

Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices on the Use of Social Media for Academic Requirements Among Nursing Students of the University of Bohol

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ABSTRACT

The adaptation towards online learning raised questions on how nursing students use social media with their academic requirements. To ensure safety as they partake in online classes, the researchers conducted descriptive quantitative research to determine the level of Knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward social media use among nursing students at the University of Bohol (UB). A sample of 200 nursing students currently enrolled in the nursing program from levels 1 to 4 of the school year 2020-2021 was selected through random sampling. Questionnaires and consent forms were administered online. The study underwent an ethics review by the UB-Research Ethics Committee. The findings inferred that most respondents are highly knowledgeable about social media, had a moderately positive attitude towards social media use, and frequently practice it to complete their academic requirements. Findings revealed a significant relationship between the respondents' Knowledge and attitude, Knowledge and practices, and attitudes and practices. A conclusion was drawn that the respondent's level of Knowledge and attitudes, their level of Knowledge and practices, and their attitudes and practices were significantly correlated, respectively.

Keywords: Social Media Use, Nursing Students, Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices, Quantitative-Descriptive Correlational Method, Tagbilaran, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is considered to be among the countries with the most social media users across Southeast Asia (ITnews Asia Team, 2021). As of January 2020, around 67% of Filipinos are reported to be active on social networking sites, spending an average of four hours on social media daily (Sanchez, 2020). As defined by Tufts University (2020), social media refers to the medium of interaction wherein people can build, share, create, or exchange information in a virtual setting. Social media encompasses different online tools and Web-based technologies. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram are the foremost popular communication systems that many students actively use (Statista, 2022). Social media sites connect people irrespective of distance. It's generally accustomed to communicating with others by providing basic information about oneself, including photos, videos, comments, and many more. These platforms are used for all kinds of things, primarily for leisure and entertainment.

In the modern age, social media has dramatically influenced the scholar culture. As part of the educational platform, social media has introduced innovative teaching strategies that are useful, especially during the pandemic (West, 2021). As a result of the fast spread of Covid-19, schools are forced to shut down across the globe. Statistics show approximately 1.2 billion students have been away from classrooms (Li & Lalani, 2020). Many academic institutions have resorted to e-learning to continue students' education in response to this problem. Moodle, Google Classrooms, and Edmodo are social media platforms currently utilized for educational purposes (Winstead, 2022).

The UB College of Nursing has adapted to the shift toward online learning. Nursing students now engage in social media activities on Facebook, Messenger, Google classroom, and Zoom to complete their academic requirements. To ensure that students are safe as they take part in online classes, the researchers deemed it necessary to conduct the study to determine the level of Knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward social media use among UB nursing students.

This study was anchored on two theories. First is the Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura, and the other is the Theory of Planned Behavior by Icek Ajzen. Social Learning Theory describes the accession of skills developed primarily within a grouping. Bandura's Social Learning theory views learning as a human process in that individuals will self-initiate, control education, and make a determined effort to create Knowledge through their actions, creating and connecting information. The idea of self-efficacy is the critical argument of Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Self-efficacy is the belief in a person's abilities to rearrange and perform courses of action needed to cause given achievements (Mcleod, 2016). Following Bandura's Social Learning Theory, students' use of social media for educational purposes will allow amassing skills and information to enhance their academic performance (Deaton, 2014). Theory of Planned Behavior by Icek Ajzen describes that attitude is believed to influence behavior. One's beliefs, emotions, and perceptions are considered vital and cognitive components of attitude. This theory determines behavioral intention in which nursing students' attitude toward social media usage may influence their behaviors (LaMorte, 2022).

Nursing students, as potential practitioners, are supposed to be responsible social media users. However, the rapid exchange of social media information exposes them to the risk of transmitting unprofessional practices, such as privacy and confidentiality violations. Social media messages should be carefully considered, and patients' clinical cases should not be posted on social media. Repeated cursing, liking a disrespectful post or comment about a fellow student or an organization, using false names or someone's identity, and sharing photographs or videos while intoxicated with alcohol were the most commonly seen unprofessional activities on social media. Without adequate guidance and understanding of social media professional conduct, it is possible to predict a future increase in amateur social media activities that can contribute to ethical and legal consequences (Barrett-Maitland & Lynch, 2020). Academic nursing institutions should consider developing approaches to resolve this issue, such as developing policies that define social media actions that could lead to disciplinary action (Edge, 2017).

Vanwynsberghe and Verdegem (2013) looked at factors that may affect social media integration in education and identified students' Knowledge about social media use (social media literacy) as one of the barriers. They defined social media literacy as the competency in accessing, analyzing,

evaluating, and creating social media content through different contexts. Access is said to be the first prerequisite to achieving social media literacy. Access mainly refers to the capacity to obtain materials using media technologies; financial constraints, support of social networks, family composition, and peer pressure are said to influence access. Through analysis and evaluation, you know how to assess the information presented to the viewer critically. In a period where social media enables individuals to be both consumers and producers of content, it is deemed necessary that people, particularly students, can utilize social media to create content that can effectively deliver the message they want to convey (Dwivedi, Ismagilova, Hughes, Carlson, Filieri, Jacobson, Jain, Karjaluoto, Kefi, Krishen, Kumar, Rahman, Raman, Rauschnabel, Rowley, Salo, Tran & Wang, 2021).

According to Lau (2017), online social networks assist students in initiating learning practices. Students who use online social networks may expand their awareness through comprehensive communication and Knowledge sharing on the sites. As Mao (2014) explored, students have optimistic perceptions and views regarding using social media in education. Students, in particular, assumed that social media could help them learn better and that they would enjoy using it for an assignment or diversional activity after school. Social media is meant primarily for nurses as it provides them with an accessible and affordable source of Knowledge (Peck, 2014).

Moreover, social media offers an effective mechanism for enhancing nursing education. Expanding the students' Knowledge regarding privacy, ethics, health policy, professionalism, and communication as technology grows is essential (Schmitt, Sims-Giddens & Booth 2012). It can also help nurses to build an early identity and specific connection with this profession in healthcare.

A study by Oducado et al. (2019) revealed that nursing students are indeed wide social media users and have good perceptions and attitudes concerning responsible social media usage. Social media is continuously gaining interest among students. Hence, its responsible use must be upheld. Misuse of social media may have negative repercussions. In research from Dhawan (2020), online activities need elaborate planning because they risk the reputation of universities and teaching programs. If deemed ineffective, students will have difficulty learning and may develop hostility towards education. Students should be made acquainted with

the hazards when using social media. Nursing students, above all, must be guided and educated about the problems of professionalism in social media usage concerning the emerging concerns within the medical and allied health field.

A study conducted by Schmitt, et al. (2012) has shown documentation of scholars engaging in unprofessional behaviors. This records 293 nursing schools; 77% experienced at least one occurrence of scholars posting or sharing amateur content on social media. There have also been reports of misconduct in African countries. Nursing students have admitted to posting information on social media platforms that they would not have any desire to be discovered by a future employer or tutorial staff member.

The study primarily aimed to determine the level of knowledge, attitude, and practices on the use of social media among nursing students at the University of Bohol for the academic school year 2020-2021. Concretely, it is directed to obtain the profile of the respondents, the level of knowledge, attitudes, and practices of the respondents. The study evaluates the relationship between the following: respondents' demographic profile and their level of knowledge, attitudes, and practices; between the respondents' level of expertise and perspective, their level of Knowledge and practices, and their attitude and practices.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilized quantitative research, which used a descriptive design to explore the knowledge, attitudes, and practices on social media use among UB nursing students. This study employed a simple random sampling technique. The respondents consisted of two hundred (200) UB nursing students who were officially enrolled from Level 1 to Level 4 of the school year 2020-2021, regardless of age and gender. The researchers chose the University of Bohol - College of Nursing as the environment.

The study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire to determine the knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward social media use among UB nursing students. The formulated questions were based on the tool of Oducado et al. (2019) entitled "Perceptions and Attitudes Toward Responsible Use of Social Media." Experts in nursing were gathered to conduct face validity of the tool to ensure that the researchers could measure what they intended to measure. After this, the researchers conducted pilot testing of at least ten respondents with similar profiles to

the actual respondents. The questionnaires were subjected to Cronbach's Alpha Test and the result showed that the tools were considered reliable and valid. Part I contains the demographic profile of the Respondents, including their age, sex, religion, and year level. Part II includes ten (10) statements that aim to assess the respondents' knowledge of social media use and can be answered using a scale. Part III, was designed to determine the respondents' attitudes, consisting of five (5) statements wherein the respondents can choose to check the column corresponding to their answer using the scale. Part IV is created to determine the social media practices of the participants. It has ten (10) statements, which the respondents can answer using the scale provided. Some items in the tool were reversed and re-coded in the responses, whereby a high score was transformed into its corresponding low score on the scale. This is because the items were negatively stated and must be reversed in scoring.

Primary ethical concerns were observed and considered throughout the conduct of the study. The study underwent an ethics review by the UB-Research Ethics Committee. Transmittal letters were sent to the Dean of the College of Nursing and the VP of Academics for approval. Once approved, the data-gathering procedure was commenced. The researchers distributed the self-made tool in Google form to the respondents in April 2021. Simple random sampling was used to select 200 respondents out of 392 total population. The researchers presented the purpose of the research study, gave proper instructions to the respondents, and provided the researchers' contact information to answer respondents' concerns from the respondents. Privacy and confidentiality were strictly observed throughout the study, as the respondents were assured that the data gathered would be used for research purposes only.

The gathered data underwent normality test to determine the statistical treatment to be used. Weighted mean was utilized to determine the level of Knowledge, attitude, and practices regarding the use of social media among the respondents. Spearman Rank Correlation and Chi-Square Tests were used to test the correlation between the variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Knowledge. Most respondents were "Highly Knowledgeable" in using conferencing apps, such as Zoom or Google Meet, for lectures. This was followed by the respondents being "Highly Knowledgeable," with

a weighted mean of 3.56 in effectively using social media applications (Facebook, Messenger, Google Classroom, etc.) to complete modules and answer quizzes or exams. In a similar study by Fuady, Sutarjo, and Ernawati, (2021), the students perceived using Zoom, Google Meet, and other learning management platforms (LMS) as relatively easy to use. The findings also align with the results of the study by Giroux & Moreau (2022), revealing that social media could facilitate students' class performance and critical thinking activities, providing learning opportunities and reducing networking with international practitioners. Clinical instructors have used Twitter for several school-related activities, including giving formative feedback, reflection, learning objectives, and announcing the orientation of learners to the clinical areas and educational rotation.

However, respondents were noted to be "Moderately Knowledgeable" when publishing articles or creating blogs for a project. But blogging has been used as one of the teaching strategies in introducing concepts on cultural competence, empathy, therapeutic relationship, transitions to practice, and self-care. Blogging allows students to practice their critical thinking skills as they need to read the blog and post responses (Giroux & Mureau, 2022). Research is one of the many roles of nurses, and publication is one of the most crucial components of study. Publication allows students to actively contribute to scientific knowledge production (Jungck, Mercuri, & Tusin, 2004). The growth of social media as a new Internet networking platform would add value and benefit to existing distance education methods. Social networking can promote online learning, enabling versatility through the convenient time or place to accommodate educators using blogs for teaching and learning with students. Social media in nursing education is a creative way of teaching and strategy (Nyangeni, Du Rand, & Van Rooyen, 2015).

Attitudes. The respondents had a "moderately positive" attitude toward all items, wherein feeling confident to locate academic sources relevant to nursing was at the top rank. A study conducted by Hay, Car, Dawe & Clark-Burg in 2017 demonstrated social media's potential utility for enhanced clinical learning and patient safety. As such, nursing students currently use mobile technology and social media as they often find assurance in the level of information they would gain using these resources. In nursing, social media provides an accessible and affordable source of Knowledge (Peck, 2014).

The students also felt that when using social media, it is easier to approach clinical instructors for follow-up topics regarding current topics.' Physical distance does not stop the learners from discussing with their clinical instructors when using social media. With this, Nyangeni et al. (2014) state that social media's versatility benefits students in tertiary education because students can communicate with instructors from home or at work.

Students agreed that it is convenient to ask patients for information by messaging them on their social media accounts to help with RLE requirements (Ventola, 2014). This is noteworthy, considering that students are at risk of violating personal-professional boundaries (Edge, 2017). Ranked fourth is feeling safe sharing private information about themselves and the patients on different platforms. Social media is open to all; thus, sharing information makes students susceptible to various threats. Moreover, the Code of Ethics for Nurses, created by the International Council of Nurses in 2012, clearly states that information about the patient must be handled with the utmost confidentiality. In 2021, a qualitative study revealed that digital learning professionalism affects how a student behaves online. Social media is an effective tool for supporting formal learning in nursing education (O'Connor, Zhang, Honey, Lee, 2021).

Practices. The findings revealed that students practiced the following all the time: sending or receiving emails, classwork, and other announcements from the University; storing files, such as in Google Drive; researching for assignments and projects; reading pdf files or journals that relate to nursing, and participating in online group discussions. The UB-College of Nursing utilizes Blended Learning, Google Classroom, and other social media platforms. UBlended learning is a combination of synchronous and asynchronous activities. Learning modules, announcements, and exams are provided through Google Classroom via the university email. Synchronous activities involve real-time virtual meetings for class discussions. Social media are seen as enabling technologies that allow blended learning solutions, and together with peer-to-peer engagement, they can facilitate active learning and information construction (Nyangeni, Du Rand, & Van Rooyen, 2015). With social media, formal learning may include activities like using YouTube videos in class. In contrast, informal learning may involve students scrolling through Twitter and finding relevant learning content in their leisure time. They could collaborate, share resources, mentor one another through social

media, and connect with nursing experts and professional institutions (Giroux & Mureau, 2022).

In addition, data showed that the respondents “frequently practiced” voicing concerns toward clinical instructors and other staff members in the College of Nursing, as well as sharing patients’ clinical information with classmates – with a weighted mean of 2.77 and 2.50, respectively. Although not practiced as much as the other practices, the two require attention because such methods do not exhibit the social media responsibility expected of nurses. The display of argumentative behaviors on social media directed to patients, employees, and institutions may be seen by students as an expression of their own personal, political, or social views. However, some interactions can be misinterpreted as personal attacks on opposing views (Edge, 2017). Social media messages should be carefully considered, regarding patients’ clinical cases which should not be posted or shared on social media because it evokes confidentiality issues. According to Price, Devis, LeMoine, Crouch, South, and Hossain (2018), the attitude and practices of student nurses may impact their future practice credibility.

Correlation between the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of the Respondents. A significant relationship between the respondents’ knowledge and attitude, knowledge and practices, and attitudes and practices was found.

The finding shows that the respondents’ knowledge level affects their attitude. Similarly, a study by Ashari, Ngadiman, Zainudin, & Jumaat (2018) revealed that students with positive Knowledge about technology had a positive attitude towards its use in learning. Moreover, the respondents’ level of knowledge influences their practices. When students know how social media operates, they can utilize it for learning. According to Faizi and El Fkihi’s (2018) study, students use Facebook to gain access to learning resources. It allows them to check for class activities and assignments, discuss topics relevant to their course, and ask for assistance on issues they have difficulties with.

Furthermore, the study shows that the respondents’ attitudes impact their practices. The more positive the respondents’ attitude towards social media use, the more frequently they used it for academic purposes. This is consistent with the study by Omotayo and Salami (2018), which revealed that the higher the students’ attitudes toward the benefit of social media, the higher the likelihood that the students will use it for sharing Knowledge.

Table 1. Correlation of the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of the Respondents (N = 200)

Variables	Spearman's Rank Test Value	P-value	Decision	Interpretation
Knowledge and Attitude	.498	.000	Reject null hypothesis	There is a significant relationship between the level of Knowledge and Attitude
Knowledge and Practices	.420	.000	Reject null hypothesis	There is a significant relationship between the level of Knowledge and practices
Attitudes and Practices	.420	.000	Reject null hypothesis	There is a significant relationship between Attitude and Practices

CONCLUSION

In light of the findings, the researchers conclude that most nursing students are highly knowledgeable in using social media applications effectively to complete modules and answer quizzes or exams. Thus, they are moderately positive in their attitude towards social media use and confident in locating academic sources relevant to the nursing course. It also indicates that the respondents practice social media frequently or often as they send or receive emails, classwork, and other announcements from the University. The student's knowledge, attitudes, and practices primarily aim to enhance their academic performance, which is supported by Bandura's Social Learning Theory that people can perform courses of action needed to cause achievements. Lastly, the study concludes that the respondents' knowledge and attitudes, knowledge and practices, and attitudes and practices are significantly correlated, respectively.

RECOMMENDATION

The results of the study prompted the researchers to come up with the following recommendations:

1. In partnership with the UB administrators, the College of Nursing must have more trainings and webinars pertaining to fulfilling of academic requirements, exploring social media applications essential for student learning and emphasizing Facebook application as tool for enhancing nursing education;

2. The UB nursing students must undergo training on Data Privacy Act so that they will use social media observing security and privacy protection;
3. The College of Nursing must hold seminars on responsible social media usage in relation to nursing practice to raise awareness about the risks of social media misuse and prevent ethical violations;
4. The UB must have online seminars about “Think Before You Click” Programs to raise awareness about potential risks in the digital and social media platforms; and,
5. The UB nursing students should be given input on how to create and publish blogs and articles. Activities will be done to enhance their knowledge of the proper utilization of social media in creating their assignments, reports, exams, and other academic activities.

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