

Original Article

Social Media Etiquette - New Professionalism for First Year Medical Students. A Descriptive Cross Sectional Study among the First Year Students of Enam Medical College

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Abstract

Introduction: Social media has become an advantageous platform for several reasons. Medical students exhibit a high social media use rate even before medical school. They may not be aware of the implications of their social media use for their future careers. **Objective:** This study has explored the purpose of the first year medical students of Enam Medical College regarding etiquette using the social media by professionalism. **Materials and Methods:** This descriptive cross sectional study was conducted at Enam Medical College among the 140 new first year students during their first phase lecture classes held in October 2022, using a non-probability convenience sampling technique. To collect data we formed a structured questionnaire in English language. Descriptive statistics with cross tabulations were performed. Collected data were analysed using SPSS version 25.0. Chi square test was used to examine the association between variables. **Results:** There were 140 participants. Among them 56% were male students and 44% female students. There is statistically significant association between gender and social media posting preference. The moderate positive association suggests that gender might have a moderate influence on the choice of posting on social media (chi-square was 11.415 df 4 significance 0.022). During online interactions 132 (94.3%) students maintained honesty and transparency, 7(5%) did not maintain that; here mean is $1.05 \pm .219$. On social media about 118(84.3%) students did not express their emotion, only 21(15%) did that (mean 1.86 ± 0.371). Among the participants 117 (83.6%) students agreed that medical institutes should have some transparency, 7(5%) did not agree that; here mean is $1.05 \pm .219$. On social about 118 (84.3%) students did not express their emotion, only 21 (15%) did that (mean 1.86 ± 0.371). Among the participants 117 (83.6%) students agreed that medical institutes should give some guideline to avoid cyberbullying, only 7.1% did not agree, 13 (9.3%) students neither agreed nor disagreed (mean 1.26 ± 0.616). **Conclusion:** In this new modern era social media are important and most effective educational aids. So medical students need to know how to use this educational aid with professional skills.

Key words: Social media; Etiquette; Professionalism; Medical students

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Introduction

Social media has become an advantageous platform for a number of reasons. Students use social media to gain and share information, to communicate and discuss within study groups, and to motivate each other to generate discussion and share thoughts.¹ Kaczmarczyk et al² suggested that students' attitudes and behaviors surrounding information sharing and communication using social media are likely to be reflected in their approach toward academic tasks. Medical students exhibit a high rate of social media use even before arriving at medical school and may not be aware of the implications of their social media use for their future careers.^{3,4} In this context, the GMC and Medical Schools Council (MSC) have issued new guidance entitled Medical Students: Professional Behaviour and Fitness to Practise, both for use by those involved in medical education and to help raise awareness among medical students of the professional behaviour expected of them.³

Guidance for professional behaviour focuses on developing and sustaining trust and the latest update of the United Kingdom General Dental Council (GDC) Guidance on Social Media states that dental team members have a responsibility to "behave professionally and responsibly both online and offline", including maintaining confidentiality, keeping appropriate boundaries with patients and complying with social media policies.⁴ Few U.S. medical schools currently have or enforce policies about monitoring their students' online presence, and the boundary in this area of professionalism between respecting privacy and intruding into students' personal lives remains to be established.⁵ This study has explored the purpose of the first year medical students of Enam Medical College regarding etiquette using the social media by professionalism.

Materials and Methods

This descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in Enam Medical College (EMC) among 140 new first year students during their first phase lecture classes held in October 2022. In Bangladesh, undergraduate new curriculum 2022 was set on Medical Humanities for few

hours (almost 7 hours) on different topics such as behavioral science, medical sociology, etiquette in using social media, self-directed learning including team learning and medical ethics. The study was conducted using a non-probability convenience sampling technique. The sample was selected from EMC first year medical students (code is EM-19). The EMC was established at 2003, situated at Savar Upazilla in Dhaka district. To collect data we used a structured questionnaire in English language. Students participated voluntarily.

Descriptive statistics with cross tabulations were performed. Collected data were analysed using SPSS version 25.0. Chi square test was used to examine the association between variables.

Results

One hundred and forty students participated in the study "Etiquette used in social media - new professionalism for first year medical students". There were 56% male students and 44% female students. Out of 140 students, 139 students were born before 2004, only one student was born after 2004. According to birth year from 2003 to 2005, most of the students aged 20 years up to 2023.

Table I shows the sources wherefrom participants knew the social media etiquette. It shows that 43.6% students knew the social media etiquette from internet, and 29.3% knew it from parents. Table II and Fig. 1 show participants' preference post in social media.

Table I: Sources wherefrom participants knew the social media etiquette

Sources	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percent
Internet	61	43.6	43.6
Parents	41	29.3	29.3
Teachers	15	10.7	10.7
Friends	18	12.9	12.9
More than one sources	5	3.6	3.6
Total	140	100.0	100.0

Table II: Participants' preference post in social media

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Funny video & video links	71	50.7
Study guide	22	15.7
Any inquiry	32	22.9
Answering question to any post	3	2.1
More than one options	12	8.6
Total	140	100.0

Most of the students about 70% preferred post funny video and video links, About >20% preferred it as a study guide, there were 35% students found any inquiry at social media, only few percentages about 5% ask question-answer post to social media.

Fig 1 shows the preference of posting in social media by students. Most of the students (about 70%) preferred funny video and video links, 35% students found any inquiry at social media, about >20% preferred it as a study guide, and only about 5% asked question-answer post to social media.

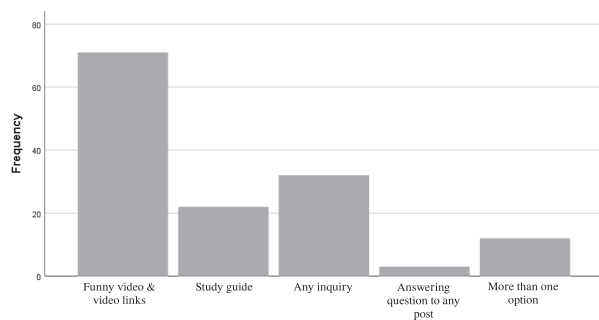


Fig 1. Preference of posting in social media

Table III shows gender of the students mentioning “my preference post in social media”. There is statistically significant association between gender and social media posting preference (Table IV). The moderate positive association suggests that gender might have a moderate influence on the choice of posting on social media.

Table III: Gender of the students mentioning “my preference post in social media”

Gender	Preference posts in social media					
	Funny video & video links	Study guide	Any query	Answering question to any post	More than one options	Total
Male	38	18	14	3	5	78
Female	38	4	18	0	7	62
Total	71	22	32	3	12	140

Table IV: Association between gender and posting preference in social media

	Values	df	Approximate significance (2-sided)
Pearson chi-square	11.415	4	0.022
Likelihood ratio	13.151	4	0.011
Linear-by linear association	.394	1	0.53
Number of valid cases	140		

Chi-Square test was done

Symmetric measures

		Values	Approximate significance (2-sided)
Nominal by nominal	Phi	0.286	0.022
	Cramer's V	0.286	0.022
Number of valid cases		140	

Statistical analysis (N=140)

	Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Mean±SD
For using social media some etiquette should be followed	Agree	124	88.6	1.21±0.594
	Disagree	3	2.1	
	NAND	13	9.3	
I introduce myself whenever I send a friend request to someone	Yes	43	30.7	1.69±0.463
	No	97	69.3	
I read every message properly whenever i send it to my known audience	Yes	126	90	1.1±0.302
	No	14	10	
I maintain honesty and transparency in my interactions	Yes	132	94.3	1.05±0.219
	No	7	5	
I express my emotion on SM	Yes	21	15.0	1.86±0.371
	No	118	84.3	
I ignore others when I use social media	Yes	34	24.3	1.76±0.43
	No	106	75.7	
Social media is the main starting place to get academic information	Yes	62	44.3	1.56±0.499
	No	78	55.7	
I post my private information (phone number, address) in social media	Yes	18	87.1	1.87±0.336
	No	122		
To avoid cyberbullying or any unwanted situation medical institutes should give some guide line to the new students	Agree	117	83.6	1.26±0.616
	Disagree	10	7.1	
	NAND	13	9.3	

NAND =neither agree nor disagree

This multivariate table expresses different types of opinions of first year students. “For using social media some etiquette should be followed” this opinion was agreed by 124 (88.6%) participants, only 3 (2.1%) disagreed and NAND by 13 (9.3%) students. Out of the 140 students here mean±SD is 1.21±.594. Out of the 140 students 97 (69.3%) did not introduce themselves when they sent a friend request on social media, only 43 (30.7%) did that, here mean±SD is 1.69±.463. During online interactions among 132 (94.3%) students maintained honesty and transparency, 7 (5%) did not that; here mean±SD is 1.05±.219. On social media about 118 (84.3%) students did not express their emotion, only 21 (15%) did that (mean±SD 1.86±0.371). About 83.6% (117) students agreed

that medical institutes should give some guideline to avoid cyber bullying, only 7.1% did not agree, 9.3% (13) students neither agreed nor disagreed (mean±SD 1.26±0.616).

Discussion

In the study “Etiquette use in social media- a new professionalism for first year medical students” 140 students participated. There were 56% male students and 44% female students. Brittany Harrison conducted similar study on third year students of medical school at the University of Ottawa, Canada. She recently presented it at the Canadian Conference for Medical Education on the topic of social media professionalism ‘Current medical students have grown up in a world where

information is shared liberally, and social media is a part of everyday life'.¹

More than 43% students knew the social media etiquette from internet, about more than 10% and 29% knew it from teachers and parents respectively. Rest of them knew from friends as well as other options. The policies of Permanente⁶ and Health⁷ are phrased in terms of best practices and guidelines. Permanente⁶ includes policies and procedures for social media use at work and home, if associated in any way with Permanente⁶. That is why their students did not know the social media etiquette from different persons. We have such type of institutional guideline. Curricula should include a proactive approach for the proper use of social media for learners.⁸

Most of the students (about 70%) prefer posting funny video and video links, 22% preferred it as a study guide, 32% students found any inquiry at social media, only a few (3%) preferred asking questions-answer post to social media. According to various studies, almost 75% of the students used some or the other forms of social networking sites, out of which 20% use them for educational interactions and learning process and to upgrade and enhance their knowledge.^{9,10} Social networking sites are mainly used to stay connected, upload photos and videos and to share their individual posts, and encourage their friendships.¹¹

There was statistically significant association between gender and social media posting preference. The moderate positive association suggests that gender might have a moderate influence on the choice of posting on social media, this statistical report align with the study of Naggar et al¹². They reported that the usage of social media by females is enthusiastic, and they have made meaningful use of it to improve their social life. Similarly, Junco et al¹³ discovered that women spend more time than men on social networking sites, but they didn't have any statistical significant.

Kitsis et al¹⁴ showed in her study that students were aware that they will need to monitor their digital footprints, but donot see the necessity to do so while they are in medical school. Or possibly students lack awareness of or agreement with

guidelines that recommend that monitoring should be done, or perhaps lack the knowledge regarding how to do it.

A survey of medical students' attitudes about social media use in Turkey suggested that students were unaware of ethical concerns posed by social media use.¹⁵ An interesting inconsistent estimated result from our study had revealed that the social media etiquette - new professionalism for first year medical students did not reflect this concern. This multivariate table expresses different types of opinions of first year students. One hundred twenty four (88.6%) students agreed that "For using social media some etiquette should be followed". Only 3 (2.1%) disagreed and 13 (9.3%) students NAND. Out of the 140 students here mean is $1.21 \pm .594$. Out of the 140 students 97 (69.3%) did not introduce themselves when they sent a friend request on social media, only 43 (30.7%) did that, here mean value is $1.69 \pm .463$. During online interactions 132 (94.3%) students maintained honesty and transparency, 7 (5%) didnot do that; here mean is $1.05 \pm .219$. On social media 118 (84.3%) students didnot express their emotion, only 21(15%) did that (mean 1.86 ± 0.371). One hundred seventeen (83.6%) students agreed that medical institutes should give some guideline to avoid cyberbullying, only 7.1% did not agree, 13 (9.3%) students neither agreed nor disagreed (mean 1.26 ± 0.616). In a response to increasing social media use, medical governing bodies in the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands have published guidelines on its use. As the challenges of social media use in anatomy have emerged, they should follow guidelines on social media use by individuals of anatomy associations.^{16,17}

In the new modern era social media are important and most effective educational aids. So medical students need to know how to use these educational aids with professional skill.

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