USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY MEDICAL AND DENTAL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT:
Social media can help to improve an individual’s sense of connectedness with real or online communities and can be an effective communication. This survey study was conducted among different medical and dental college students of different medical and dental colleges. The relevant information about usage of social media, their timings and their view about benefits or disadvantages was collected on a predefined proforma. A total of 220 medical and dental students participated in the study. There were 130 males and 90 females. The mean age was 20.48±2.20 years. The mean time spent on these social media was 3.23±1.90 hours per day. Out of 220 students, 149 were using social media in form of Facebook, twitter, snapchat or Instagram along with WhatsApp.

Keywords: Social Media, Medical Students, Dental Students
INTRODUCTION:

Social media are interactive computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation or sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks. The variety of stand-alone and built-in social media services currently available introduces challenges of definition; however, there are some common features i.e. social media are interactive internet-based applications, user-generated content such as text posts or comments, digital photos or videos, and data generated through all online interactions, is the lifeblood of social media, users create service-specific profiles for the website or app that are designed and maintained by the social media organization, social media facilitate the development of online social networks by connecting a user’s profile with those of other individuals or groups. Users usually access social media services via web-based apps on desktops and laptops or download services that offer social media functionality to their mobile devices (e.g., smartphones and tablets).

As users engage with these electronic services, they create highly interactive platforms through which individuals, communities, and organizations can share, co-create, discuss, participate, and modify user-generated content or self-curated content posted online. Networks formed through social media change the way groups of people interact and communicate or stand with the votes. They "introduce substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities, and individuals". These changes are the focus of the emerging fields of techno self-studies. Social media differ from paper-based media (e.g., magazines and newspapers) and traditional electronic media such as TV broadcasting, Radio broadcasting in many ways, including quality, reach, frequency, interactivity, usability, immediacy, and performance. Social media outlets operate in a dialogic transmission system (many sources to many receivers). This is in contrast to traditional media which
operates under a mono-logic transmission model (one source to many receivers),
such as a newspaper which is delivered to many subscribers, or a radio station
which broadcasts the same programs to an entire city.

Observers have noted a wide range of positive and negative impacts of
social media use. Social media can help to improve an individual's sense of
connectedness with real or online communities and can be an effective
communication (or marketing) tool for corporations, entrepreneurs, non-profit
organizations, advocacy groups, political parties, and governments (1-4).

MATERIAL OF METHODS:

This survey study was conducted among different medical and dental
college students of different medical and dental colleges. The relevant
information about usage of social media, their timings and their view about
benefits or disadvantages was collected on a predefined proforma. All the data
was kept confidential. All the data was analyzed with SPSS Ver. 23.0. Relevant
statistical analysis was performed. The qualitative variables were presented as
frequency and percentages. The quantitative variables were presented as mean
and standard deviation.

RESULTS:
A total of 220 medical and dental students participated in the study. There were
130 males and 90 females. The mean age was 20.48±2.20 years. Out of 220
students, 149 were using social media in form of Facebook, twitter, snapchat or
Instagram along with WhatsApp. Remaining 71 were using only WhatsApp and
no other platform. The mean time spent on these social media was 3.23±1.90
hours per day. Those using Facebook commented that they use this to stay in
touch with friends and family and join some study groups and conversations.
Students using twitter commented about keeping in touch with latest news and trends.

DISCUSSION:

The more time people spend on Facebook, the less satisfied they feel about their life. Self-presentational theory explains that people will consciously manage their self-image or identity related information in social contexts. When people are not accepted or are criticized online, they feel emotional pain. This may lead to some form of online retaliation such as online bullying. Trudy Hui Hui Chua and Leanne Chang’s article, "Follow Me and Like My Beautiful Selfies: Singapore Teenage Girls' Engagement in Self-Presentation and Peer Comparison on Social Media" states that teenage girls manipulate their self-presentation on social media to achieve a sense of beauty that is projected by their peers. These authors also discovered that teenage girls compare themselves to their peers on social media and present themselves in certain ways in effort to earn regard and acceptance, which can lead to problems with self-confidence and self-satisfaction.

There are several negative effects to social media which receive criticism, for example regarding privacy issues, information overload and Internet fraud. Social media can also have negative social effects on users. Angry or emotional conversations can lead to real-world interactions outside of the Internet, which can get users into dangerous situations. Some users have experienced threats of violence online and have feared these threats manifesting themselves offline. At the same time, concerns have been raised about possible links between heavy social media use and depression, and even the issues of cyberbullying, online harassment, and "trolling". According to cyber bullying statistics from the i-Safe Foundation, over half of adolescents and teens have been bullied online, and about the same number have engaged in cyber bullying. Both the bully and the
victim are negatively affected, and the intensity, duration, and frequency of bullying are the three aspects that increase the negative effects on both. Studies also show that social media have negative effects on peoples' self-esteem and self-worth. The authors of "Who Compares and Despairs? The Effect of Social Comparison Orientation on Social Media Use and its Outcomes" found that people with a higher social comparison orientation appear to use social media more heavily than people with low social comparison orientation. This finding was consistent with other studies that found people with high social comparison orientation make more social comparisons once on social media.

Users also tend to segment their audiences based on the image they want to present, pseudonymity and use of multiple accounts across the same platform remain popular ways to negotiate platform expectations and segment audiences. Social media can also function as a supportive system for adolescents' health, because by using social media, adolescents are able to mobilize around health issues that they themselves deem relevant. For example, in a clinical study among adolescent patients undergoing treatment for obesity, the participants' expressed that through social media, they could find personalized weight-loss content as well as social support among other adolescents with obesity. The same authors also found that as with other types of online information, the adolescents need to possess necessary skills to evaluate and identify reliable health information, competencies commonly known as health literacy. Other social media, such as pro-anorexia sites, have been found in studies to cause significant risk of harm by reinforcing negative health-related behaviors through social networking, especially in adolescents (5-8).

REFERENCES: