rights within the education system provided that this conversation did not occur within the public organizational structure. Upon recognizing that trend, I decided to return to ProQuest and the Education Resource Information Center (ERIC). ProQuest returned quite a few papers that focused on emergency respondents and public sector workers that work for the federal government. Because previous dissertations focused on teachers in local school districts, I felt concentrating my research on local and municipal workers might fill a gap in research. Although the issue of educators being terminated for incivilities on social media seems to increase in news media circuits as time goes by, especially within the context of higher education (Herron 2019; Kalmbacher 2021).

To explore additional approaches in social media research, I decided to attend various webinars that guided me to working texts for this research. In June 2018, I attended the Humanities Intensive Learning and Teaching (HILT) conference at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA. This conference provided the space for interaction with other scholars in the humanities and allowed me to confer with experts familiar with texts that could benefit in my research. I received leads to *The Darkside of Technology* by Peter Townsend (2017) and *Social Media and the Value of Truth* by Berrin Beasley and Mitchell Harvey (2012). HILT also exposed me to Black digital humanities, highlighting scholars such as Catherine Steel, André Brock, and P. Gabrielle Foreman: whose works assisted in the development of my panel discussion, *Is It Safe to Tweet?* discussed in Chapters One and Five.

The conversation around digital ethics was loosely mentioned in various academic articles I read that were somewhat related. I began looking for archives and research

centers that focused on ethics in the workplace. I discovered the Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, IL. I reached out to the Center's librarian, Kelly Laas. She invited me to the Center to browse through their library. During my visit, Kelly assisted in a guided search on ethical terms that would be related to the *Code of Conduct and Freedom of Speech.* Within their database, we found articles published by *Duke Law Journal*, *The Employee Relations Law Journal*, and the *Journal of Internet Law* that discussed state policy statutes and First Amendment Rights for public sector employees.

The NFBPA provided a social media-related workshop, *Digital Rights vs. Civil Rights* during their 2019 national convention, *Forum,* in Orlando, FL. Workshop attendees inferred those social media policies were outdated. A panelist (previously addressed as Judge Maybelline in Chapter One) mentioned that all public sector employees should be familiar with statutory laws around cyberbullying and language, i.e., microaggressions and opprobrious language. These two terms were added to my search. A student from Kennesaw State University who took a class on Social Media ethics informed me about her professor, Dr. Carolyn Carlson. I reached out to Dr. Carlson to see if I should be willing to have a short conversation about my research interest: which led to one of my most memorable moments conducting this research.

Dr. Carlson and I met over the phone in June 2019. While she had only scheduled thirty minutes, we ended up on the telephone for nearly two hours. She provided articles and the syllabus for her course on social media and First Amendment issues that would assist with my research. The wealth of knowledge that she provided led me to examine the practices of each organization that sanctioned public sector employees for misconduct

on social media and to search for human resource and personnel protocols for social media practices. Dr. Carlson introduced me to the Marion B. Brencher First Amendment Project at the University of Florida. This research center also houses free speech policy briefs and publications written by Clay Calvert and Jasmine McNealy.

I had a chance to visit the Jimmy Carter Library and Research Center in Atlanta, GA for a class project in early 2019. An archivist and research librarian worked with me to build my outline for this research, particularly because I wanted to include historical context. The archivist believed that doctoral research in the humanities should include political speech, especially since policy impacts are typically the root cause of social issues in the US and recommended that I visit the Clinton and Bush Libraries to utilize finding aids to search for meeting notes and other memos on policies such as Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act. I did not have the opportunity to travel to utilize finding aids due to the COVID-19 restrictions at the research libraries. However, I did collect articles that were published by local newspapers in Indiana, *Speedway TownTalk* and *IndyStar*.

The pandemic's limitations did not restrict how creative I could be in my process for gathering resources for this research. Many national library resources were made open and available for students to access during the pandemic. The Constitution Center hosted webinars to explain how the government can limit free speech. These workshops included long texts and other media that I found quite helpful for developing a deeper understanding of the First Amendment and federalism. DePauw University's Prindle Institute for Ethics hosted a virtual workshop on civility, featuring Chelsire Calhoun as the facilitator. Calhoun's presentation provided meanings on civility in the US. She made

a recommendation for the text, *Miss Manners: A Citizen's Guide to Civility* by Judith Martin as part of her presentation.

Indiana University hosts a series "Ethics, Values, and Technology" which consists of research from different schools and departments across the Indiana University system. These workshops enhanced my knowledge on ethical approaches in business technology and science. Social Media is a primary topic. The workshops inform research on misinformation and the ethical challenges of the press on social media. The resource page of this project's website provided a link for the Associated Press' Social Media Policy.

An approach that I find worth mentioning to finding literature is requesting the syllabi from teachers and professors that taught social media issues. I reached out to fifteen professors from various universities in the US: American University, Georgia State University, Howard University, Indiana University – Bloomington, Indiana University Purdue University – Indianapolis, and Indiana University – Northwest. Many of their texts were consistent with those that I previously received.

However, my favorite texts were listed as recommended texts: *Social Media in the Public Sector* (2013) by Ines Mergel and *The Social Media Handbook: Rules, Policies, and Best Practices to Successfully Manage Your Organization's Social Media Presence, Posts, and Potential* (2012) by Nancy Flynn. These two authors provided a great framework upon which to build social media policy implementation and design. Their work was written and published prior to 2015; however, I see a need to merge the two works and extend the conversation to carry over into the next decade simply because the times have evolved.

What does it mean to be a public administrator in the era of social media? How is the behavior of these workers constructed by the organization? To facilitate good conduct, public organizations in this study all function under ethical policies. Ethics refer to the commonly accepted principles of responsible behavior in each culture, such as what is acceptable or not, what is good or bad, and the promotion and consistent application of these values, as well as the visible embrace of integrity in any action taken.[8] When considering what is right and wrong in social media policies, it is necessary to look at ethical approaches in public service. Shafritz, Russell, and Borick (2013) write there is a hierarchy of levels of ethics in public administration: 1) personal morality; 2) professional ethics; 3) organizational ethics, and 4) social ethics.[9] See Table 2-b for a full description of each level.

Table 2-b: The Four Levels of Ethics in Public Administration

The Four Levels of Ethics in Public Administration	
Personal Morality	Parental influences, religious beliefs, cultural and social mores, and one's own personal experiences.
Professional	Guidelines are codified by professional associations such as the American Society for Public Administration and the International City Management Association.
Organizational	Public laws, executive orders, and agency rules and regulations.
Social	Laws of a given society that protect individuals and further the progress of the group as a whole.

Data adapted from Shafritz, Russel and Borick (2013).

Personal Morality: Personal morality reflects in the way people live, work, and relate to others. The values that people hold differ significantly, which is easily noticed in public service. People's choices are influenced by inherent values or are at least the

[8] Corondeau, 2015.
[9] Shafritz, Russell and Borick 2013, 182.

values that are assigned to them. A public leaders' actions, or omissions, can have significant and often unanticipated implications that legitimize the conduct of those they serve.[10]

Professional: The standards of professional ethics are standards established by professional organizations for the conduct and values of persons who work in the field. The standards typically guide the development of the *Code of Ethics* which is implemented in organizations to describe the organization's ethical stance to its constituents and the outside world. Betsy Stevens states ethical codes exist because organizations are held responsible for the actions of their employees.[11] Professional ethical codes can help people conduct more appropriately by focusing attention on important ethical principles, defining expectations, and guiding them.

Organizational: Organization-based ethics refers to how an agency should react to its surroundings. Organizational ethics refers to a set of norms and concepts that determine how employees should act in the workplace. Research by Leisha Deheart-Davis (2017) shows rules socialize employees to an organization's values and norms by communicating the behaviors which are desired or considered undesirable. Under these terms, this study focuses on the rule of appropriate behavior in public organizations.

Social: A culture's or people group's social ethics are a collection of values and practices. It comprises the moral components of social structures, processes, issues, and communities in a systematic way.

[10] Clark and Clark, *Choosing to Lead*, 64-68.
[11] Stevens 2009, 14.

Ethical behavior sets the standard for employees and encourages professionalism. Public leaders are expected to conduct business in an ethical manner because any improper use or misuse of ethical principles can have a destructive effect on the area in which they serve.[12] The hierarchy of ethics in public administration allows us to see how organizational policies can be applied by employees to achieve the goals of public institutions. Shafritz, Russell, and Borick also warn that codes of ethics are not usually binding, they may not be taken seriously (187). While ethical rules are helpful, deciding what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior on social media remains a challenge for government bodies.

Social Media Culture and the Public Sector

Today's job applications may include a box requesting applicants submit their personal LinkedIn or Twitter account profiles. If you recognize either of the two, you more than likely have engaged in cyberculture in the last ten years. Although it seems like it would be a good idea to share your profiles on your job application, we should take into consideration that social internet technology usage in the workplace is new to some organizations in the public and private sectors. Digital connectivity has become a part of our language and a leading component of the human experience; technical skills are necessary. What exactly does this culture mean for American workers? In retrospect, we have entered a new domain of charting our work and how this form of technology aligns with practices.

Social media researchers have labeled the internet a 'public sphere' where individuals gather to express opinions and organize to improve life for everyone in the

[12] Khan 2018, 120-125.

community or civil society (Dryburgh and Bezboruah 2016; MacKinnon 2012). This public sphere allows distant human interaction to take place on public platforms such as Facebook. Public messages, news, entertainment, marketing, and political talk are copied and circulated, altered, and recontextualized daily by users of social media platforms while public, yet it is personal communication as discussed by Graham Meikle in *Social Media: Communication, Sharing and Visibility*.[13] Meikle defines social media as a networked database platform that combines public with personal communication.[14] Popular culture critic Karen Sternheimer recognizes that online platforms are central in many people's lives and are fundamental in work communication and socializing. There is no doubt that people are still learning how to engage on social media.[15] For these reasons, Nancy Flynn and Ines Mergel address a need for directives, rules, and social media policy in the public sector.

Public administrators are utilizing social media to boost their relationships with citizens. Generally, the attention on the use of social media as a tool to improve relationships with citizens emphasizes collecting information, transparency, and participation. Citizens who engage with the government using social technologies expect instant feedback but are open to the context of working relationships with public officials. Communication dramatically changes how people band together and communicate over the internet with social media technologies. Internally, social media technology can boost

[13] Graham Meikle, Social Media: Communication, Sharing and Visibility, (New York: Routledge, 2016).
[14] Meikle 2016, 6.
[15] Karen Sternheimer, Connecting social problems and popular culture: why media is not the answer, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013), 63.

the efficiency and collaboration throughout the organization.[16] Mergel (2013, 67) asserts that people are connecting to social technologies to collect, assess, and discuss news and information, instead of turning to formally scripted content provided by the government. She purports that social media technologies are a tool to fill the trust gap and help triangulate government, mass media, and citizens to fulfill a critical civic function and increase trust in elected government officials.

Mergel and Greeves (2013) believe the difficulty of employees utilizing social media creates a solid division between personal and professional. The authors recommend employees who manage a social media presence strictly for personal reasons do not mention their employment in a profile. The employees do not join groups or comment on topics relative to their specific agency. They also recommend maintaining a profile focused on personal interests such as sports and traveling or an average citizen's view on their industry. In consensus with other writers, Mergel and Greeves (2013) acknowledge an employee's social media presence expands the boundaries of the organization.[17]

While social media seems ideal for government operations, there are experts who feel like the integration of social media is risky. In a chapter within *The Internet in Public Life* Levine (2004) argues the internet changes the nature and the limits of privacy. The civil society (community groups and non-governmental organizations such as labor unions) requires a particular degree and type of privacy. He points out that in public institutions such as courts, all business is normally supposed to be public and transparent

[16] Sobaci 2016,135-151.
[17] Mergel and Greeves 2013, 131.

but for intimate matters, privacy is the norm.[18] Thomas Bryer (2016) challenges social media use in a governing sector with a position on transparency. He believes full transparency is risky when citizens, especially uninformed citizens, engage with overwhelming amounts of data. Not understanding the context or how to interpret information may set citizens up to fail.[19] His theory was well played during the 2020 pandemic when citizens spread misinformation about COVID-19 on social media.[20] Law professor Glenn Reynolds (2019) affirmed that people are more likely to believe misinformation on social media because they tend to only read headlines from people they see as ideological [political] allies. He adds the design of social media encourages people to make assumptions about the background of information shared and assumptions that may follow their own preconceptions and prejudices.[21] Astra Taylor presents an argument in *The People's Platform* that the values of programmers and stakeholders at social media tech companies shape the online worlds we inhabit. Their choices can segregate us further, exclude voices, or expand our sense of human possibility.[22]

Tim Highfield refocuses the conversation on the role of identities and how it impacts behavior on social media. He labels the benefits of a politician engaging on social media to portray the politician as human and visible.[23] On the flipside, he also announces that the 'callout culture' can lead to individuals being targeted in response to

[18] Levine 2004, 95.
[19] Bryer 2016, 207.
[20] Ferrara, Cresci and Luceri 2020, 271-277.
[21] Reynolds 2019, 37-38.
[22] Astra Taylor, *The People's Platform: Taking Back Power and Culture in the Digital Age (New York: Metropolitan Books*, 2014), 31,116.
[23] Highfield 2016, 128-129.

their personal views, comments for revenge, for the governing sector, and admits policy choices can lead to public humiliation.[24] The callout culture and cancel culture on social media can shame misogynists, bigots, and other demeaning characters to empower marginalized groups (Kornhaber 2020; Highfield 2016). Highfield also writes this culture may include the practices of account hacking, surreptitious recording and uploading highly private and personal content, also known as leaking, on various social media channels for revenge.[25]

This last decade witnessed an increase of public sector organizations engaging on social media to inform citizens of news, highlight meetings, and showcase civic efforts being made on citizens' behalf. Jue, Marr and Kassotakis predicted social media would change the government by making it inexcusable for government officials to hear the needs of the people.[26] Little did they know, social media also became a heightened space for social activism. Social scientists within the Center for Critical Race and Digital Studies have produced works that discuss progressive social movements on the Internet, via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or "Black Twitter". Black Digital Studies Professor, André Brock defines "Black Twitter" as an intentional group of Twitter users rather than a Black online public. "Black Twitter" posts about racial identity ground their existence around their digital practice.[27] Highfield, too, recognized that the social media use of Black Americans has attracted attention for their practices utilized in public spaces.[28] "Black Twitter" rage is typically in response to discriminatory events in which

[24] Highfield 2016, 26.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Jue, Marr and Kassotakis 2010, 188.
[27] Brock 2020, 79-124
[28] Highfield, 20.

public employees may be "tagged" (i.e., included) into a conversation. The employee's response may not be acceptable, and the situation brings unwanted attention to the organization. Although, Dryburgh and Bezboruah (2016) imply that online scrutiny by community members can hold public organizations to a high level of accountability.

Social Media in the Public Sector- Education

Social media issues in public education are highly relevant to this study and could offer some insight to professionals that are cross managing in the public sector. Embedded in the introduction of this research, I identified school administrators in public education and faculty at universities across the United States that were publicly dismissed for their incivilities on social media. Those cases are only 1 percent of the cases that can be tracked in a general Google search.

Social media technology allows educators to develop relationships with students, parents, and the school's community. John Palfrey believes digital environments frequently lend themselves to incivility in interpersonal discourse.[29] Therefore, educators must be mindful of the risks of vulnerability by engaging on social media. The trending controversies of teachers being terminated for their use of social media require school leaders to be conscious of the educators' First Amendment of Free Speech and the governing policies.[30] "School leaders must draw their own lines between issues that can be handled informally and matters that must be treated more formally?" said Palfrey.[31]

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[29] John Palfrey, *Safe Spaces Brave Spaces: Diversity and Free Expression in Education* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017), 81.
[30] Mandy Vasek and Randy Hendrick, "Teachers, Social Media, and Free Speech," eJournal of Education Policy, (Spring 2016): https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1158122.pdf.
[31] Palfrey, "Safe Spaces,",37.

Horowitz and Bollinger recommend school districts establish policies that rule and provide guidance for the use of social media for students and employees. These policies should specifically state what actions would result in punitive consequences.[32]

From my experience as an educator, I know teachers are expected to maintain honesty, integrity, transparency, and the ability to relate to the community. The nature of the educational profession suggests teachers exercise more decorum in their personal lives than in other professions.[33] Posts on online platforms and engaging in cultures also encourage discrimination among a minority group as a form of microaggression. Regardless of color, microaggressions make people worry.[34] If teachers are engaging in these activities, it reduces their level of trust and reflects poorly on the school (Naughton 2016; Younger 2016; Smith 2012).

Freedom of expression is one of the defining features of American democracy.[35] For years, teachers as public workers have not had free speech rights as explained by David Hudson, Jr.[36] An example of this is the *Pickering vs. the Board of Education* case which is discussed later in this review. In Chapter Four of *Safe Spaces, Brave Spaces*, Palfrey argues the First Amendment does not state to whom free expression applies (68). The First Amendment does not grant an affirmative right of free expression to all people. It operates as a restraint on the state, stopping those in authority from making laws that

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[32] Merle Horowitz and Dorothy M. Bollinger, *Cyberbullying In Social Media Within Educational Institutions: Featuring Student, Employee, and Parent Information* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 85.
[33] Horowitz and Bollinger, "Cyberbullying," 87.
[34] Ibid., 37.
[35] Julian Petley, "Censoring the Word," (Oxford, NY: Seagull Books, 2007)
[36] David Hudson, Jr., Public Employees, "Private Speech: 1st Amendment doesn't always protect government worker," ABA Journal, (May 2017): http://www.abajournal.com/magazine/article/public_employees_private_speech.

truncate the right to free expression.[37] Lori Andrews notes state statutes protect the rights of employees who are whistleblowers or those that point out flaws in their workplace.[38]

Education-Based Social Media Management Research Alignment

Previously stated, this research aligns with scholars in education who promote the need for social media policies specifically stating which social media behaviors require disciplining. Through these studies, it is apparent social media issues in education fluctuate.

Stephanie Smith (2012) finds school boards are mostly untrained in determining and evaluating unacceptable social networking practices. She argues school administrators and staff should have an open forum to discuss what is considered inappropriate engagement on social media. Throughout her research, Smith illustrates employees need to be reminded they will not be disciplined for using social media communications, but for the actions they chose for engagement (68). Her research concludes by providing examples of appropriate social media communication and acceptable texting practice which reduce negative reactions (72).

Coleman (2013) focuses on the challenges of disciplining students for cyberbullying in schools. Whereas this research is not concentrated on employment issues in school, it directs attention to how the social media culture of cyberbullying contributes to student-to-student or student-to-teacher issues within the school. Like Smith (2012), Coleman (2013) found school districts are challenged with interpreting and applying legislation in the process of implementing policies for disciplining their

[37] Ibid., 69.
[38] Lori Andrews, *I Know Who You Are and I Saw What You Did* (New York: Free Press, 2012), 76.

students. Coleman mentions that forty-eight states require schools to have a written policy that addresses bullying, but four states include off-campus behaviors as part of their discipline code.[39]

Vicki Hollis Younger (2016) explores the lines of separating the free speech rights of teachers in their professional and personal lives on social media. Based in Louisiana, a southern state that often trends heavily in educators disciplined for inappropriate behavior on social media (WAFB 2020; Pagones 2018; Johnson 2016), Younger (2016) examines the social media policies that Louisiana-based school districts implemented. Her research contends that an employees' personal social media page may contain unprotected speech when social media discourse engages personal and professional speech.[40] Also, she noted that school employees have no guarantee of free speech protection when speaking from their role unless they are providing testimony under oath.[41] This research concludes with urging administrators to become familiar with court appeals and rulings to avoid litigation for themselves and their districts when it comes to controlling speech.

The common theme this researcher recognized in education-based literature is the need for clarity for employees in the process of administrators managing the personal or professional lives of the members of the organization. In addition, administrators did not know how to properly address the issue of social media personas, cyberbullying, and other gestures the organization may deem as inappropriate. Each manuscript linked free speech cases, especially *Pickering and the Board of Education*, the first case setting the

[39] Coleman 2013, 14.
[40] Younger Hollis 2016, 100.
[41] Younger Hollis 2016, 99.

precedent for ruling on the behalf of freedom of speech for public sector workers, i.e., educators in the United States. In agreement with the focus of knowing the protocol for managing the freedoms of an employee on social media, the next section of this literature review briefly touches on the standards for federal employees and the national rules and regulations for regulating social media in the workplace.

Federal Rules and Regulations in America for Local Workers

History captures public workers in the US in confrontation over their free speech rights as professionals with legislature and organizations. Based on Social Media Law, the US Supreme Court has significantly reduced the layers of First Amendment protection provided to public sector employees. In 1968, *Pickering vs. Board of Education,* 391 US 563, Marvin Pickering, a high school science teacher, composed a letter to the editor of a community newspaper in Will County, IL, condemning the board of education's allocation of funds between academics and athletics. The school board responded by terminating the teacher. He was terminated with claims the letter contained false statements that impugned the integrity of the school system. Pickering sued, claiming that the board violated his First Amendment rights to freedom of speech by terminating him. The Supreme Court ruled that Mr. Pickering had the right to free speech speaking on public concerns, and the school officials violated the rights of the teacher by terminating him (Oyez 2018). This case set the standard for court rulings over First Amendment issues. The Supreme Court further ruled that *Pickering v. Board of Education's* balancing test be implemented in this process. This test weighs the employee's interest as a citizen in commenting on matters of public concern against the

government's interest as an employer in improving the efficiency of the public services it provides through its employees.

You'll need a connector sentence here to tie these paragraphs together. What constitutes a First Amendment retaliation claim; who files the claim? Does it apply to any worker or just public workers?

A *First Amendment retaliation claim* involves this five-step analysis: 1) Did the plaintiff speak on a matter of public concern. If not, the employee has no protection; 2) Did the plaintiff speak as a private citizen or public employee; 3) Was the plaintiff's protected speech a significant or motivating reason in the adverse employment action; 4) Did the employer have a good reason for treating the employee differently than the rest of the public; and 5) Would the employer have taken unfavorable employment actions even if the protected speech had not occurred.[42]

The parameters around freedom of speech are broad, and the US Government has placed limits on free speech content. The US Supreme Court supports employee speech in the voice of private citizens, however, when it comes to work matters, the employee's First Amendment rights may not be protected. *Connick v. Myers,* 461 US 138 (1983) determines that employee expressions of workplace matters, if it addresses a public concern, the content, form, and context of the statement released by the public employee must be taken into consideration.[43] Other significant cases that rule in favor of the employee's freedom of speech in a public sphere are *Rankin v. McPherson*, *Garcetti et al. v. Ceballos*, and *Lane v. Franks*. Rankin v. McPherson, 483 US 378 (1987) rules

[42] Furi-Perry 2019, 638-645.
[43] Alfred 1984.

that when a public employee's speech is on a matter of concern, and when the speech is not disruptive to the discipline and regular operation of the workplace, it is protected by the Constitution.[44] In The case of *Garcetti vs. Ceballos* 547 US 410 (2006), the court rules that government employees are only covered by the First Amendment when speaking as private citizens.[45] *Lane v. Franks*, 134 S. Ct. 2369 (2014) unanimously ruled that speech on a matter of public concern or concerning information learned in public employment must be distinguished from speech that is part of his or her ordinary speech job duties. With this ruling, citizen speech receives protection.[46]

As private companies in the United States, social media companies such as Meta Platforms, Inc., corporate for Facebook and Instagram, can censor what people post to give users a platform to express their views without feeling threatened safely. The Communications Decency Act – Section 230(c)(1) protects internet-based companies from the legal liability for the comments of their users. Congress passed Section 230 to enhance service providers' ability to delete or monitor content without becoming publishers. If a user's statement is altered by the provider and is seen as defamatory, then the provider (Minclaw 2018) waives the immunity. The clauses of CDA Section 230 do not cover users. Therefore, it leaves workers who utilize social media to post vile content at fault. In a local news article, Attorney Charles Maiers confirms that without Section 230, social media would "cease to exist or become a cesspool" of the worst media content humanity has to offer.[47]

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[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] "Lane v. Franks." Mtsu.edu, 2014. https://www.mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/1466/lane-v-franks.
[47] Charles Maiers, "About that Section 230," *Speedway Towntalk*, February 2021.

The federal Electronic Communication Privacy Act (ECPA) clarifies that the company's computer system, sites, accounts, or devices are the employer's property. Under these claims, the employer has the legal right to monitor employees' electronic use, content, activity, and transmissions. In Delaware and Connecticut, employers must notify employees that their computers are being monitored.[48] The ECPA also allows employer access to electronic communications [email] with the employee's consent. If employers give clear notice about policies and practices of monitoring electronic communications, when employees utilize the company's electronics, they will be regarded to have given their agreement to monitoring.[49]

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) began developing policies in 2011 for private employers to incorporate into their operational manuals. The NLRB protects the rights of employees by the following:

> Whether or not you are represented by a union, federal law gives you the right to join together with coworkers to improve your lives at work - including joining together in cyberspace, such as on Facebook.
>
> Federal law protects your right to engage in not only union activity but also "protected concerted" activity. You have the right to address work-related issues and share information about pay, benefits, and working conditions with coworkers and a union. You have the right to take action with one or more coworkers to improve your working conditions by, among other means, raising work-related complaints directly with your employer or with a government agency or seeking help to form a union. Using social media can be a form of protected concerted activity. You have the right to address work-related issues and share information about pay, benefits, and working conditions with coworkers on Facebook, YouTube, and other social media.
>
> But just individually griping about some aspect of work is not "concerted activity": what you say must have some relation to group action, or seek to initiate, induce, or prepare for group action, or bring a group complaint to the attention of management. Such activity is not protected if you say things about

[48] Flynn, 67.
[49] American Bar Association 2006, 140.

> your employer that are egregiously offensive or knowingly and deliberately false or if you publicly disparage your employer's products or services without relating your complaints to any labor controversy.

The NLRB advises that employers have their legal counsel review and analyze the organization's social media policies. This process is to critique the policy language employers have put in place for their employees to ensure their rules do not put the organization at odds with NLRB rules.[50]

In a conference paper, Holt et al. trace that depending on local, state, and federal laws, National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) employers have 'latitudes' to regulate an employee's political speech. Section 7 of the NLRA grants employees the right to engage in concerted activity. Concerted activity can be a social media post. Even so, liking and commenting on a post is a form of engaging in concerting activity (Holt et al. 2021; Flynn 2012). Holt et al. also warns public employees of possible state laws that protect political speech but may have some nuances.[51] Currently, Indiana does not have state laws protecting political speech. However, in January 2022, House Bill 1190 was proposed to extend free speech rights to students attending state educational institutions. My guess is that if this bill becomes a law, we could see this growth in faculty and staff (public employees) in the future.

In addition to state laws, Holt et al. address that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII) sustains an employer's right to fire for social media posts. Title VII prohibits employment discrimination and harassment based on race, color, sex, religion, and national origin. As explained, if an employee uses hate speech to address a person or

[50] Flynn, 71.
[51] Holt at el. 2021, 4.

group based on the terms of the act, the employers have a right to take action to avoid claims from the victim.[52]

This section literature review was meant to illustrate the angle from which local public sector employers can terminate their employees that engage inappropriately on social media. In order of US standards, public employees that post on social media must also consider organizational policies and rules. The shifting US population demographics, which are more diverse and reflect different languages, cultures, values, and backgrounds, necessitate professional societies and organizations to take the lead in developing rules and policies which outline the parameters of social media free speech.

The Case for Social Media Policies for Local Governments

Social media's integration into the public sector has taken various forms. Many of the texts informing of social media issues and policies were written in the early 2010s. However, in 2022, local (county, townships, and municipal) agencies have not implemented a social media policy in their employee's handbooks. As social media emerges and new technologies are integrated into organizations, there will be a need to maintain a standard for how the organization and its actors will engage (Mergel 2013; Bezboruah and Dryburgh 2012). Jue et al. contend that creating the right policies regarding use, the scope of access, and privacy will significantly influence the success of the organization's efforts in implementing social media.[53] Nancy Flynn in *Social Media Handbook* (2012) illustrates that social media is a risky business and puts employees at risk. She recommends social media policies are essential to compliance management and

[52] Ibid.
[53] Jue, Marr and Kassotakis 2010, 160.

for organizations to develop and enforce social media use, content, and business records.[54] Considering that Mergel (2013) also promotes the implementation of AUPs to maintain the organizational standards.[55]

Organizations that have implemented social media policies should update their documents and employee training (Benay 2018; Flynn 2012; Bezboruah and Dryburgh 2012). Alex Benay argues that governments need to revisit policies and procedures to strip out inefficiencies to succeed in a modern world globally. He remarks that some government teams believe they have implemented practical social media guidelines for their staff, but they haven't.[56] Brown, Mossberger, and Cho advocate for local governments to address the lack of trust and confidence in government among communities of color, understanding their connection with governance.

> Governance requires the government to promote transparency, listen to, and value the contributions of citizens, ensure equity in access to government information and decision-making processes, and provide opportunities for two-way communication between government and citizens and among citizens. Technology is one mechanism for achieving these aims, but local governments must also consider how its use reflects disparities in society, including income, education, race, and ethnicity, which are persistent factors in the "digital divide." Therefore, strategies that incorporate technology as a critical mechanism for governance should seek to overcome these challenges to create an inclusive government for communities of color and create policies that reflect their needs and values. (Brown, Mossberger and Cho, 111-112)

Meier and Rutherford believe that public administrators should be aware that racial disparities could bleed over into an institution's policies and create more significant

[54] Flynn 2012, 7.
[55] Mergel 2013, 57.
[56] Benay 2018, 120.

differences for the organization's clients.[57] Here, we'll say, racial disparities could bleed over and create issues among the team.

Conclusion

The role of social media in the public sector is evolving. While it may be seen as a dangerous and destructive source, it can benefit the organization's efficiency and ability to connect with ALL citizens. Social media platforms allow citizens to see the people that serve them as humans (Highsmith 2016). But, if public-serving organizations are not setting rules and standards for employees who engage on social media, especially on the organization's behalf, there could be a higher risk of dealing with ethical challenges and unpleasant conversations on social media. Effective social media policies should be as strong as the enforced dress code policy. If maintaining the community's trust is a part of public value in government, a social media policy is necessary.

Chapter Three explores the methodologies for this research. Using the multi-methods approach, I examine the social media policies implemented within local governments in Indianapolis and surrounding areas through the lens of the Logic of Appropriateness by James G. March and Johan P. Olsen. This study surveys human resource professionals to determine whether agencies have social media policies and a code of ethics and what actions put an employee at risk for termination. In addition, a follow-up interview was done to provide explanatory evidence that social media policies are not adequately implemented. A third method applied in this research was a content analysis of the social media policies of nine agencies to determine the language utilized to explain retaliation for misconduct on social media.

[57] Meier and Rutherford 2020,181.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Design and Methodology

The primary focus of this study is to examine how local government employee behavior is managed in work policies, i.e., social media policies. This explanatory sequential multi-methods study identifies possible variables in social media policies that could potentially present challenges for governing agencies and their employees. The multi-methods approach provided a deeper understanding of the development of the social media policies, the implementation process, and the organization's expectations of its employees. Within this chapter, I discuss the applied methodology of my study with Indiana-based public sector human resource and personnel professionals. The sections of this chapter are: 1) Theoretical Framework, 2) Research Questions, 3) Research Method, 4) Preliminary Study, and 5) Research Ethics.

The research design is the specific plan or a recipe for studying the research problem (Joyner et al. 2013). John W. Creswell defines research design as the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiries, and specific methods.[58] The design of the study is what sets the present research apart from others. It functions to ensure that evidence obtained enables the researcher to answer the initial question as clearly as possible.[59] The research problem, the audience, and the personal experience of the researcher is the driver for the selection of the research design. Three methods in research

[58] Creswell, John W. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. Los Angeles: Sage, 2009:5.
[59] Vaus, David A de. Research design in social research. London Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE, 2001.

design that are typically used for research are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods.[60] As previously mentioned, this research employs multi-method strategies.

My initial thought for this study was to design a qualitative research-based analysis. I wanted to approach this research by assisting a local organization with revising a social media policy based on the qualitative responses from the administrative team and employees within the organization and after a workplace culture observation. As I began to implement the study, the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown orders were extended throughout Indiana as coronavirus death cases were rapidly rising.[61] To limit my interaction with people and to protect myself from the virus, I reframed my research. I revisited a collection of journal articles and books previously read to develop an understanding of social media in the public sector. After careful evaluation, I found a need to identify the differences between AUPs, social media policies, and a code of conduct. I was rather distracted by a few cases that I found posted on the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) and NLRB websites. Three of those cases placed major concern on social media policies in the public sector and not AUPs. As a result of those cases, I decided that my first question would be: 1) How are HR professionals managing employees using the social media policy?

Before I could interrogate human resource professionals, I needed to know if each agency an administrator represented had a social media policy or a code of ethics for their employees. My sub-question: 1) Does your organization have a code of conduct or code

[60] Creswell, Research Design, 3.
[61] Vantryon, Matthew. "Stay-at-Home Order to be Extended: Details Come Monday for Order Lasting to April 20." Indianapolis Star, Apr 04, 2020. http://ulib.iupui.edu/cgi-bin/proxy.pl?url=http://search.proquest.com/newspapers/stay-at-home-order-be-extended/docview/2385895889/se-2?accountid=7398.

of ethics; was also the foundation of this research. Codes of Ethics are typically used by organizations as rules and standards for the company's values, ethics, and beliefs for operation as explained in my literature review. A code of conduct would be a set of rules and regulations used to inform employees of behavior expectations in the workplace. Examining the code of conduct and the code of ethics seemed fitting since the social media policy would align behavior expectations and rules for social media engagement as deemed "appropriate" for the organization.

Theoretical Framework for Research

This section of the research methodology and design chapter focuses on the introduction of the theory that guides my research, *Tweet or Fired*. With intent, this dissertation is written for completion as a requirement for doctoral studies, however, my lay audience are professionals, administrative and organizational leaders of public sector organizations. I will provide a short summary on the meaning of the theoretical concept in research before presenting the Logic of Appropriateness.

The theories that I explored for a framework were rooted in the context of new institutionalism ("neoinstitutionalism") by James G. March and Johan P. Olsen (1984).[62] Neoinstitutionalism is widely used as a method to study institutions through a social, economic and political lens within the United States. It identifies the rules, norms, practices, and the relationships that influence decision-making in politics, i.e., in public

[62] I was introduced to the concept of new institutionalism theory (aka "neo-institutionalism") in my organizational leadership and change course at DePaul University as a model for developing teams and structures.

administration.[63] These theories typically fall in between these three structures: rational choice, sociological, and historical institutionalism.

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) define theoretical frameworks as the underlying structure, the scaffolding, or the frame of a study. A theoretical framework is typically used in qualitative research. Charmaz (2006) claims that theoretical frameworks locate the specific argument a researcher makes. It derives from the positioning of the study and draws upon concepts, terms, definitions, models, and theories of a particular literature base and disciplinary orientation.[64] The goal of a study should be informed by current theory and knowledge.[65]

Classical organization theory laid a foundation for organizations to navigate productivity and manage employees. Classical organization theory is the merger of scientific management, bureaucratic theory, and administrative theory. These overarching themes of these theories view organizations as machines and human beings as parts of the machine. Classical organization theory was the first set of theories of its kind. Classical organizational theory originated at the time of the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution was a period in the eighteenth century when farmlands became industrialized, and factories began to produce goods. Scottish economist Adam Smith and

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[63] Lane, Jan-Erik. "The New Institutionalism." In The Public Sector: Concepts, Models and Approaches, 3rd ed., 217-40. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2000. https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446220085.n11.

[64] Sharan B. Merriam, and Elizabeth J. Tisdell. Qualitative Research : A Guide to Design and Implementation. Vol. Fourth edition. The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2016. https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1022562&site=ehost-live

[65] Joseph Alex Maxwell, Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach, 3rd ed, Applied Social Research Methods, v. 41 (Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications, 2013).

James Watt, the inventor of the steam engine, are two people often named as responsible for industrialization (Shafritz et al. 2013). As a result of this evolution, the organizational theory needed to be revamped to manage the body of workers in the factory. In the classical organization, theory category is Frederick W. Taylor's Scientific Management, Henri Fayol's Administrative Management, and Max Weber's Bureaucratic Management. Each theory is rooted with the concerns of problems of the workplace and the authority level of the organization.

Scientific Management

Frederick Winslow Taylor's science of management was developed by his approach and philosophy on life, work, and society (Fry 1989). Taylor's overall aim was control (51). He is the first man recorded to critique work with a systematic observation. He developed time-and-motion studies, known as "Taylorism", and the scientific management theory. Scientific management emerged as a national movement in the United States in 1910 (Shafritz et. al 2013, 221).

As mentioned above, this era was the shift into industrialization. Taylor's position was to end the turmoil and unrest between management and the workers (Fry 1989). He believed a person is needed to govern and manage people. In chapter two of the *Principles of Scientific Management* (1911), Taylor explained the core duties for managers in scientific management (15):

1. Develop a science to study the element of man's work and determine the most efficient way to perform tasks to replace the rule-of-thumb method. Under scientific management the "initiative of the workmen is obtained with absolute uniformity and to a greater extent than is possible under the old system and in addition to this improvement on the part of the men, the managers assume new burdens, new duties, and responsibilities never dreamed of in the past".

Webster defines the rule-of-thumb as a method of procedure based on experience and common sense.

1. They scientifically select, train, teach, and develop the workman.

Prior to this statement, the workman chose their own work and trained themselves.

1. They heartily cooperate with men so as to insure all of the work being done in accordance with the principles of the science which has been developed.
2. There is an almost equal division of the work and the responsibility between the management and the workmen. The management take over all work for which they are better fitted than the workmen, while in the past almost all of the work and the greater part of the responsibility were thrown upon the men.

Brian Fry (1989) views Taylor's Scientific Management theory as essential at this time. Taylor recognized the interests of the workers at least to the extent that they shared a stake in higher productivity with the managers. His systematic investigation by the precision of his measurements replaced the prior reliance on rule-of-thumb and set the tone for evolution of a technical enterprise (68-70).

Bureaucracy

Max Weber, a German sociologist, believed bureaucracy is the most efficient form of organization. Equal enforcement is bureaucracy. He defines an organization as an order of social ties, which are maintained by certain individuals. Weber's concept of the organization is central to the orientation of human behavior toward a set of rules. Weber identifies bureaucracy in the legal-rational society as the dominant organizational form (Fry 1989, 30).

For employment in a modern bureaucratic organization, Weber structures these rules:

1. Officials are personally free and are appointed on the basis of a contract.
2. Officials are appointed, not elected.
3. Officials are appointed on the basis of professional qualifications.
4. Officials have a fixed money salary and pension rights.
5. The official's post is his sole or major occupation.
6. A career structure exists with promotions based on merit.
7. The official is subject to a unified control and disciplinary system in which the means of compulsion and its exercise are clearly defined (Fry 1989, 31).

Shafritz et. al (2013) says public sector bureaucracies tend to operate in a somewhat different climate from those in the private sector. Opposite of Weber's definition, public sector bureaucracies refer to all government offices and bureaus as well as the public officials of a government which include public officials that are elected and appointed. It is also used as a general criticism in reference to any red tape that burdens inefficient organizations (226).

Administrative Management

Henri Fayol, a French executive engineer, developed the theory of management. Fayol believed organizations could universally use this concept: 1) Technical: production and the manufacturing of goods; 2) Commercial: Buying, selling, and exchange activities; 3) Financial: raising and using capital; 4) Security: Protecting employees and property; 5) Accounting and 6) Managerial: Planning, organization, commanding people, coordinating and control (Shafritz et al. 2013).

Wren et al. (2002) says to make the French economy more powerful, Fayol aimed at developing an administrative theory. Like Taylor, Fayol has rewarded traditional knowledge and experience. However, unlike Taylor, Fayol was not focused on individual tasks in the conduct of a company but rather on its overall management and concentrated on overall social interactions within the company.

As time progresses, traditional scholars continued to develop a variety of theories to explain organizational behavior and sociology. James G. March and Johan P. Olsen are two scholars in political science that introduced new institutionalism in the 1980s as mentioned above. March and Olsen noticed the transformation of social institutions and the ongoing observations that were being made about them. They labeled these institutions as "political" and economic institutions that are larger, more complex, and resourceful. The major actors are the institutions of law (legislature and bureaucracy) or a company. From their viewpoint, a governing institution shapes the political behavior of the institution which dictates the customs, norms, rules, and expectations (March and Olsen 1983; March and Olsen 1995). The Logic of Appropriateness is an extension of their view on the role of institutions in controlling behavior within new institutionalism.

March and Olsen's Logic of Appropriateness is a theory that places rules as a driver for exemplary human behavior organized within institutions. The compatibility of behavior to cultural and political norms and rules is used to determine whether it is appropriate or not. These rules could also be embedded as ethical norms for public sector agencies. In their opinion, individuals and collective groups make inferences from their own and others' experiences, and the rules of appropriateness that institutions develop is a carrier of lessons from experience. These rules revolve over time as new experiences

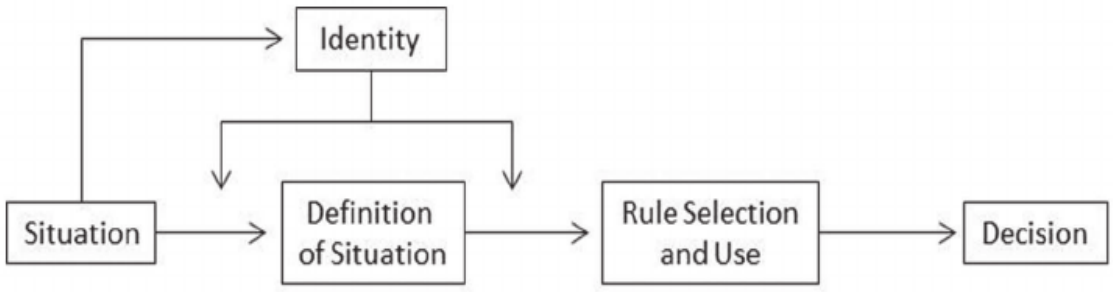
guide new rules and forces organizations to improve their effectiveness and ability to adapt to change.[66]

> To act appropriately is to proceed according to the institutionalized practices of a collectivity, based on mutual, often tacit, understandings of what is true, reasonable, natural, right, and good. The term "Logic of Appropriateness" has overtones of morality, but rules of appropriateness underlie atrocities of action such as ethical cleansing... (4)

The Logic of Appropriateness (2004) was conceptualized as a framework by J. Mark Weber, Shirli Kopelman, and David M. Messick. This frame filters an individual's behavior in a situation within an institution. Weber et. al says the appropriateness framework suggests that the dynamics of identity play a vital role in how the situation is defined. The actor in this process asks themselves these three questions[67]:

1. What is this situation?
2. Who am I and what is my role?
3. What are the rules?

Figure 3-a Appropriateness Framework Design



Adapted from Weber, Kopelman and Messick (2004).

[66] James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, The Logic of Appropriateness, Oxford Handbooks Online (Oxford University Press, 2011), https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199604456.013.0024.
[67] Weber, Kopelman and Messick 2004, 289.

This framework draws emphasis on the interaction between identity and situational cues in the meaning of a situation and which creates a set of possible appropriate actions (decision).[68] The core of the appropriateness framework is the definition of the situation. Weber et. al instructs the definition of the situation to inform an individual about the norms, expectations, rules, learned behaviors, skills, and relevant strategies and "acts" as the proximal mediator of behavioral choice. In other terms, what an individual may see as appropriate in a situation may affect how they approach the issue, other decisions or behaviors.

As a framework for this research, the focus is on the human resource professionals' experiences and my interpretation of their response to the application of social media policy within the organization. However, here this is a typical scenario that can be played out in the workplace that can support the application of this framework:

> Situation: An employee neglects to attend two team meetings in January and does not inform the team or managers.
>
> Identity of Actor: Human Resource Manager (HRM)
>
> Organizational Rule: Each employee is required to attend three full team meetings per month. If an employee cannot attend a team meeting, they must inform the team and a manager.
>
> Potential Employee Outcome: The Logic of Appropriateness would nudge the employee to check in with management after the first unattended meeting. Cultural professional norms may inform the employee to call or email the team informing them they will not be attending the meeting.

[68] Ibid.

Potential HRM Outcome: If there are no middle managers, HRM would meet with the employee to discuss the protocol and the duties of an employee. Also, the HRM would allow the employee to defend their reason for missing the meetings. If these reasons are not within violation, they will excuse the employee. If within violations, the HRM will discipline the employee.

Potential Organizational Outcome: The organization will provide reinstatement of rules to the team and possibly create new protocols and consequences for employees that do not attend regular meetings. If the management team does not reprimand the employee, it may be assumed that team meetings are not mandatory and other employees will catch on and possibly skip out on team meetings.

B. Guy Peters argues that this framework can be conceptualized as a model for role theory. He also instructs that in order for the Logic of Appropriateness to be successful, there must be some form of enforcement. Rather than relying on an external enforcement mechanism, effective institutions include sanctioning and enforcement processes into their structures through socialization. Institutions, which range from conventions, codes of conduct, and behavioral standards to statute law, common law, and individual contracts, are always evolving and, as a result, altering the options open to us.[69] With consequences, if agencies are efficient in influencing the behaviors of their staff, the employees will take into consideration with how they conduct themselves.[70]

A primary function of institutions is to eliminate uncertainty by providing a solid framework for human interaction. He also states that a potential problem is the degree of

[69] North 1990, 6.
[70] Peters 2019.

uniformity within the institution is an issue with 'appropriateness' in a policy. Meaning how the term in the policy is understood among the diverse culture within the organization.[71] Dehart-Davis (2017) broadens the argument that rule behavior is complex when considering personality and the organization's culture. The concept of appropriateness in an organization may be unclear to employees depending upon their culture, upbring, religious beliefs, and personal values. This further pushes the need for transparent policies, especially when it comes to behavioral rules.

By incorporating the appropriateness as a framework in this research, the study contributes to organizational studies and adds a perspective to formal practices in human resources. When identified, the Logic of Appropriateness supported the perception that social media policies are created by organizations to control how employees behave as representatives of the organization. This theory confirmed my thoughts on the application of policies in the workplace to manage how public sector employees engage as representatives for their agency.

Research Questions

To develop questions for this research, I approached it using the explanatory research method. These questions set a foundation for the survey and literature review. In addition, my research questions were not answered in related research.

Question 1: How are HR professionals managing employees using the social media policy?

Question 2: What is the separation between the agencies' social media policies and a code of ethics?

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[71] Peters 2019, 35-44.

Question 3: What are the consequences stated for misconduct on social media?

Question 4: Why should public agencies have a social media policy?

Hypotheses

In alignment with the research questions, the following hypotheses are proposed to be explored:

H1: Public sector HR professionals manage employees by monitoring and do not place disclaimers of consequences within the social media policy.

H2: The separation between the social media policy and a code of ethics in an agency is that the social media policy does not inform of values but instructs on maintaining character. While the code of ethics emphasizes the organization's values and how to do business.

H3: There are no consequences stated for misconduct on social media in the social media policy.

H4: Public Agencies should have a social media policy because it lowers the risk of having to discipline an employee and protect the organization.

Research Method

Gathering data in explanatory research can involve quantitative or qualitative strategies or a combination of both, mixed (MMR) (McNabb 2013). Often, researchers may use quantitative research to examine cause-and-effect relationships to test a theory by means of numbers and counts. Qualitative research is used by an investigator to make use of non-numeric data to test a phenomenon.[72] Johnson et al. (2007) defines mixed method research as the type of research in which a researcher combines elements of

[72] McDougal 2017, 116.

quantitative and qualitative research approaches for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration.[73] MMR as explained by Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016) can be defined based on how methods are applied in the research. For example, this research utilizes two qualitative methods for data collection and one quantitative method for data collection and analysis. Under the context of MMR, this research would be labeled multi-method (MMMR). I reference this research as multi-method throughout this chapter; however, the foundational design of this research is mixed methods.

MMMR designates studies in which the researcher combines multiple quantitative approaches or combines multiple qualitative approaches or combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches.[74] Brewer and Hunter (2006) say multi-method research emerged as a research style because the nature of multi-method in contemporary social science has convinced researchers that their solutions for research problems require more or different kinds of information than what one method provides. Previous research I reviewed incorporated mixed methods or a singular method to answer research questions and seemed vague. I found challenges correlating the issues with the policies when only policies were reviewed because details or events around the policies were absent. The outcomes of multi-method finds are likely to be better solutions with a greater theoretical scope because they are grounded in various ways to observe social realities.[75]

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[73] Johnson, R. Burke, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and Lisa A. Turner. "Toward a definition of mixed methods research." Journal of mixed methods research 1, no. 2 (2007): 112-133.
[74] Plano Clark, Vicki L., and Nataliya V. Ivankova. "What is Mixed Methods Research? Considering How Mixed Methods Research is Defined." In Mixed Methods Research: A Guide to the Field,,55-78. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2016.
[75] Brewer and Hunter, “The Multimethod Approach and Its Promise,” 1-15.

The difference between multi-method research and mixed methods is the question variation. The multi-method approaches the sub-questions by utilizing various research methodologies to answer each question, whereas mixed methods would answer the same question using different methodologies. Researchers that use MMMR apply triangulation measures to enhance the credibility of the study by using multiple resources. For a better explanation, triangulations provide multiple perspectives and lead to a more comprehensive understanding of what the researcher wants to predict or describe.[76] A true advantage of triangulation is that it can help researchers' ability to be innovative in the approach to solve the issue in research.

The strategy that was applied for the pre-study and later in this dissertation was sequential explanatory. The sequential explanatory method is a popular mixed methods procedure. A sequential explanatory two-phase design is employed to gather and analyze follow-up qualitative data to explain and interpret quantitative research data (Creswell 2009). Figure 3-b exhibits the sequential explanatory design phase.

Figure 3-b Sequential Explanatory Design Process

Adapted from Creswell (2009)

The method applied in the first full phase of the sequential explanatory design is quantitative data collection and analysis. For this research, I decided to survey

[76] Salkind, Neil J. Encyclopedia of Research Design. 0 vols. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2010. doi: 10.4135/9781412961288.

administrators in human resources and personnel services in the public sector. In the process of scouting participants for the pre-study, I realized potential research subjects did not have interest in completing long surveys. The survey design had to be direct, concise, and thorough. For the pre-study, the survey was twenty-five questions. When adapted for the dissertation research, the survey was complete with thirty-one questions. The second phase of the sequential explanatory design is qualitative data collection and analysis. The method used for data collection was one-on-one interviews. The final phase is the interpretation of the data is called "mixing". After the gathering of the data, the researcher combines the results and analyzes the case.

This study as a multi-methods approach addresses a need for public agencies to create or modify social media policies for their workers engaging on social media platforms. Public agency means and includes every public office, public officer or official (State or local, elected or appointed), institution, board, commission, bureau, council, department, authority, or other units of government of the State or any county, unit, special district, or other political subdivision of government. To develop a suitable argument, the questions answered in this process are: First, how often are employees terminated for incivility? Incivility is defined as rude or unsocial-able speech or behavior. Second, is there an enforced code of ethics? Third, did the terminated employee's agency have an enforced social media policy before their termination? And what is the reason behind the displaced employees being terminated for violations on social media? The outcomes are explained as a descriptive case in a sequential explanatory format.

A survey was used as a quantitative instrument to answer the close-ended questions about managing public sector employees. Social scientists use surveys for

applied and basic research to answer specific questions (Ruel 2019, 4; Neuman 2011, 309). While surveys may provide valid, accurate, and reliable data, literature informs the survey approach (and or but) does not provide the context and deeper understanding of the need for public agencies to incorporate social media policies that a qualitative approach can provide (McNabb 2013; Neuman 2011). The software used to administer the survey and analyze survey data was Qualtrics.

The experimental group for the quantitative survey consists of individuals with roles in human resources, human capital, and personnel within public agencies in Indianapolis. A subgroup for this study includes technology advisers and specialists, and executive administrators. These subjects were able to answer questions about the design of social media policies and a code of ethics. Additional questions on the survey address monitoring of employees and organization engagement on social media. The experimental and subgroup provided an aid in developing an understanding of the agency's culture and expectations of its employees engaging with the public online. The target number of subjects was ten representatives from city, county, and municipal agencies.

A qualitative approach is preferred to develop a full understanding of the research context and practices used within the context. The qualitative research method seeks to develop an understanding of the underlying issues (ambiguity of code of standards, jargon, and relativity) within social media policies or the code of ethics. This method was performed as a follow-up one-on-one interview with subjects facilitated by the investigator to confirm findings on the survey and to determine other thoughts around the issue of managing employees by way of a social media policy. The interviews were

designated for sixty minutes = 270 total of actual minutes and took place on Zoom. The data from the interview was transcribed and analyzed in the research software, MAXQDA.

The second qualitative research strategy in this MMMR approach was a content analysis. A content analysis consists of a systemic examination of a body of texts, images, and other communication sources (Krippendorff 2013; Weber 1990). A content analysis is transparent and makes it easy for a researcher to replicate findings and conduct follow-up studies (McDougal 2017,198). The content analysis for this research dissects the language of the social media policies and code of ethics enforced by the seven designated municipal agencies. Through the application of this method, I identify the language each agency uses to translate the standard expectation of conduct for employees interacting on social media. The primary search terms for the content analysis were sanction, discipline, terminate, fire, violation, misconduct, race, sex, and religion. Applying the appropriateness framework, I demonstrate the potential social media situations of the employees and how it violates certain rules within the policies. The content analysis detects if these policies foster a positive social culture for employees and properly guide them for engaging as employees. Or, if the said policies are a hindrance to how the employees engage and if they are left susceptible to being scrutinized for their conduct on social media. The role of the Logic of Appropriateness in the workplace places responsibility on the employees to maintain the culture of the business and how the employee engages. The documents (social media policies and code of ethics) for the content analysis were uploaded, organized and examined also in MAXQDA.

Locale

This research is centralized in Indianapolis, Indiana. The county, Marion. The agencies that were approached and studied ranged up to thirty miles outside of the center of Indianapolis. Indianapolis is the state capital of Indiana and has the largest population. Indianapolis is divided into nine townships: Center, Decatur, Franklin, Lawrence, Perry, Pike, Warren, Washington, and Wayne.[77] In addition, there are four independent cities that were "excluded" out of Indianapolis Unigov's consolidation: Beech Grove, Lawrence, Southport and Speedway.[78]

Recruitment Process

The participants for this research were recruited through direct contact via email or by telephone between July 2021 and September 2021. Thirty-two non-educational local public agencies with an open access directory were identified in Indianapolis and surrounding areas within thirty miles of the city's center. Twenty-seven of those agencies had active human resource managers. An email was forwarded to each listed human resource and personnel department member at the twenty-seven agencies which totaled a number of forty-three recipients. Five of these recipients were labor union representatives. Cold calls were made to the Indianapolis based agencies.

Outcome: I received a total of fifteen responses. Eleven committed to completing the survey but only six completed the survey and five completed the follow-up interview.

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[77] "InDepth Profile: STATS Indiana," Indiana.edu, 2020, http://www.stats.indiana.edu/profiles/profiles.asp?scope_choice=a&county_changer=18000&button1=Get+Profile&id=2&page_path=Area+Profiles&path_id=11&panel_number=1.

[78] Pierce, Richard B. Polite Protest: the political economy of race in Indianapolis, 1920-1970. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

The other four opted out of the survey but provided a copy of their social media policy, information about their social media policy, or provided another contact. Two of the correspondents informed me that they did not have a social media policy at the time but would possibly have one implemented by the beginning of the year 2022. Those two were a local union (requested to not be identified) and the city of Speedway.

It was my hope to book a participant from one of the agencies based out of Indianapolis (City of Indianapolis/Marion County, Health and Hospital Corporation, Indianapolis Airport Authority and IndyGO). Thankfully, the preliminary study aftermath suggested expanding my research locale. The agents from these locations did not return emails. They received either two emails, or an email and a vetted phone call. I called the City of Indianapolis office twice. The first time to request a link to their social media policy on July 29, immediately after IRB submission, the secretary did not have information on how to access it and stated that she would return and placed me on hold. After waiting ten minutes, she returned to the phone and said, “Let me give you a call back.” I never received a return call.

Another phone call was placed, and I spoke with the HR secretary again on August 26, 2021 and received the name of the representative that is responsible for managing social media policies. This HRM was also directly contacted by an employee that I was accidentally connected to by the HR secretary. I left a voicemail for this representative and forwarded two emails and never received a response. I took a trip to city hall one morning but none of the HR staff were available according to the desk clerk. While there, I had a chance to speak with an officer and later, two city employees about their policies. One of them provided a copy of the social media policy.

Twelve of the twenty-seven agencies had publicly accessible social media policies and employee handbooks in July 2021.This is a sentence fragment. But some of the uploaded documents were out of date or were marked unofficial. Nine social media policies and five code of ethics documents were provided within my outreach. The documents that I used for the content analysis cross study were Indianapolis (primary) and the five agencies that had representatives participate in the survey and interview.

Preliminary Study Methods

The preliminary study for this research was performed during August – December of 2020. The research design implemented was mixed methods. This study provided a working framework as is. I decided to perform a pre-study using subjects from municipal governments across the Midwest in Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio. The state of Indiana was omitted because this study is grounded in Indiana since this state is the home base for Indiana University. The area provided a greater potential to access public sector workers with IUPUI's campus in proximity to the State capital building. I wanted to see the trends and issues across the Great Lakes region to find what I could possibly see in my future results as it pertains to managing public sector employees on social media.

The greatest challenge in implementing this study was that it was in 2020 at the height of the pandemic and before Election Day. Getting in contact with human resource representatives for public agencies in the various states was challenging since many of them had limited office hours during this time. I reached out to a total of twenty-five human resource staff members in municipal governments in the three states mentioned. Four representatives responded with emails that they were transitioning out of the role due to elections and did not have the time to participate in the research. Eighteen

of the emails were left unread (read receipts were requested from Microsoft Outlook). Three of the representatives returned my request and one agreed to do a follow-up interview. The two representatives that did not interview left their public sector roles for a major retail corporation in Illinois and a US-based nonprofit, Goodwill Industries International Inc., prior to completing the survey. Yet, they answered the questions based on their experience in the public sector.

Preliminary Instrument Development

I enrolled in the quantitative methods in sociology class which provided an opportunity for me to focus on the development of this survey. Simultaneously, this study was advanced in an independent labor relation reading course. The quantitative course focused wholly on the Belmont principles[79] and removing biases from research, especially when surveying research subjects.[80] To guide the process, my instructor had each student design a survey for their thesis or dissertation. The initial draft consisted of fifty questions to ask subjects dealing with our research. The task of the survey was to identify demographics for varied perspectives; ask the hard questions and remain unbiased; accessible and user-friendly for all users, and nontraumatic.

After the development of the survey draft, the instructor reviewed the survey submissions and paired students with similar content. My research team consisted of a master's student and a doctoral student that performed social media and behavioral

[79] Office, "Read the Belmont Report," HHS.gov, January 15, 2018, https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/read-the-belmont-report/index.html.
[80] Anna-Marie Greaney et al., "Research Ethics Application: A Guide for the Novice Researcher," British Journal of Nursing 21, no. 1 (January 11, 2012): 38–43, https://doi.org/10.12968/bjon.2012.21.1.38.

studies research. We were tasked to use the instructor's feedback along with peer feedback to develop more concise questions and to shorten our survey by eliminating up to fifteen questions which would lessen the time a survey respondent would use to complete the survey. After the critique of my peers, a section on workplace climate was added to the survey and a few questions on the command of social media functions and subject demographic questions such as age and race were eliminated for the respect of persons and potential biases since the survey was about the role, and use of the policy. Also, my subjects would be identifiable since employee profiles are available on the websites of each agency. I personally felt eliminating the age of the subject question was not a good idea, but the function of the survey worked.

When the survey was reviewed by my independent reading course instructor, he identified the survey lacked depth in discussing monitoring practices and the creation of the social media policy. Second, the instrument needed follow-up questions. In addition, the survey should define incivility, surveilling, and sanctioning in the questioning. But it was noted that the survey would receive IRB approval once submitted. The recommendation of this instructor was to add the definitions and to create interview questions to turn this research into a mixed methods design.

The creation of research questions for the interview was created after an assessment of the literature and the survey. The instructor and I realized that the selected literature mentioned training after the implementation of social media policies. Therefore, the first question that we saw a need for was: How was the social media policy implemented within the agency? We then added for further inquiry: why was the social media policy implemented?

After careful consideration of the timing and the nonresponse from individuals for the survey, the instructor recommended that I limit my questions to five to be considerate of the personnel representative's time. Utilizing the survey results, we also decided that these questions would be necessary for knowing: 1) How long has the organization had a social media policy? 2) Is there training for all employees on all levels on the social media policy? And 3) What are the repercussions for the employees that are sanctioned?

I created two more creations just in case the representatives asked if there were additional questions. Those questions were 1) Who was responsible for the design of the social media policy? And 2) What is your perspective on the overall value of the social media policy for the organization?

After a mock interview, we realized that this interview could take up 20-30 minutes with explanations, pauses, and maybe additional questions that are prompted by the interviewee's responses. The interviewee stated he could designate no more than forty-five minutes for the interview, therefore the questions planned were within time.

Preliminary Study Results

The survey for the pre-study was completed by three human resource professionals between October 1, 2020, and December 1, 2020. Based on this group of respondents, two out of three organizations have a social media policy. As it pertains to a code of ethics and employee handbook, two out of three organizations had a code of ethics and employee handbook. Question #16 of the survey asked, how many positions within your organization require social media engagement; all three responded 1-10, less than 5 percent of each total staff. None of the professionals have terminated an employee

for incivility on social media, however, one of them agreed that having a social media policy has prevented the need for terminating or correcting employees.

As it pertains to incivility, two out of three responded based on their opinions, that incivility would be a reason an employee would most likely be terminated. The other respondent said leaking work-related information is most likely the reason their organization would terminate an employee. When questioned about their perceptions on terminating employees publicly, one of them stated they never publicly terminate employees. Another respondent stated,

> "If the employees' comments and actions harm the organization, a conversation with that employee should be held so they understand the code of ethics when it comes to social media and the impact on the organization that the employee represents."

The other commentator had some similarities to the previous but stated they would not publicly terminate an employee.

A follow-up interview was done on December 10, 2020, with one of the human resource representatives that completed the preliminary survey. These are five major points that were determined that could be used in a study:

1) The social media policy implementation process may not be properly executed. Policies like social media policies are e-mailed or handed in a mailbox as addenda without review.
2) Some states may require harassment and unconscious bias training at least once a year, and uncivil social media issues may be treated as harassment.

3) Non-elected and appointed city workers may be the most vulnerable. Generally, staff positions on the city level may be unionized. Organizations that terminated employees for actions on social media would receive backlash from the union.
4) If an employee is terminated, he/she may have previous write-ups. A write-up normally is strict enough to keep employees on straight and narrow paths.
5) Human resource representatives must be fair in the decision of terminating employees. The job requires them to be fair mediators between the organizations and employees.

Largely, the results from this illustrate that social media issues in the workplace are still new but relevant for human resource professionals. As well, some agencies' social media policies may be relatively new. The interviewee recommended adding the perspective of a labor union and employees.

Research Ethics

This dissertation research, led by Dr. Leslie Etienne, aims to determine how public sector organizations in the Indianapolis metropolitan area administer social media policies to control the behavior of the employees that engage on social media; and to inform of fair practices for implementing policies, which will help employees make better and informed decisions when they post. This strategy will support organizations in retaining employees and maintaining its reputation.

1) Conflict of Interest: The author declares that they have no conflict of interest.
2) Ethical Approval: All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of Indiana University and approved by the institutional review board.

3) Informed Consent: Informed consent was obtained from each study participant after they were told of the potential risks and benefits as well as the investigational nature of the study.
    a. The participants provided consent with the intent that the author will use pseudonyms for their names and place of work in the report.
4) Gifts: Participants that were involved in this study did not accept monetary gifts for this research. Their roles as public sector employees prohibit the acceptance of monetary gifts.
5) Data: The original data for this research was not shared with any persons beyond the author and adviser of the research. The survey responses and analysis, and audio and video recordings of the participants' interviews for this research were properly stored on a password-protected portable flash drive.

Chapter Summary

Chapter Three provides a detailed analysis of the function of the research design and methodologies applied in this multi-methods dissertation research. By employing the appropriateness framework, I detect issues in language with social media policies in local public sector agencies in Indianapolis and surrounding areas using content analysis. In addition, I surveyed and interviewed local human resource professionals to determine the approaches human resource personnel use to manage their employees that engage on social media. Chapter Four presents the recorded data from the survey, interview, and content analysis for this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Data and Analysis

Chapter Four is the seasoning of this research. Chapter Three covered the methodology for gathering this research's data. This chapter discusses the findings from this research study designed to identify public sector practices in governing employees on social media using local Indiana government-based local public agencies as the subjects. The data was triangulated from surveys, interviews, and content analysis.

When searching for research subjects during the pre-study period, I realized a few public sector workers were hesitant to participate because of the high risk of retaliation. To protect the subjects that participated in this research, I developed pseudonyms for each human resource and personnel professional and their cities or counties. Their agreement to participate in this research was under the vow that a pseudonym would be provided when reporting their responses. I will utilize characters from television sitcoms that closely match the subject's demographic to reference each research subject. While I have the social media policy from their agency, I will not identify the participants' agency. Various agencies will review eight social media policies. To protect the persons engaged in the research, the policies will also be presented in code using fictional cities also from television sitcoms and literature. The locality of the county or municipal government in proximity to Indianapolis will be given directions with approximate mileage. Indianapolis and Marion County's social media will be the only document that will be identified. We have participants that are employed at five local municipal governments and one. That is a public labor union worker that participated in the survey. Five of the six completed the one-on-one interviews.

Table 4-a Survey Respondents

Subject	Position/Title	Gender	Race	Years in Position	Government Type
Denny Crane *Boston Legal*	HR Director	Male	White	8	City
Angela Bower, *Who's The Boss*	HR Director	Female	White	25	City
Al Borland, *Home Improvement*	Administrator	Male	White	29	AFL-CIO Affiliate (Labor Union)
Reba Hart, *Reba*	HR Administrator	Female	White	7	County
Michael Scott, *The Office*	HR Director	Male	White	3	City
Evelyn Harper, *Two and a Half Men*	HR Director	Female	White	2	County

General Job Description of the Human Resource Representatives

Human Resource Administrator: The HR administrator is the first point of contact within a company for all HR-related inquiries. Specific tasks include handling employment contracts, recruiting, and setting up interviews for open positions in the company. Additionally, HR administrators oversee other HR personnel.[81]

Human Resources Director: Human resource directors have many different roles and responsibilities in many different organizations. These directors can head up several departments and put in place someone to manage them. They are strategic partners and proponents for the company and the people who work for it. They also have the responsibility of dealing with the day-to-day problems and complaints from their employees, employee benefits, payroll, and employee paperwork. They ensure employees' adherence to policies and procedures. They also make sure that programs are

[81] "Human Resources (HR) Administrator," Payscale.com, 2021, https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Human_Resources_(HR)_Administrator/Hourly_Rate/5fdfec1c/Bloomingdales-Inc.

consistently administered and aligned with organizational goals, have compliance with professional standards, and meet state and federal regulatory requirements and laws. HR directors also oversee staff operations, business planning, and budget development of HR programs. They also plan, direct, and manage all human resource initiatives, such as recruitment, compensation, benefits, training, and employee relations of an organization. They oversee hiring, training, coaching, salary and benefits, team building, and leadership.[82]

Explanation of Character Selection

Denny Crane's character on *Boston Legal* is a well-respected lawyer and team leader. The subject identified as Denny Crane is also an attorney and human resource representative who works with various governing agencies across Indiana.

Who's the Boss? character Angela Bower is a robust independent advertising executive known for her advertising business experience. The subject is given, Angela Bower has worked in human resources for more than twenty years and was responsible for developing the human resources department.

In the 90's television series *Home Improvement,* the character Al Borland was the supporting co-host of Tim Taylor on the fictional TV program *Tool Time* in the show. Al was very vocal and provided sound advice for the audience on how each tool functioned. The subject named Al Borland was vibrant and knowledgeable. He provided great insight into how public agencies navigate their relationships between the employees and labor unions. Even though he is not a direct human resource manager or information

[82] "Human Resources (HR) Director," Payscale.com, 2022, https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Human_Resources_(HR)_Director/Salary.

technology director, he could direct me to additional information about labor unions and their practices.

Reba Hart was known for putting out fires on the hit TV show *Reba.* Reba had a spunky attitude and a very upbeat spirit that maintained her household. On the day of the interview, the subject, Reba, had a few technical issues and other hiccups before our meeting. However, that did not stop her from interviewing. She is a great storyteller and a solid subject for this research.

On *The Office,* Michael Scott is the regional manager of the paper sales office. He is the protagonist of the show. The subject, Michael Scott, is the head of human resources and has a passion for human resources and personnel. He carries over 22 years of experience in human resources and has private and public HR experience.

The last subject, Evelyn Harper, is the mother of the main characters, Alan and Charlie, on *Two and a Half Men.* She is a real estate agent who is rarely seen but makes occasional appearances from time to time, leaving lasting impressions. This subject was one of the last to submit the survey but was more than willing to complete the interview. However, her schedule did not permit the opportunity for us to meet.

The two recognizable demographics applied in the character selections are race and sex. The years of experience listed indicate the time filled in the position they held during the recruitment period between August and September 2021.

Government Location for Content Analysis

Indianapolis, IN, is the center of the research. Indianapolis is the largest city represented,most populated and racially diverse in this research.

Pawnee, IN is a city on the television show *Parks and Recreation.* In this research, Pawnee is the city that is closest to Indianapolis. This city is approximately fifteen miles south of Indianapolis.

The second closest city in this research is Stafford, IN. Stafford is a city in the movie, *The Fugitive*. This city is approximately fifteen miles north of Indianapolis.

Rosewater, IN, is also approximately fifteen miles north of Indianapolis for this study. Rosewater is a city in Kirk Vonnegut's book; God *Bless You, Mr. Rosewater, or Pearls Before Swine.*

Eerie, IN is a horror science television series. Eerie, IN is used here as a city that is approximately twenty miles east of Indianapolis.

The television show, *The Middle,* is set in Orson, IN. Orson County, in this research, is around twenty-five miles southwest of Indianapolis.

Hohman County is located almost 25 miles northwest of Indianapolis. Hohman, IN is the location setting for a highly favorable Christmas movie, *A Christmas Story*.

Netflix's major hit series, *Stranger Things,* introduces Hawkins, IN. In this research Hawkins County is placed almost 35 miles west of Indianapolis.

Data Collection

The data for this research will be presented in the sequence it was completed. As a sequential explanatory multi-method research, this research was completed by implementing the quantitative survey first and then the qualitative data collection one-on-one interviews. The third data set from the content analysis was collected after the mixed data collected from the human resources and labor union representatives.

Survey Data

Five local government representatives and one union representative completed the survey developed to identify the process of managing public sector employees through the implementation of a social media policy. The driving research question for this survey is: How are HR professionals managing employees using the social media policy?

The first section of the survey identifies the subjects' demographics, which totaled six identified as White or Caucasian Americans. The sex of each subject split evenly: three men to three women. In their roles, they function as an HR Director (4), HR Administrator (1), and an upper administrator (1). Al Borland, the union representative, responded as an affiliate of the union and utilized his current role in the union, nondisclosed. He, too, has experience in human resources and team management. The type of governing institutions represented: city (3), county (2), and nonprofit union (1). Four of these individuals directly manage up to ten employees in their offices, while the others manage forty or more employees. The primary race of the employees governed by these agencies identifies as white/Caucasian. Over half of their employees are women.

The next section of the survey addresses workplace climate. Four out of the six said their employees were satisfied with the workplace climate. Michael Scott said this his team was delighted with the workplace climate. Evelyn Harper said her team was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Five of the subjects think they have an excellent relationship with their team. The other stated that their employee-manager relationship was good.

When asked if they had an employee handbook, all subjects stated they do, including a code of ethics. Reba did not precisely agree or disagree that having a code of

ethics assists with managing employee behavior. Denny Crane reprimands more of his employees than the others per month. On average, the others reprimand three per month. Half of the respondents stated they witnessed or intervened on racial issues within 2020-2021. Angela and Evelyn's responses showed some deficits in their agencies celebrating diversity, while the others showed no slippages.

The third section addresses technology integration and governance, including social media policies and computer use by employees. The people in these organizations generally use both desktop and laptop computers. When questioned if they were satisfied with the technology training for employees, Michael was the only one that was fully satisfied. However, they all stated that their employees had satisfactory or advanced skills using the agency's technology. Evelyn noted that forty or more of her personnel must interact with the public on social media. The others said twenty or less.

To my surprise, all public agencies represented have a social media policy, while the labor union does not. If you recall from the research methods section, the representative in the preliminary study suggested that public sector organizations would have pushback from the labor union if a member were terminated for misconduct on social media. However, Al felt a low need for a social media policy. In addition, all the human resource representatives had input in designing the social media policy at their organization.[83]

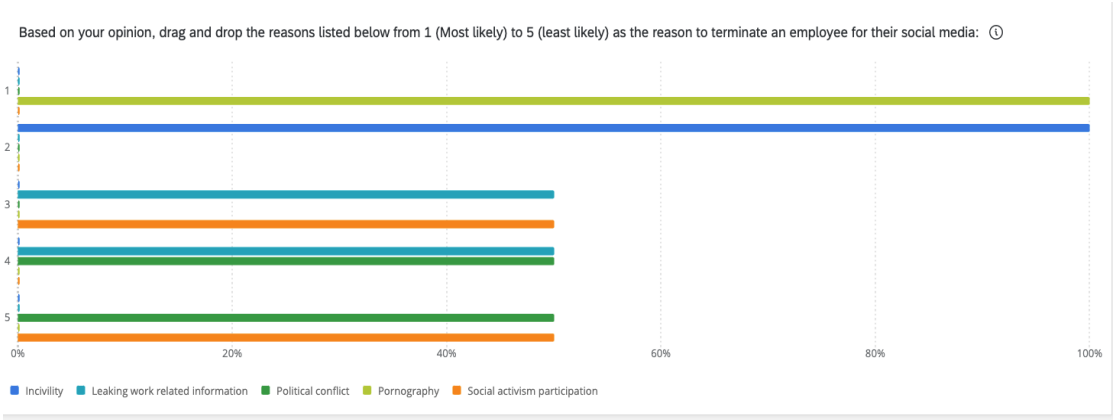
As it pertains to monitoring their staff on social media, Evelyn and Denny were the only representatives who monitored their staff. But Michael and Reba's information

[83] Three of the other local HR representatives that opted out of participating informed they had no participation in designing or implementing the social media policies.

technology teams create technology and social media policies and surveill the employees' daily activities.

Angela and Denny both disagree that having a social media policy has prevented the need for terminating or correcting their employees; the others were uncertain. The survey data in Figure 4-b shows a graph of what the respondents believe would most likely be a reason to terminate an employee for their misconduct on social media. The record indicates that pornography and incivility would be why a public sector employee would most likely be removed. But none of the respondents have ever fired a worker for disrespect on social media. Though, the reason that is least likely for discharge is still questionable.

Figure 4-b Survey Data- Termination



Survey Data Interpretations

This study assessed how human resource professionals in the city and county human resource officials in the Indianapolis metropolitan area view and utilize social media policies to control the behavior of their employees that engage on social media. It was found that 100 percent of the identified public sector agencies have a social media

policy. This study also discovered that a local labor union that backs public sector workers does not.

While this survey does not determine an accurate number of how many local public administrators are engaging on social media on behalf of the organization, we can conclude that social media integration into these organizations took place within the last 5 to 10 years. While more than half of the represented HR specialists have not had to terminate an employee for incivilities on social media, the benefit of having the social media policy is still vague. It can also be ruled that since most of the employees' technology is being monitored by the information technology teams, fires have been put out by the technology department before they reach the human resource directors.

If the Indianapolis human resource representatives (more extensive staff and more diverse) completed this survey, we might see that an employee has been disciplined for misconduct on social media. Although, another thing to point out is that these represented teams are predominantly White. Conversations about race and other injustices may not happen in these spaces; simply because it creates an uncomfortable environment and White people pay little attention to their identities (DiAngelo 2018; Tatum 2003). As presented before, social media issues in political spaces typically surface when a more significant population of Black/African Americans or other racial groups (Highfield 2016; Citron 2010).

Overall, the survey result informs that human resource managers are not focused on managing social media culture. But they recognize the need for a policy and a system for managing their employees' use of social media technologies.

Interview Data

The positionality of the interviews has been associated with the organization's idea of appropriateness for the employees interacting on social media as understood by HRMs. Considering the appropriateness framework, the driving question of this interview was finding out which employees are held under the terms of the social media policies and the organization's expectations for their staff. Inclusive of applying the social media policy, the procedure of managing employees is also explored. Each interview summary will only provide the most informative components of the interview. The additional data from the interview will be listed in Table 4.2.

1) Denny Crane, The First Interview

   Author's impressions about Denny Crane: Denny was very prompt throughout this process and most communicable when the request for the social media policy and the proposal to engage in this study was forwarded. His interview was quite informative and confirmed the argument that administrators should know governing laws and appeals when designing a social media policy (Younger Hollis 2016).

Denny Crane's interview took place on September 29, 2021. It was a sweltering and cloudy day in Indianapolis. We interviewed on Zoom. When Denny appears on camera, he has a smirk and is very calm. He sat in position and was ready to get to work. After explaining the research and on-camera agreement, we began reviewing his survey responses. He is the first respondent, and as mentioned in the survey data, the only interviewing that selected that they monitor their employees. We jumped into the conversation discussing the process of tracking an employee's social media.

> **Denny**: "……Well, we actually monitor them by other employees monitoring, if that makes sense. We get information. We had an individual who posted some city information that was not supposed to be out there. We don't monitor it, but the employees monitor themselves so that if somebody posts something they know is not supposed to be out there. We get immediate information on it. And this individual was claiming that he knew he saw the business plans to some special company coming to the city…which got us in a lot of trouble with that company. But it was because somebody else (another employee) was friends with him on Facebook. So, when I say monitoring, that's really how we do it. Because we do have a very strict policy on what you can and can't say out there with the government because your First Amendment rights pretty much go out the door with municipal government. What you post on Facebook, there are enough people watching; I'm probably going to find out about it if you put it out there. Yeah, so when I say monitoring, it's not I don't, I assure you. I do not have time to sit and watch everybody's Facebook. But fortunately, there are enough people out around here that must have a lot more free time than I do."

In Mr. Crane's agency, the human resources department manages the policy. He was unaware of why the organization implemented the procedure, but he did acknowledge that the policy is more than five years old. As a matter of fact, he designed the social media policy as a consultant for the agency and co-authored it with an information technology specialist in 2013. Denny joined the staff years later at the request of the mayor. He has written policies for over 100 companies and public agencies across Indiana. He makes mention of five governing institutions, two of which did not respond to the request for participation. He informs that his experience as an attorney in employment law guided the design of the social media policy.

When asked about his overall views about employees' expectations on social media, Denny's personal values showed through his statement.

> "Because of the way the policy is written and what's in it, I don't care whether you're on work out of work or on vacation, if you say something is detrimental to the city, something detrimental to your boss, the mayor, I legally have the grounds to create a problem for you. Unfortunately, most of the things that we've dealt with since I've been here have been they did it on their own time…"

> "When you go to incite racial things that affect your job, then we have control, but outside of that, if you wanted to say you wanted Biden for president or if you were a Trump person and you post it all over, I don't care about any of that stuff. When it creates issues with your workforce, and how you work together, and pretty much in that particular instance, just even with that, just ask the guy, take it down, stop trying to incite a riot."

He further argues that a social media policy is valuable for a municipal government simply because of the backing provided by the Supreme Court. A policy allows the organization to maintain "*some form of control… unlike in a private company."* This interview ended with Mr. Crane alluding that he developed the social media policy using federal statutes and torts as his guide.

2) Angela Bower, The Expert

Author's impressions about Angela Bower: Angela had a few uncertainties about if she would be a great asset for this study, but she was more than gracious to participate. Out of the respondents from the survey, she has the most experience in public sector human resources.

Angela Bower's interview was hosted via Zoom on September 30, 2021. It was a Thursday morning, which appeared to be Angela's downtime in her office. She sat on camera very poised. Before our discussion, she let it be known that she does not have any interactions on social media and that this study wouldn't pertain to her as a worker but the issues she understands. With that disclaimer, we explored the creation of the social media policy. Angela's agency is the most recent organization to implement a social media policy right before the pandemic in 2020.

> **Angela:** "One of my staff members came to me and said, 'you know, people are saying, and a lot of things out on social media that have to do with the city, a lot of our employees are very active on social media. And we really should have a way to manage that if we can't, to the extent that we can manage it, or at least a monitor or have something in place that we can enforce if people are doing things

> that are inappropriate.' It was one of my staff members that brought it to my attention. And she actually did the research and wrote the policy. It had to be approved by our board of works, but the policy came from one of my staff members."

Since her employee developed the policy, I pushed to find out exactly how the policy was implemented and who is expected to abide by this policy. Their policy was forwarded out in the handbook, which they required the employees to sign off on in 2020. It was expected that every person who signed the guide acknowledge the social media policy and provide a signature that they've read the social media policy. However, I did not expect this part of her response:

> "So, everyone should have read the policy and assigned sign something that says that they've read the policy. If they do something that they shouldn't be doing, we can say you agreed to this. We can either administer discipline, or we can just have a talk, and they can stop what they're doing. And frankly, we haven't done any of that we haven't. And I don't know what it would take to actually trigger some kind of enforcement because we've had a lot of a lot of language about COVID and about vaccines, a lot of stuff that that is contrary to the city's policy, or hateful or inaccurate. We haven't done anything about it. I'm not sure that our policy is very effective. And since, as I said, I'm not on social media, I don't get actively involved in that."

While grasping to understand that her employees could get away with misconduct on social media, I decided to ask her about the city's elected officials. Also, we explored how her employees could be disciplined for inappropriate behavior on social media.

> "They (the policies) would just be for our regular employees, not for elected officials. In fact, we just had a meeting last night about another topic, but that that came up…. our city attorney made it very clear no city officials are not bound by our personnel policies."
> "As an employee of the city, they are supposed to distance their personal opinions and say, 'This is not the opinion of the city.' This is my opinion of me personally and make it clear. They are not representing the city. That's the basic requirement." But if an employee fails to do so," that would not under any normal circumstances be immediate termination unless they did something awful on social media. I don't know; I suppose if you threatened to kill someone on social media, you might get terminated. But most people aren't quite that extreme. We would probably tell them; they know that that's not acceptable. And they need to

> change the way they communicate. Although, again, that would require us to somebody to monitor them. I suppose if we got to that point where we had to discipline someone or threatened discipline, then we would be required to watch to make sure they did what they said. But it would not be immediate termination under any but the most extreme situations."

This interview concluded with Angela asking about trends across the states that I studied for this research. I mentioned the labor unions retaliating; she retorted that the labor union is not a bargaining unit. Meaning union membership is not mandatory for the workers. The collective bargaining agreement does not apply to them.[84] She closed by notifying that if any of the civilians were terminated, without union protection and merit laws to protect them, the agency could fire them without consequences, so long as they administer the law fairly and are not discriminating against people.

3) Al Boreland, The Regulator

Author's impressions about Al Boreland: Al was very forward. He honestly missed his calling in teaching. He entered this conversation ready to provide information about the union's role in supporting public workers.

Al's interview was later in the afternoon following Angela's, and he was in a high-functioning mode. When he arrived on camera, Al had a call because of an issue with a worker. Our interview was cut short. He provided similar references that Denny provided and information about the NLRA. Like Angela, Al is against social media. He encourages his employees to stay off social media. He called it a "cesspool."

> **Al:** "…. our companies do not discipline their workers for their social media stuff. They may call them in the office and have a little chat with them and say, 'Hey, you shouldn't be posting about you slept with the supervisor in some hotel room or something like that.' And it happens, okay, it happens all the time. But, but a lot of that if I didn't get paid overtime, even if I'm a non-union worker, if I wanted to complain on behalf of my coworkers, about pay, or working conditions,

[84] Shafritz, Russell and Borick 2013, 416-416.

> etc., that is protected under the law. And if these non-union workers, like these HR folks that don't have a union, where they represent those workers, do discipline them, then that could be a violation of federal law, and they would have the right to go pursue that with the, with the, with the NLRB."
>
> "I'm not seeing a lot of social media policies because really, if you look at the hierarchy of the union work, the relationship with an employer in a collective bargaining agreement, federal law overrides everything. Then the union contract comes second. And then third is the company's policies and procedures. The companies have a right to implement reasonable rules and regulations. We can challenge the decisions that they made when enforcing those rules and regulations, say the attendance policy.
>
> "We can challenge those to the grievance procedure because everything is covered under the management rights clause of a collective bargaining agreement, the employer has the right to hire fire, suspend, discharge, reduce the workforce, implement, you know, implement the rule their methods of production, you know, but everything is subject to the grievance procedure. The grievance procedure in a collective bargaining agreement can be used to challenge the law, challenge, violate the contract, challenge the reasonable rules and regulations and policies established by the employer, and challenge. Safety, we can file a grievance on safety. There are too many potholes in the parking lot. The workers are getting injured. We've had five sprained ankles in the last, you know, month, something like that."

This discussion filled in many missing gaps, especially when he mentions that a union may not protect human resources workers. As in the preliminary study, the human resource director I interviewed was an elected official. He was employed at-will. It may be fun to mention that the workers in this union would be the actual "essential" workers in the public sector. He said contract violations unrelated to social media a few times in the interview.

4) Reba Hart, The Fire Fighter

   Author's impressions about Reba Hart: Reba's interview was the most fun. She has a great sense of humor and energy that her employees may love. She was the most transparent out of the group.

Reba's conference did not get off to a great start. It was Friday, October 22, 2021, and somehow, all her computers in the office could not connect to Zoom. Consequently, we had to meet over the phone. Transcribing her interview was a little more challenging, but that did not stop the show, especially since Reba had some tea to spill in current popular culture terms. Her office is a small county office; everybody knows who is saying what in the office or on social media. She has experience dealing with employees making improper statements on social media. Just so happen, her incident was recent.

An employee posted a comment about parking allocations for public employees on Facebook. The county commissioners and local business managers became disgruntled with the employee's statements. Her office ended up telling the employee to watch how they share on social media because "you can put out where you work and your opinion out there like that." Although she does understand that the employee has the freedom of speech, she warns her workers to be cognizant. I asked her overall thoughts of the social media policy were, and she found value in local governments having them.

> **Reba**: "I think it's necessary because you want to keep everything consistent. And you don't want people just to go out and have the freedom to do whatever they want on social media; I think that, especially if they're carrying a county emblem, so for departments themselves, I think that we have to have one to be consistent for departments to use them."

Reba's social media policy was composed by an Indianapolis based attorney, not Denny, but another that I learned who wrote the procedure for other nearby government institutions. She stated that the IT department controls a lot of the technology and social media management and actively stays on top of all technology policies. In addition, the county government's technology falls under the Public Records Act. All posts and emails

are made public records. Their workers are not allowed to search Facebook or Instagram while at work unless the department's social media account and the employee manage it.

5) Michael Scott, The Closer

Author's impressions about Michael Scott: Michael was the hardest to reach, but his team spoke highly of him and believed he would be a great asset for this study. After being connected, Michael provided all information promptly. His interview was the most direct.

Michael's dialogue was the last interview completed. Friday morning, November 12, 2021, Michael logs onto Zoom near lunchtime. It seems that he is using a standing desk. His office appears more modern than the other interviewees. By this time, my expectations for him were to tell me that he did not discipline his employees; however, he said the opposite. Before we got into disciplinary actions, he discussed that the social media policy is maintained as an interdepartmental effort between human resources, public relations/marketing, and information technology. Like Reba's organization, Michael's expects their employees to only engage on social media during work hours if their job entails it. Otherwise, all social media is navigated through the public relations and marketing department.

While Michael said they did not necessarily have any experience dealing with misconduct on internet platforms, similar to Denny's organization, they would take a progressive disciplinary approach.

> **Michael**: "We have a progressive discipline policy that starts with a verbal warning and goes to a written warning, suspension, and then of course termination. It's on a case-by-case basis. We're going to look at every scenario individually and determine the severity of the impact and follow the disciplinary action accordingly to our policy or whatever the city at that point, the teams, the severity of it. But generally speaking, we're going to issue some warnings and

make sure that employee understands what they did wrong and what's policy is how to proceed from there."

In concord with all other human resource directors, Michael believes the organization should have a social media policy.

> "Well, I think it's certainly something that it's important to have. As I said, we have not run into issues where we've had to address the policy with employees or anybody violates at least knowingly. But in HR, we certainly understand that if you don't have a policy, that's trouble down the road……. So, I think there's definitely high importance of having such a thing in this day and age. I think it's also important to maintain it, evolve with the times, and make sure that your policy is up to date with what's going on in the world and advancing technology in ways that people do use social media."

Michael's viewpoint on social media policies aligns with the other human resource directors and Mergel and Greeves (2013). However, apart from the others, his team is that social media policy management is not focused on just one area. This allows the organization to maintain the policy.

Table 4-c: Social Media Policy Enforcement

Social Media Policy Enforcement in Local Government Agencies				
Theme	Denny Crane's Agency	Angela Bower's Agency	Reba Hart's Agency	Michael Scott's Agency
Policy Enacted Month/Year	May 2015	2019	2016 or 2017*	Exact date unknown, possibly 2011.
Policy Audience	All Employees	Regular Employees	County Employees	All Employees
Organization's Expectations HR Perspective	Top- Down approach, Mayor and upper management expect employees to be respectful.	When speaking politically, provide a disclaimer that your opinions are personal and that you aren't acting like you're representing the organization	No false representation	No posting during work hours unless you're working a PR Marketing Staff member. Do not post

		unless you've been authorized to do so.		
Training	Yes, All new hires	No	No	Yes, within training modules
Disciplinary Actions	Progressive Disciplinary Approach for ALL violations. Theft, sexual harassment results into immediate termination.	No immediate termination unless threats have been made.	Open discussion/redirection/post removal	Progressive Disciplinary Approach
*Notes			This agency's policy derived from a technology policy from the 1990s.	

Interview Data Interpretations

Based upon the qualitative research, the four human resource directors and the union representative revealed that social media expectations are equivocal beyond the concept of respect. However, their roles determined:

1) Consequences are necessary to maintain control of employee misconduct. Implementing a progressive disciplinary action is more favorable than immediately terminating an employee.
2) Social media policies should evolve as new technologies are implemented, and new trends occur.

3) Employees should be regularly trained on work policies, mainly social media policies. Training can help organizations inform employees of their expectations and protocol for engaging on social media as public sector employees.
4) Professionals who work in human resources may not have the union's support. They are more vulnerable than employees. A proper policy and procedure protect human resource directors and the organization.
5) Federal policies, state statutes, and torts should narrate the operative policy. This action limits the organization's risk for legal issues.
6) Organizations should use an attorney to design and evaluate the effectiveness of the guidelines. Legal counsel can provide support for individuals who may be inexperienced with employment law. In addition, a legal expert will inform if the application of the rules in the policies is applied correctly.

Mixed Data Conclusion

If this study were to conclude here, the outcomes of the research in a mixed methods approach could be:

1) The smaller organizations have experienced social media issues. In this study, Denny and Reba's agencies would be the signifier. This may not be a result of just a policy issue. It could be that it is more noticeable among the smaller teams.
2) Public sector organizations are not terminating employees for misconduct on social media due to the progressive disciplinary action models.
3) Organizations that monitor employees have lesser issues with employee misconduct on electronic communication systems simply because employees know they are being watched.

4) Human resource directors and representatives remain uninformed until the issue is brought to their attention by an employee.
5) Social media issues in the workplace are current. Governments have not fully identified how to manage ethics, expectations, and workers' behaviors through a social media policy.

Content Analysis Data

The content analysis was performed in MAXQDA using the Text Search and Autocode feature. The eight local policies were scanned and evaluated in four components.

Component One: The first area explores behavioral expectations, the premise of this study. The words in Table 4-d: Behavioral Expectations Statements were retrieved from statements for behavioral expectations as stated by the HRDs. Keywords used from data: Respectful, Appropriate, and Non-Discriminate comments (hate speech, racism, sexiest, religious, slanderous, and discrimination). Indianapolis and Pawnee have these terms embedded in either a technology policy or AUP.

Table 4-d: Behavioral Expectations Statements

Behavioral Expectations Statements			
Governing Sector	Appropriate	Respectful	Non-Discriminate
Indianapolis	Yes	Yes	Yes*
Pawnee	Yes	Yes*	Yes*
Stafford	Yes	No	Yes
Rosewater	Yes	No	Yes
Eerie	No	Yes	Yes
Orson County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hohman County	No	No	Yes
Hawkins	Yes	Yes	Yes
Notes*	Embedded in Tech or Acceptable Use Policy		

Component Two: The second perspective reviews a rule for transparency. Organizational representation on social media has been a major component throughout this study. A transparent expectation is clear and direct. To engage how public sectors should represent the organization and apply the code of ethics on social media, the HRDs stated employees must state that their opinions are different from the organization. Table 4-e: Organizational Representation show that half of the agencies did set the expectation for their employees to make statements that warn their personal posts or social media does not reflect the views of the organization.

Table 4-e: Organizational Representation

Transparency – Organizational Representation	
Governing Sector	Yes/No
Indianapolis	Yes
Pawnee	No
Stafford	No
Rosewater	Yes
Eerie	No
Orson County	Yes
Hohman County	Yes
Hawkins	No

Component Three: This component tests the third hypothesis for this research, which posits that there are no consequences stated for misconduct on social media in the social media policy. In addition, it responds to the sub-question, does the policy define the terms for disciplinary action or immediate termination? The codes that were used to distinguish the statement: warning, sanction, discipline, termination, and fired.

The results of the qualitative interview found that progressive disciplinary action is the process that human resources use for managing public sector employees in the Indianapolis area. The data from the content analysis retrieved the practices and aligns with the findings from the interviews. The results in Table 4-f: Disciplinary Actions exhibits all the local organizations stating how they will follow up with misconduct on social media.

Table 4-f: Disciplinary Actions

Disciplinary Action	
Governing Sector	Yes/No
Indianapolis	Yes
Pawnee	Yes
Stafford	Yes
Rosewater	Yes
Eerie	Yes
Orson County	Yes
Hohman County	Yes
Hawkins	Yes

Component Four: Technology integration seeks to find the are social media applications (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.) and other forms of technology (Email and Office-Based Platform) mentioned in the social media policy to maintain transparency. The analysis in Table 4-g: Technology Integration shows a variation of the policies that included or omitted the social media platforms or electronic devices. Eerie and Hawkins did not list any technology in the organization's policy.

Table 4-g: Technology Integration

Technology Integration			
Governing Sector	Social Media Applications	Email	Office-Based Platform
Indianapolis	Yes	Yes	No
Pawnee	Yes	Yes	Yes

Technology Integration			
Governing Sector	Social Media Applications	Email	Office-Based Platform
Stafford	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rosewater	No	Yes	Yes
Eerie	No	No	No
Orson County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hohman County	No	No	Yes
Hawkins	No	No	No

To test the appropriateness framework, two hypothetical situations are listed to compare against the rules stated in the social media policy based on the statements for transparency in behavioral expectations and how to represent the organization in this section merge the application of the appropriateness framework. Instead of listing the decision of the employee, as modeled in the appropriateness framework, this example displays disciplinary action as the decision of the organization-based on the policy. The two entities tested in this section are Orson County and Indianapolis. Among the eight policies, Orson's is the most comprehensive. Indianapolis is tested as the largest government system.

Test I

Table 4-h: Appropriateness – Indy v. Orson County (Test I)

Situation: Employee leaks a nude picture of an elected official during work hours.		
Governing Sector	Actual Rule	Decision
Indianapolis	Indy prohibits use during work hours. Full rules are not listed in the social media policy.	Progressive Disciplinary actions Full details are not listed in the social media policy, employees can view it on a private AUP.

Orson County	OC places responsibility on the employees for what they post online. This action would be considered a negative impact on business. Allows employees to use personal devices during work hours.	Disciplinary actions 1)Referral to counseling 2) Withholding of a promotion 3) Reassignment 4) Demotion 5) Suspension without pay 6) Termination

Test II

Table 4-i: Appropriateness – Indy v. Orson County (Test II)

Situation: An employee makes a racial slur about a group on the organization's page and posts a meme.		
Governing Sector	Actual Rule	Decision
Indianapolis	ISA (Information Service) owns the rights to the post. Indy places responsibility on the employees to be respectful.	Disciplinary actions Full details are not listed in the social media policy, employees can view it on a private AUP.
Orson County	OC rules they have authority to remove the post. Employees are held responsible for what they post and maintaining their image.	Disciplinary actions, same as above. Also, potential civil or criminal penalties.

Content Analysis Interpretation

After a careful review of each policy through the content analysis, it was determined that:

1) Local public sector organizations in the Indianapolis metropolitan areas place the ethical value of respect throughout their social media policy.
2) Compared to smaller governments, Indianapolis would deal with social media misconduct more than other agencies due to the professional verbiage used to explain expectations.
3) The term responsible is used interchangeably to define "appropriate".

4) Social media policies often reference the AUP. None of the organizational AUPs were included in either policy.
5) Orson County has the most comprehensive social media policy within this area.
6) Orson County and Stafford provided glossaries of social media and social technology to enhance the reader's comprehension of the organization's terms on social media.
7) Hohman County's approach is too short and needs revision. The policy needs more transparent language for their employees.
8) Stafford was the only agency with an all-inclusive audience for their social media guidelines. Their policy includes levels of expectations city officials, employees, and citizens are provided for employees.
9) The organizations warn the employees that disciplinary actions will occur for social media misconduct.
10) Only half of the reviewed policies require their employees to state their posts are not being made on behalf of the organization or its values.
11) None of the organizations provide an example of an appropriate and not inappropriate comment on social media.

Triangulation

The inclusion of the content analysis provides a correlation to the other data collected. An organization that would be the most protected among all terms would be Evelyn's. Since her organization utilizes social media more than the others, they have a solid guide for their employees. Angela stated that she did not know if her agency's policy was effective. The content analysis proves that her policy needs a few revisions to

include technical applications and devices but is overall a good policy. Denny's policy is the most outdated among the HR directors.

Overall, each HRD surveyed has a careful social media policy as is. Some may need to focus more on providing language that is as transparent as Orson County. All organizations need to develop an exemplar on how they will discipline an employee for misconduct. While "disciplinary actions" are stated in each policy, employees may not understand those terms.

Chapter Summary

Chapter Four confirms that the social media policies in the Indianapolis metropolitan area are careful in stating how their employees should engage on social media. The organizations place value in the ethics of being responsible and respectful citizens. If social media misconduct is an issue, local public sector employees must understand that their actions warrant corrective action. Chapter Five is the final discussion on the value of transparent social media policies in the public sector. A summary of this research with the inclusion of limitations and other findings are included in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

A Push for Advanced Social Media Policies

Extra, Extra, read all about it! Social media is here and advancing. Does your organization have a social media policy? If you are an American worker, I hope your answer is yes. If not, I hope this research has shown why it would be of great interest for employers in the public sector to develop social media policies. Not just any policy, but a transparent social media policy. Previous studies (Younger Hollis 2016; Coleman 2013; Smith 2012) offer recommendations for shaping social media policies in public school systems and conclude that they should be aligned with federal and state regulations. The present study purports the alignment of federal and state regulations in social media policies adjacent to the organization's rules for conduct on social media. The Logic of Appropriateness instructs that an organization would set rules for their employees, forcing them to decide how they abide.[85] The literature review proposes that social media policies must be supported by federal regulations and state and local city laws. The First Amendment does not protect all free expression according to every text examined. Each contributor analyzes social media's dominance in American culture and its cultural impact on human conduct in public spaces and online. The only legal papers regularly addressed in multiple texts are federal government regulations and state statutes.[86] However, there is no mention of the local labor board's rulings or its stance on employees fired for misconduct. In addition, the literature offers that social media policy must evolve with the organization's technology and must be intersectional for all

[85] March and Olsen 1994.
[86] Holt et al. 2021.

demographics. This chapter will present a futuristic perspective for implementing social media policies. This chapter also addresses the study's limitations and recommendations for future studies.

Discussion

The argument for a transparent social media policy comes from the experience of a social media user that is often misread. An individual can plead that it's not about what you say, it's how you say it. The reactions of others can make one feel that you did something wrong when all you stated is how you felt. You may hear people quote reality tv star NeNe Leakes, "I said what I said… it ain't changing over here!"[87] That statement is often relayed in various contexts about injustices, but in reality, social media posts are a big part of our present-day identity.

Reflecting on the issue of people being terminated for misconduct on social media, there is always the question, why were they let go? Is it because the organization did not agree with their true identity? Or did they disobey the policy? The appropriateness framework shows that identity is key in an individual's decisions.[88] Termination because of how they identify is quite possible, but this study also finds that would be discrimination based on the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Holt at el. 2021; Furi-Perry 2019).

As mentioned in chapters one and two, the experience of social media for American people of color is quite different from their white counterparts. In a virtual

[87] Kandi Burruss, "Kandi Burruss Calls out NeNe Leakes," Bravo TV Official Site (Bravo, October 28, 2014), https://www.bravotv.com/the-real-housewives-of-atlanta/season-6/episode-25/videos/kandi-burruss-calls-out-nene-leakes.
[88] Weber, Kopelman and Messick, 2004.

presentation, “Is It Safe to Tweet?”, these issues were explored in dialogue with four Black professionals in a panel sponsored by the Center for Africana Studies and Culture at IUPUI.[89] The panelists all recognized that parents taught respectability politics in BIPOC households to adapt to the norms of White America. Hasani Burton, a politician, stated his parents taught him to speak and present himself well, but he was chastised by his Black peers growing up for “speaking white.” As he moves between the northern and southern parts of the United States, he sees significant differences in good standard behavior in the Black culture. His statement supports Leisha Dehart-Davis (2017)'s notion that socialization affects conduct, which influences the rule of professionalism (78-79).

Dr. Sherri Williams has a similar argument of other Black scholars like André Brock (2019). She advocates that social media is for a “dominant” culture. While Black people utilize social media platforms to explore political speech and other issues in America in a polite manner on Twitter, the media culture may not exemplify that when publicized or when the private tech companies discipline the Black user for their posts. Online prejudice arises in various forms, via discussions or treatment, each day and reflects a general level of casual racism.[90]

In addition, a big question is how are the public agencies protecting their Black employees and elected officials? Currently, as it seems, the algorithms for African Americans that are shamed on the internet do not go away. Former Indianapolis deputy mayor David Hampton is a Black man publicly blasted for his remarks about a group on

[89] “Spring 2021 Emerging Africana Scholar Presentation - Desmond L. Kemp - Indiana University,” Kaltura.com, 2021, https://iu.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/t/1_66m449g1.
[90] Highfield 2016, 25.

social media in 2017. He resigned and left office in 2020, but all traction of his incident on social media is traceable and more visible than his résumé. The most significant concern is if this will be the same for Jim Burns, a White man, Indiana state official disciplined for misconduct on social media in 2021. If not, there lies another issue with public technology. Or should we be modifying our government to perform implicit bias testing on our public officials before being placed in office?

In his book, *Transracial Communication,* Arthur L. Smith explains that messages in interracial communication are complex.[91] What may be seen as norms or uncivil to one individual may not be seen the same way to others—especially people of color. Norms can be hazy. They are something we can socially negotiate. The shifting demographics in the population in the United States and within the workplace will force management and employees to discuss these terms.

While we are here focusing on workplace demographics, yea, about that…. Baby Boomers are retiring. Generation Z is either entering the workforce[92] or currently in college preparing to enter. Norms, civility, and formality are not understood or practiced within Generation Z as in previous generations. They are known as the first digital natives.[93] These young people are drawn to online platforms that allow them to develop new and real-time relationships with people from all over. While there may be a protocol on how to send an email through the organization, they may opt to send a quick message

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[91] Arthur L. Smith, Transracial Communication (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973), 18.
[92] S. Mitra Kalita, "What Your Gen Z Colleagues Wish You Knew," Time (Time, February 22, 2022), https://time.com/charter/6149918/generation-z-workers/.
[93] Annie E Casey, "What Are the Core Characteristics of Generation Z?," The Annie E. Casey Foundation, January 13, 2021, https://www.aecf.org/blog/what-are-the-core-characteristics-of-generation-z.

via social media. Especially since emails tend to go unanswered, as discovered during this research.

Nancy Flynn's layout for social media policies, agreements, and social media policy training would be great to target the issues mentioned. Although her book is outdated, efforts should be initiated for all levels of government, inclusive of public officials. Training will allow employees to ask questions about the things that are misunderstood. People have to be taught that posting things like, "That's an ugly black baby Betty!" or "Those white chumps in this photo are idiots, go back to Europe." or "When are we going to blow up the Statue of Liberty?" on social media, is not okay when in the public eye, and if respect remains an ethical code.

Misconduct on social media can stem from various things. But what we do know is that the public sector norms are shifting. Today's organizations deal with more global issues and technology. To maintain the organization's culture and legitimacy, managers, especially human resources, must explore their policies from all lenses. People will take responsibility when they feel involved, supported, and valued. If the code of ethics is the model for employees, then honesty, integrity, transparency, and responsibility have to be exhibited and received by all stakeholders. The public, the media, and other government officials constantly watch public administrators. It is easily noticed if they aren't doing right in running an adequate government.

Summary of Research Findings

Through this study, these questions were sought to be explored:

Question 1: How are HR professionals managing employees using the social media policy? Human Resource professionals manage employees that engage on social

media with an enforced policy that provides guidelines on how to conduct themselves as citizens and public employees. Some organizations may have systems implemented to monitor and surveil their employees utilizing its technology.

Question 2: What is the separation between the agencies' social media policies and a code of ethics? The code of ethics is a protocol of the organization's values and how its employees "appropriately" model it. Social media policies guide employees on utilizing social media as local representatives in their personal and professional identities.

Question 3: What are the consequences stated for misconduct on social media? Specific implications for misconduct on social media are undetermined. But human resource directors apply progressive disciplinary actions to address opprobrious behaviors as needed.

Question 4: Why should public agencies have a social media policy? Social media policies protect the organization and help maintain the organization's image. The growing popularity and application of social technologies and the increasing usage of social media technologies by citizens and government personnel have created a reality that is entirely at odds with traditional government operations. Organizational processes must engage new interaction modes and new task fulfillment forms. Removing existing technological limits and introducing new technical means requires the government to consider new rules, acceptable use standards, organizational institutions, resource allocation, and adaptations to existing resources to meet the unique requirements (Mergel 2013; Flynn 2012).

Limitations

The total number of employees dismissed for incivility on social media in the Indianapolis region has yet to be identified; historical data on the total number of employees terminated for incivility on social media in the Indianapolis area has yet to be discovered. The listed number of employees in chapter one is a collection of names from the news media and not from direct employee records and human resource files. However, this study could serve as a model for the creation of archives and a database of these figures; also, the reasons for dismissal are too broad.

The phrase "social media" is general, and it refers to a variety of platforms. Identifying a single social media platform would be appropriate for a longer study and would help to restrict the research and develop questions by reducing the subject's ambiguity. However, there may be circumstances that support that every organization maintains a fine line between the social media policies, the AUP, office technology policy and email use policy.

It was difficult to enlist the help of human resource officials as a student, especially because this study deals with a relatively new topic in the field. The survey's quantitative design would've had a greater outcome in the mixed methods approach and in the analysis with a larger number of participants.

A focus group for the human resource professionals was not included in the process of the IRB to complete before two of the subjects' roles changed. If this study would be revisited for policy evaluation and implementation to include the current subjects that are currently in the human resource director's role, two of the agencies will not be represented.

Explanation of Unanticipated Findings

This research includes a union representative that no longer operates in human resources. While the union affiliate selected does not have a social media policy, local and national unions have social media policies for their members and staff.

In addition, the literature draws emphasis on the social media issue in public education. This research does not include public school systems HRDs in the targeted demographics. This research only targeted city, county, village, and township jurisdictions.

Implications for Future Research

This study, *Tweet or Fired,* has identified a few areas that could be further investigated. The findings of this study encourage public sector institutions to develop transparent social media policies by (1) developing a tool to measure policy effectiveness; (2) implementing a study involving employees to see if your policies are clear and easy to understand; (3) develop a training course for work policies, mainly social media policies; and (4) Indiana-based governments should use community partners such as Accelerate Indiana Municipalities (AIM) to implement a standard policy for each institution to build their policy.

First, many human resource directors acknowledge gaps in social media policies. A tool to measure policy effectiveness should be developed and tested within agencies. The book, *Social Media Law* by Ursula Furi-Perry[94], has a checklist for drafting a social media policy. This list could be utilized as a framework for the measuring tool.

[94] Perry, Ursula. Social Media Law: A Handbook of Cases & Use. Chicago, Illinois: American Bar Association, 2019.

Next, organizations should evaluate their policies with the employees as study participants. This process would provide an opportunity for personnel to be involved with reframing policies that impact them. In addition, this opens the possibility that members of your minority groups will participate and provide their perspectives of the economy of language in the policy.

Furthermore, misconduct on social media can also be managed through on-the-job training. Develop a training course for employees to convey the organization's expectations and how you plan to respond to their actions. This action is not limited to social media policies. This is advised for all policies, dress code included.

And finally, for Indiana-based public sector agencies, Accelerate Indiana Municipalities promotes and advocates for the success of municipalities statewide. Organizing a collective group to review your policies can enhance your policy's effectiveness across the board.

Conclusion

Social media is a tool that will continue to broaden the scope of how individuals interact in public. Public leaders must embrace positive behavior that reflects not only on their organization but also on themselves, in addition to social media. Organizational executives and human resource managers must continue to work on a policy that will apply to all employees. The public may want to hear public workers' opinions. Still, if the First Amendment does not wholly safeguard their right to free expression, public employees must exercise caution in their online interactions. Through a multi-method approach this research, *Tweet or Fired,* illustrates the process by Indianapolis-based

human resource managers used to maintain or correct employee behavior on social media.

Chapter One introduces the issue that employees' social media policies in Indianapolis and areas thirty miles outside the city limits are not transparent.

Chapter Two confirms previous studies and literature proves that public employees are at risk for termination for misconduct on social media.

Chapter Three revisits organizational theory, the Logic of Appropriateness, and shapes how ethics and rules impact employees' decisions.

Chapter Four validates those procedures and guidelines for social media should be transparent and modernized.

Chapter Five offers a standpoint on enhancing social media policy effectiveness and practices.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Dissertation Survey Questions

Section 1: Demographics

Complete the following demographic information. Please note that all personal information will be kept completely confidential and none of the responses you provide will be connected to your name, email address, or other identifying information.
**Answer required based on your previous response*

1) Please select your gender:
    a. Male
    b. Female
    c. Transgender
    d. Prefer not to say

2) Which of the following best describes your racial/ethnic identity? (Select all that apply)
    a. African American or Black
    b. American Indian or Alaskan Native
    c. Asian or Pacific Islander
    d. Hispanic or Latino
    e. White or Caucasian
    f. Other
    g. Prefer not to say

3) What best describes the geographic area of the country in which you work?
    a. Northeast (CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT)
    b. Midwest (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI)
    c. South (AL, AR, DE, DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TX, VA, WV)
    d. West (AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY)
    e. Prefer not to say

4) Please select your current job title:
    a. Executive
    b. Director
    c. Senior Manager
    d. Team Lead
    e. Management Level
    f. Department Supervisor
    g. General Team Member
    h. Human Resource President/Vice President

i. Human Resource Director/Co. Director
j. General Personnel/Human Resource Officer
k. Employee Specialist
l. Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator
m. Payroll Specialist
n. Human Capital/HR Consultant
o. Prefer not to say

5) Which department do you represent?
    a. Human Resources/Personnel
    b. Human Capital
    c. Executive Leadership
    d. Other
    e. Prefer not to say

6) Does your organization function as a public agency? Public Agency means and includes every public office, public officer or official (State or local, elected or appointed), institution, board, commission, bureau, council, department, authority, or other unit of government of the State or of any county, unit, special district, or other political subdivision of government.
    a. Yes
    b. No

7) If you answered yes to the question above, is your agency: *
    a. Federal
    b. State
    c. City
    d. County

Section 2: Employee Management and Relations

This next section has questions about the employees you manage and the workplace culture. For each question, please choose the answer(s) that best describes your work experience.

1) How many people do you manage?
    a. 0-10
    b. 10- 20
    c. 20-30
    d. 30-40
    e. More than 40

2) What is the primary racial/ethnic identity of your staff?
    a. White/Caucasian
    b. Black/African American

c. Latino/Latinx
d. Hispanic/Non-Hispanic
e. Other
f. Prefer not to say

3) What is the primary gender of your staff?
    a. Male
    b. Female
    c. Transgender
    d. Prefer not to say

4) Does your organization have an employee handbook?
    a. Yes
    b. No

5) How satisfied are your employees with your workplace climate?
    a. Very satisfied
    b. Satisfied
    c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
    d. Dissatisfied
    e. Extremely dissatisfied

6) How would you rate the relationships of your employees?
    a. Excellent
    b. Good
    c. Fair
    d. Poor

7) Does your organization have a code of ethics for employees?
    a. Yes
    b. No

8) Do you agree that having a code of ethics assists in managing employee behavior?
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neutral
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree

9) On average, how many employees do you typically reprimand each month? Reprimand: an official warning that a manager or supervisor gives an employee in an attempt to improve.
    a. 0-5
    b. 5-10
    c. 10-15

d. 15-20
e. More than 20

10) How many times have you witnessed and intervened on racial issues on within the last year?
    a. None
    b. 1-10
    c. 10-20
    d. 20-30
    e. More than 30

11) Your organization celebrates diversity, and you rarely must address diversity issues in office?
    a. Most Definitely
    b. Definitely
    c. Somewhat
    d. Very Unlikely

Section 3: Technology Integration and Governance

This section addresses technology integration and governance as it pertains to social media policies and employee usage. Please answer the questions based on your knowledge.

1) What type of computers do your employees use?
    a. Desktop Computer
    b. Laptop
    c. Neither
    d. Both

2) How satisfied are you with your organization's technology training for employees?
    a. Satisfied
    b. Neither
    c. Unsatisfied

3) Rate the overall skill of the employees' utilization of technology purchased by the organization:
    a. Novice
    b. Satisfactory
    c. Advanced
    d. Expert

4) How many employees within your organization are required to interact with the public on social media as part of their job?
    a. 1-10
    b. 10-20
    c. 20-30
    d. 30-40

e. More than 40

5) Does your organization have a social media policy? A social media policy is a document that outlines how an organization, and its employees should conduct themselves online.
    a. Yes
    b. No

6) If yes, did you or your colleagues have any input in creating the social media policy? *
    a. Yes
    b. No

7) Do you monitor employees interacting on social media?
    a. Yes
    b. No

8) If you answered no to questions 23 or 28, does your organization require the information technology department to govern technology and social media use? Select all that apply.

    a. __ The IT department only provides technical support (installation, maintenance, etc.) for employees.

    b. __ The IT department creates technology and social media policies and monitors daily activity.

    c. __ The IT department does not create technology and social media policies and monitors daily activity.

    d. __ The IT department creates technology and social media policies that are enforced by another department.

9) On a scale of 1 to 5, how often does your company engage on any social media platform?
    a. 1-Not at All
    b. 2-Once a month
    c. 3-Two or more times a week
    d. 4-Once a day
    e. 5-Two or more times per day

10) In your opinion, drag and drop the list below from 1 (Most likely) to 5 (least likely) a reason to terminate an employee for their social media activity:

    a. Pornography
    b. Leaking Work-related Information

c. Incivility
d. Political Conflict
e. Social Activism Participation

11) Have you or any of your colleagues terminated an employee for incivility on social media? Incivility: rude or unsocial-able speech or behavior
    a. Yes
    b. No

12) Having a social media policy prevents the need for terminating or correcting employees.
    a. Totally Agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither Agree nor Disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Totally Disagree

13) If your organization does not have a social media policy, how would you rate the need for a policy on a scale of 1 (low need) – 4 (Immediate need):
    a. 1-Low Need
    b. 2-Moderate Need
    c. 3-High Need
    d. 4-Immediate Need

Thank You for Your Participation!

Appendix B: Follow-Up Interview Questions

A follow-up interview would be for respondents that have social media policies and that agree to discuss their survey.

1) Can you further discuss the process of managing employees in reference to the social policy?
2) Who manages the social media policy implementation between human resources/personnel and information technology departments?
3) Which employees within the agency are held responsible to follow the social media policy?
4) How long has the organization had a social media policy?
5) How was the social media policy implemented?
6) Why was the social media policy implemented?
7) Is there training for all levels of employees on the social media policy?
8) What are the organization's expectations of employees participating on social media after work hours?
9) What are the repercussions of employees that are sanctioned?
10) What is your perspective on the overall value of the social media policy for the organization?

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Desmond L. Kemp

Education

2022 Doctor of Philosophy in American Studies, Indiana University degree earned at Indiana University-Purdue University- Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN

2015 Master of Arts in Applied Professional Studies, DePaul University, Chicago, IL

2011 Graduate Certificate in Educating Adults, DePaul University, Chicago, IL

2004 Bachelor of Science in Graphic Communication Systems, North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, Greensboro, NC

Facilitation/Teaching Experience

2021- 2022 POLS-103 Introduction to American Politics
Undergraduate Lecturer
School of Liberal Arts- Indiana University Purdue University – Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN

2022 "Developing Research Topics"
Black Doctoral Conference Workshop Facilitator
Center for Africana Studies and Culture: Indiana University Purdue University-Indianapolis, IN

2021 To+ Through College Workshop
Fall/Summer Facilitator
SMASH Academy Illinois, Chicago, IL

2021 STEM Workshop
Summer Facilitator
SMASH Academy Illinois, Chicago, IL

2021 "Is It Safe to Tweet? Censorship and Black Voice in The Age of Social Media"
Online Lecture/Panel
Center for Africana Studies and Culture: Indiana University Purdue University-Indianapolis, IN

2019 "Omoluwabi- The Fundamental Basis of Yoruba Traditional Education."
Guest Lecturer, The Early Period to 1914, April 2, 2019
Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA

2019 "The Teachings of Ptahotep."
Guest Lecturer, The Early Period to 1914, April 23, 2019
Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA

2016-2017 Civic Leadership and College Seminar
Founding Teacher
CICS Ralph Ellison High School, Chicago, IL

2014-2017 Grades 5-6 Social Science
Resident Teacher/Paraprofessional
CICS Avalon Middle School, Chicago, IL

2010-2013 Job Readiness Training
Contractual JRT Trainer/WIA Case Manager
ABJ Community Services, Chicago, IL
National Able Network, Chicago, IL

Professional Experience

2019-2022 Graduate Assistantship
Indiana University Purdue University- Indianapolis

2008-2009 RISE Program Coordinator
Chicago Commons, Chicago, IL

2006-2007 AmeriCorps VISTA
University of Chicago Neighborhood Schools Program
Donoghue Charter School, Chicago, IL

Poster Presentations

2021 "An Analysis on the Practice of Managing Public Sector Employees on Social Media." 3MT Contestant. November 18, 2021
IUPUI PFFP Conference Three Minute Thesis Competition
Indianapolis, IN - Virtual

2020 Community-Engaged Research and Practices
Co-Presenter
IUPUI PFFP Conference, November 17, 2020
Indianapolis, IN- Virtual

2019 "Implementing Cross-Cultural Teacher Training Policy: Macon County School District." Presenter at CAU Public Administration Policy Research Symposium, April 12, 2019
Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA, First Place Winner

Honors

2022	IUPUI Elite 50
2021-2022	IUPUI Graduate Emissary
2021	Emerging Fellow for Center for Africana Studies and Culture at IUPUI
2021-2022	Foundry10 Scholarship Recipient
2020-2021	Congressional Black Caucus Spouses Scholarship Recipient
2020	Center for Research on Inclusion and Social Policy Fellowship Indianapolis University Purdue University- Indianapolis
2019-2020	Congressional Black Caucus Spouses Scholarship Recipient
2004	NC A&T Outstanding Student – Fall Graduate

Affiliations

Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.
National Forum for Black Public Administrators
North Carolina A&T Alumni Association
AmeriCorps Alums (VISTA)

Publications

Kemp, Desmond, la. 2021. "Marching to Preserve Our History: One Cadence at a Time." In *The HBCU Experience: HBCU Band Alumni Edition* by Ashley Little. The HBCU Experience, LLC.

Kemp, Desmond. 2021. Book of the Month: Kennetta Hammond Perry's London is the Place for Me (blog). *PopMeC Research Blog*, February 12, 2021, https://popmec.hypotheses.org/3942.

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Kemp, Desmond. 2020. "*What does Covid mean for vulnerable workers? Ask a millennial cashier."* New America, May 4, 2020. https://www.newamerica.org/indianapolis/blog/what-does-covid-mean-vulnerable-workers-ask-millennial-cashier/

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Research Interests

Workforce Development
Equity
Work Policy
Emerging Issues in Technology
Education
African American History
Black Studies
Youth Development
Popular Culture
(*Arranged in order of interest)*