



Evaluating Pharmacy Faculties' and Students' Perceptions of Social Media Study Tools

Bobby LeDuff, PharmD, Chamika Hawkins-Taylor, PhD, MHA, Cheryl Hayes, PhD, RPh



Background

- Social media (SM) platforms are continuously evolving, and their sole purpose has moved beyond simple communication and networking.
- The use of SM and mobile technology for higher learning is relatively new, and the U.S. Department of Education states that educators in higher learning engage in different forms of social media to target students for content dissemination.¹
- While the available literature demonstrates the growing use of the various SM platforms, study of the reliability of such tools is limited.⁷
- Colleges of Pharmacy (COPs) can leverage the benefits of SM for student recruitment, profession advancement, educational tools, and innovation; however, SM users need to be aware of intentional and unintentional dissemination of misinformation.

Study Objective

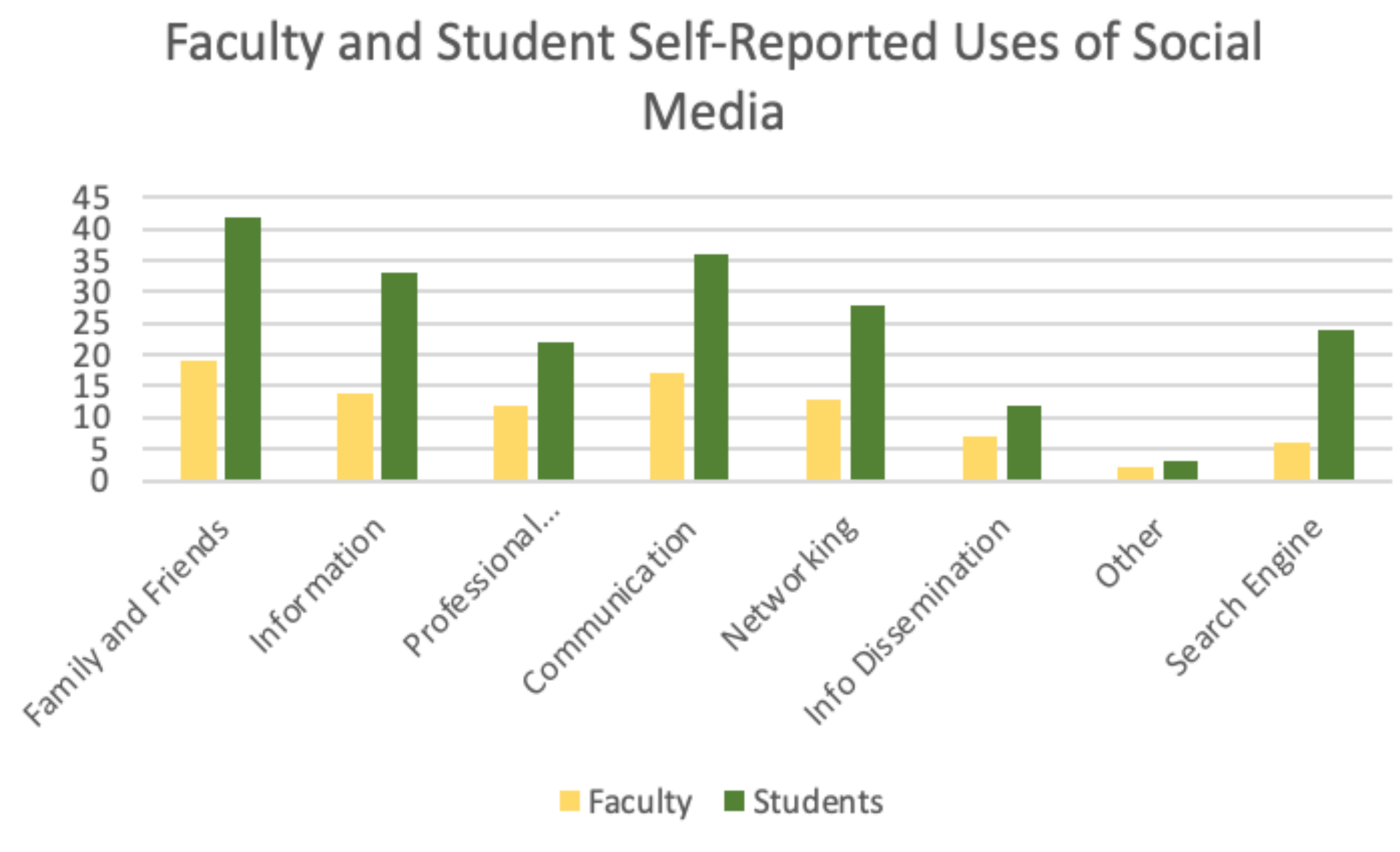
- Evaluate the perceptions of faculty and students at a college of pharmacy regarding pharmacy education with social media study tools.

Methods

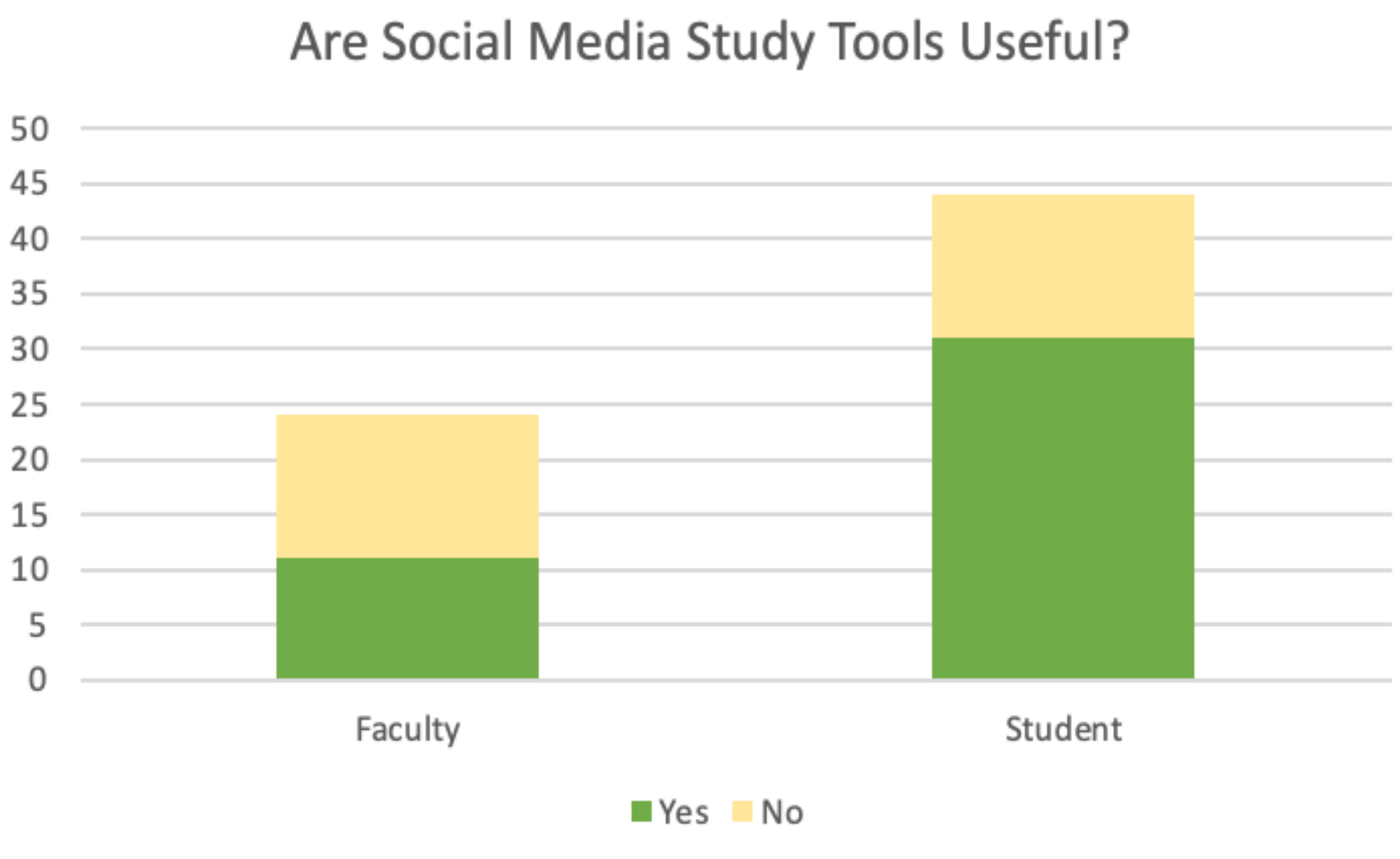
- **Design:** Pilot study employing a cross-sectional survey
- **Study Population:** Novice and experienced pharmacy faculty and P1-P4 pharmacy students
- **Setting:** Xavier University of Louisiana College of Pharmacy
- **Data Collection:** Data were collected from March to June 2023 using a structured questionnaire, tailored for faculty and students, distributed through an online survey platform.
- **Analysis:** Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize demographic characteristics and participants' responses. Unpaired t-test was used to compare mean differences between Faculty and Student social media platforms used and use purposes for social media. The chi square statistic was used to explore associations between categorical variables.
- This study was approved by Xavier University of Louisiana's Institutional Review Board.

Results

- An association was found between students' awareness of social media tools and their perceived usefulness of social media ($X^2= 11.8523$, $p=0.000576$).



- There was also a significant association found between user type (faculty or student) and perception that social media study tools are valid.



Snapshot of Faculty Questionnaire

Have you ever utilized social media for instruction?
If yes, in what capacity?

If yes, what social media platforms do you use for instruction?

If yes, what course do you use it for?

I feel information on social media is valid.

Snapshot of Student Questionnaire

In what capacity do you use social media?

Have you ever utilized social media to study?

If yes, in what capacity?

If yes, what social media platforms do you use for instruction?

I feel information on social media is valid.

Social media is useful for students to utilize as a study tool.

Social media is useful for students to utilize as a study tool.

Conclusion

- Findings suggest that students who are aware of social media study tools are more likely to view social media as a useful resource for their academic endeavors.
- This observation could be of interest to educators and institutions seeking to leverage SM platforms as supplementary learning tools or to enhance students' engagement with academic content.
- SM users need to be aware of intentional and unintentional dissemination of misinformation.
- A notable limitation is the use of a relatively small, convenience sample, which will impact the generalizability of the research findings.
- The relatively small sample size may limit the statistical power of the analyses, potentially affecting the detection of subtle associates or differences found within the data.
- The cross-sectional study, by design, offers a snapshot of perceptions for a specific and short period of time.

References

1. Ansari, J.A.N., Khan, N.A. Exploring the role of social media in collaborative learning the new domain of learning. *Smart Learn. Environ.* 7, 9 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-020-00118-7>
2. Barnes, N. G., & Lescault, A. M. (2011). Social media adoption soars as higher-ed experiments and reevaluates its use of new communications tools. North Dartmouth: Center for Marketing Research. University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
3. Hamilton LA, Franks A, Heidel RE, McDonough SL, Suda KJ. Assessing the Value of Online Learning and Social Media in Pharmacy Education. *Am J Pharm Educ.* 2016;80(6):97. doi:10.5688/ajpe80697
4. Onge, Erin & Hoehn, Katie. (2015). The Educational Use of Social Media Sites by Pharmacy Students. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching.* 4. 10.5430/jct.v4n1p114.
5. Prudencio J. Pharmacy Students' Perspectives of Social Media Usage in Education. *Hawaii J Health Soc Welf.* 2019;78(9):297-301.
6. Prudencio J, Wongwathananukit S, Lozano A, Xu Y. Instagram as a tool to enhance pharmacy student learning of ambulatory care pharmacy. *Curr Pharm Teach Learn.* 2021;13(2):134-138. doi:10.1016/j.cptl.2020.09.007
7. Vogelsang M, Rockenbauch K, Wrigge H, Heinke W, Hempel G. Medical Education for "Generation Z": Everything online?! - An analysis of Internet-based media use by teachers in medicine. *GMS J Med Educ.* 2018;35(2):Doc21. Published 2018 May 15. doi:10.3205/zma001168
8. American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. Social Media Resource Guide for Faculty, Students, Staff, and Administrators: Harnessing Its Power to Further the Professional Goals and Image of the Profession. Arlington, VA (2022).
9. Bettinghaus EP. Health promotion and the knowledge-attitude-behavior continuum. *Prev Med.* 1986;15(5):475-491. doi:10.1016/0091-7435(86)90025-3
10. Al-Rahmi AM, Shamsuddin A, Wahab E, Al-Rahmi WM, Alyoussef IY, Crawford J. Social media use in higher education: Building a structural equation model for student satisfaction and performance. *Front Public Health.* 2022;10:1003007. Published 2022 Sep 20. doi:10.3389/fpubh.2022.1003007