

Exploring the Awareness and Perceptions of Social Media Influences on Mental Health among Allied Health Science Students-A Descriptive Study

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Abstract- A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the knowledge and attitude towards the important act of social media usage on mental health among allied health science students in a selected institution. The study aimed to evaluate the level of awareness, perceptions, and attitudes regarding the influence of excessive social media use on psychological well-being. A structured self-administered questionnaire was employed to gather data from 100 allied health science students selected using simple random sampling. The results indicated that 58% of the participants had inadequate knowledge, 30% had moderate knowledge, and only 12% had adequate knowledge regarding the mental health implications of social media. In terms of attitude, 65% of students exhibited a neutral attitude, 20% had a positive attitude, and 15% demonstrated a negative attitude towards social media's impact on mental well-being. These findings highlight the growing concern about social media use among students and emphasize the need for targeted awareness programs that promote responsible digital behavior and mental health literacy. Such interventions are essential to help young adults develop a balanced approach to social media use and reduce the risk of associated mental health issues.

Index Terms- Social Media, Mental Health, Knowledge, Attitude, and Allied Health Science Students

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an integral part of daily life among young adults, especially students. While it serves as a powerful tool for communication, learning, and entertainment, excessive or unregulated use can adversely affect mental health, leading to issues such as anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, and decreased academic performance [1],[2]. Allied health science students, being future healthcare

professionals, need to be aware of these impacts to promote healthy digital habits. According to the World Health Organization [3], mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes their abilities, can cope with normal life stresses, can work productively, and is able to contribute to their community. With the rapid growth of social media platforms, concerns regarding their influence on students' mental health have risen globally. Studies have shown that increased screen time and social media addiction are associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and stress among adolescents and young adults [3]. The present study focuses on assessing the knowledge and attitude of allied health science students towards the impact of social media usage on mental health. Such assessments are critical, as these students are future health promoters who can educate the public on the responsible and informed use of digital media [4].

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A descriptive cross-sectional design was employed to assess the knowledge and attitude towards the impact of social media usage on mental health among allied health science students. The study was conducted from January 2025 to March 2025 in a selected institution. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Human Ethics Committee prior to the study. A total of 100 students aged 18–25 years from various allied health science departments were selected using simple random sampling (lottery method). After obtaining informed consent, data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire comprising 25 items related to knowledge about social media usage and its mental

health implications, and 15 items to assess their attitude towards its impact.

The scoring was categorized as:

- Adequate Knowledge: 75–100%
- Moderate Knowledge: 50–74%
- Inadequate Knowledge: <50%

For attitude:

- Positive Attitude: Score above 75%
- Neutral Attitude: Score between 50–75%
- Negative Attitude: Score below 50%

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

III. RESULTS

The results of assessment of knowledge level on social media among participants.

Inadequate knowledge,	58%
Moderate knowledge,	30%
Adequate knowledge.	12%

The results of assessment of attitude level on social media among participants.

Neutral attitude	65%
Positive attitude,	20%
Negative attitude.	15%

Table 1 shows the distribution of knowledge levels among the participants.

Level of Knowledge	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
Adequate Knowledge	12	12%
Moderate Knowledge	30	30%
Inadequate Knowledge	58	58%

Table 2 shows the distribution of attitude levels among the participants.

Level of Attitude	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
Positive Attitude	20	20%
Neutral Attitude	65	65%
Negative Attitude	15	15%

Statistical analysis revealed a significant association between knowledge level and year of study ($p < 0.05$), but no significant association with gender or department ($p > 0.05$).

IV. DISCUSSION

The present study assessed the knowledge and attitude towards the impact of social media usage on mental health among allied health science students. The findings revealed that a majority of students had inadequate knowledge and a predominantly neutral attitude toward the subject[5],[6]. Similar results have been reported in previous studies, where students exhibited limited awareness of the psychological risks associated with excessive social media use, including increased anxiety, depression, and emotional distress [7],[8],[9]. These findings underscore the urgent need to integrate digital literacy and mental health education into the allied health science curriculum[10],[11],[12]. As future healthcare providers, these students must be well-informed about the mental health consequences of digital media overuse to effectively guide and counsel their peers and patients [13]. Enhancing their awareness can contribute to early recognition, prevention, and management of social media-related mental health issues within the broader community[14],[15],[16].

V. CONCLUSION

The study revealed a notable gap in knowledge and a largely neutral attitude among allied health science students regarding the impact of social media usage on mental health. These findings underscore the need for targeted educational interventions and awareness initiatives aimed at enhancing students' understanding of the psychological effects of

excessive social media use. Promoting digital well-being and fostering a more informed and positive attitude toward responsible social media practices are essential, particularly for allied health students who are expected to play a pivotal role in future health education and mental health advocacy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Incorporate digital well-being and mental health education into the allied health science curriculum.
2. Organize workshops and seminars focusing on the mental health impacts of excessive social media usage.
3. Promote counseling services and helplines for students struggling with social media-related mental health issues.
4. Encourage students to engage in digital detox activities and mindfulness practices.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors express sincere gratitude to all study participants for their cooperation.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND SPONSORSHIP: Nil

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There are no conflicts of interest.

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