

## Original Research

### Evaluation of Correlation of Social Media Networking and Health Status- An Observational Study

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#### ABSTRACT:

**Background:** The present study was conducted to assess the effect of social media on health status. **Materials & Methods:** The present study was conducted in the department of Community Medicine. It comprised of 525 subjects of both genders. A questionnaire was designed to acquire information such as number of hours spent on social site, type of sites visualized and effect on general health. Responds were recorded and tabulated. **Results:** 35 subjects used to spend 1 hour/day, 130 subjects spent 2 hours/day and 360 used to spend >2 hours/day on social media. The difference was significant (P< 0.05). The most commonly seen site was facebook in 380 subjects, whatsapp by 410, yahoo by 435, twitter by 126 and instagram by 218 subjects. The difference was significant (P< 0.05). The maximum cases of stress (172) were seen in subjects who spent >2 hours/day on social media. Similarly, 120 had loss of concentration, 340 had obesity and 135 had hypertension who spent >2 hours/day on social media. **Conclusion:** Authors found that as the duration on social media increased, the health related problems increased. Obesity, hypertension, and stress was commonly seen health problems.

**Key words:** Health, Stress, Social Media

Received: 14 March, 2019

Revised: 20 May 2019

Accepted: 22 May 2019

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**This article may be cited as:** Gupta B, Gupta R, Gupta M, Jain S. Evaluation of Correlation of Social Media Networking and Health Status- An Observational Study. J Adv Med Dent Scie Res 2019;7(6): 86-89.

#### INTRODUCTION

In the early 2000's, the Web became much more personal as social networking websites were introduced and embraced by the masses.<sup>1</sup> Social networking sites (SNS) are defined as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a limited system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and terms of these connections may vary from site to site.<sup>2</sup>

In the last ten years, the online world has changed dramatically, thanks to the invention of social media, young men and women now exchange ideas, feelings, personal information, pictures and videos at a truly astonishing rate. Seventy-three percent of wired American teens now use social media websites. Social network interventions have been successfully used in international health programs to promote modern family planning methods and bullying reduction among adolescents.<sup>3</sup> Social network focused interventions have been utilized for weight reduction, diabetes, smoking cessation, exercise, and improving the

well-being of people with schizophrenia. There has been documentation regarding excessive usage of social networking on general health of individual. The effect of social media on general health is based on various factors such as duration of usage, kind of sites seen etc.<sup>4</sup> The present study was conducted to assess the effect of social media on health status.

**MATERIALS & METHODS**

The present study was conducted in the Department of Community Dentistry. It comprised of 525 subjects of both

genders. All were informed regarding the study. Ethical approval was obtained from institutional ethical committee. General information such as name, age, gender etc. was recorded. A questionnaire was designed to acquire information such as number of hours spent on social site, type of sites visualized and effect on general health. Responds were recorded and tabulated. The data was processed and subjected to statistical analysis. P value less than 0.05 was considered significant.

**RESULTS**

**Table I Distribution of subjects**

Total- 525		
Gender	Males	Females
Number	315	210

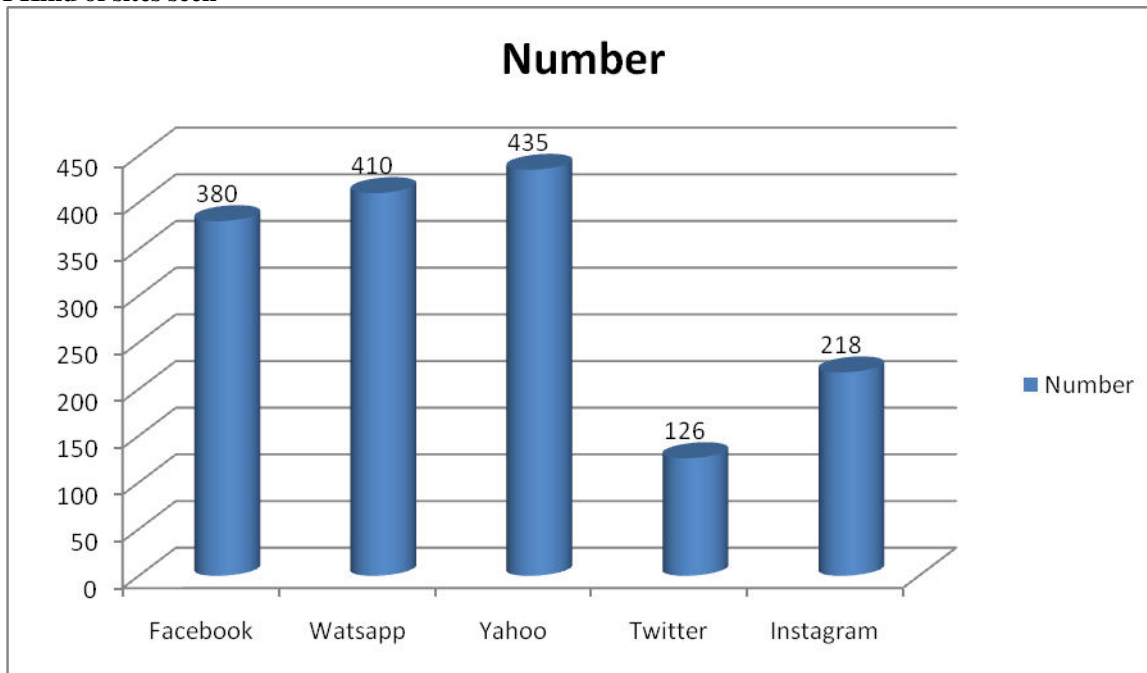
Table I shows that out of 525 subjects, males were 315 and females were 210.

**Table II Duration spent on social media**

Duration	Number	P value
1 hour/day	35	0.01
2 hours/day	130	
>2 hours/day	360	

Table II shows that 35 subjects used to spend 1 hour/day, 130 subjects spent 2 hours/day and 360 used to spend >2 hours/day on social media. The difference was significant (P< 0.05).

**Graph I Kind of sites seen**



Graph I shows that most commonly seen site was facebook in 380 subjects, whatsapp by 410, yahoo by 435, twitter by 126 and instagram by 218 subjects. The difference was significant ( $P < 0.05$ ).

**Table III Duration on social media and health status**

Duration	Health status			
	Stress	Loss of concentration	Obesity	Hypertension
1 hour/day	40	20	110	25
2 hours/day	110	70	165	68
>2 hours/day	172	120	340	135

Table III shows that maximum cases of stress (172) were seen in subjects who spent >2 hours/day on social media. Similarly, 120 had loss of concentration, 340 had obesity and 135 had hypertension who spent >2 hours/day on social media.

## DISCUSSION

Network interventions often utilize existing social support, social exchange, and social influence processes such as modeling and verbal persuasion. They utilize the existing network structure to diffuse behavior change. Moreover, as network members often maintain relationships, networks interventions can help to sustain behavior change. For serious illness and health conditions, members of individuals' personal network are often emotionally, economically, and socially impacted. Hence, for secondary prevention it can be helpful to involve and consider these network members in the support, care, and behavior changes processes.<sup>5</sup>

As it's known in this generation tend to rely on the net and also spend most of the time on social networking sites such as Twitter, Google Plus, MySpace and Facebook. This is probably due to the reason that college and university students as well as teens used it extensively to get global access. The majority of the scholars prefers to stay on the internet for hours, than studying for their exams or doing their assignments. The main reason is that when they are studying or searching their course material online, they get attracted to SNS's to kill the boredom in their study time, diverting their attention from their work.<sup>6</sup> The present study was conducted to assess the effect of social media on health status.

In our study, out of 525 subjects, males were 315 and females were 210. We observed that 35 subjects used to spend 1 hour/day, 130 subjects spent 2 hours/day and 360 used to spend >2 hours/day on social media. Junco et al<sup>7</sup> conducted a study in which out of one thousand five hundred and seventy-eight copies of the questionnaire distributed, one thousand five hundred and eight were retrieved which represented a response rate of 95.5 %. The study revealed that majority of the respondents had mobile phones which also had Internet facility on them and had knowledge of the existence of many media sites. The study further confirmed that most of the respondents visit their

social media sites using their phones and spend between thirty minutes to three hours per day. In addition the study revealed that the use of social media sites had affected academic performance of the respondents negatively and that there was direct relationship between the use of social media sites and academic performance. The study recommends among others that, students with mobile phones having internet facility should be encouraged to use it to supplement their research in the library rather than the usual chatting with friends all the time. Students should be encouraged to limit the time they spend on their social media sites per day and advise them to rather substitute those hours to read novels to improve their knowledge. Since the use of social media sites had affected the academic work of students negatively there is the urgent need for the introduction of students to the availability of novels and other information resources or materials that can help them academically.

Aida et al<sup>8</sup> conducted a study in which out of 1215 subjects, 890 had various health issues. A questionnaire was prepared and distributed among subjects to respond accordingly. It was found that those who spent more than 4 hours on social site they tend to have more health problems. Among those, obesity, hypertension, dementia and arthritis was common. The study showed that the use of social media sites had affected academic performance negatively. There was occurrence of dependency on social sites.

## CONCLUSION

Authors found that as the duration on social media increased, the health related problems increased. Obesity, hypertension, and stress was commonly seen health problems.

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