

Social Media Use and its Association with Academic Performance in First- and Second-Year Pharmacy Students

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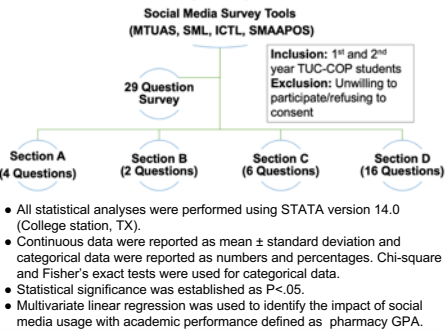
Introduction

- The use of Social media has increased among students.
- Pharmacy curriculum may benefit from incorporating online learning, technology, and social media sites.¹
- There is limited evidence whether social media sites can or should be used as an educational tool to improve academic performance.²
- Multiple studies have evaluated the use and engagement of social networking sites among students.¹⁻⁸
- Few studies have aimed to analyze the importance of Facebook and other social media sites in the pharmacy curriculum.^{1,3-5,9}
- Limited studies have examined the use of social media sites on pharmacy curriculum (i.e. Facebook).^{3,4,10}

Objectives

- To assess pharmacy students' use of social media sites as an academic tool to supplement didactic training in first and second-year pharmacy students (P1 and P2) at Touro University of California College of Pharmacy (TUC-COP).
- To determine the influence of social media usage and exposure among the pharmacy students on their academic performance of Fall Semester 2018.

Methods



Demographics

Participants (N=151)	Mean ± SD	Frequency (%)
Age	26.9 ± 4.2	
Graduating Class:		
Class of 2022 (P1)		89 (58.9)
Class of 2021 (P2)		62 (41.1)
Gender:		
Female		91 (60.3)
Male		60 (39.7)
Ethnicity:		
Asian/Pacific Islander		101 (66.9)
African American		8 (5.3)
Hispanic/Latino		7 (4.6)
White/Caucasian		25 (16.6)
Other		13 (8.6)

Table 1: Demographics of the students who participated in the social media study survey from TUC-COP class of 2021 and 2022.

Results

Social Media Platform Usage Among First and Second-Year Pharmacy Students

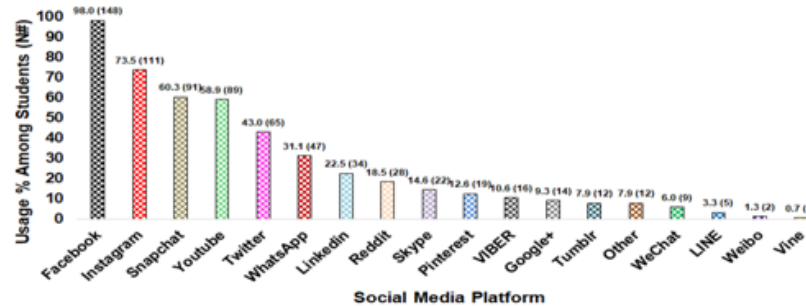


Fig 1. Ranking the most commonly used social media platform to the least commonly used among first and second-year pharmacy students at TUC-COP.

Number of Social Media Accounts Used by First and Second Year Pharmacy Students

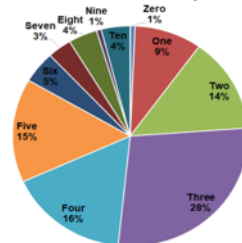


Fig 2. Social media usage by first and second-year pharmacy students at TUC-COP in terms of number of accounts.

Utility of Social Media Among First and Second Year Pharmacy Students

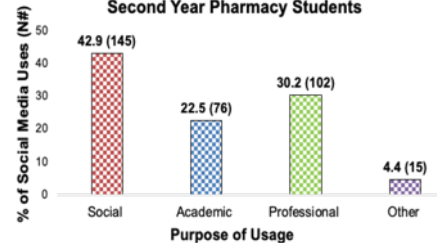


Fig 3. First and second-year pharmacy students' opinion on social media utility.

Demographic Variables as Predictors of Academic Performance

GPA Variables	Coefficients	CI	P values
Undergraduate Cumulative GPA	0.42	(0.25, 0.59)	0.001
Highest Degree	-0.09	(-0.23, 0.049)	0.201
1- Bachelor's			
2- Master's			
Hours/Day	-0.003	(-0.03, 0.02)	0.828
Sense of Community	0.05	(-0.06, 0.16)	0.400
Posting Questions to Peers	-0.15	(-0.26, -0.03)	0.013
Faster Feedback from Peers	0.07	(-0.07, 0.22)	0.305
Faster Feedback from Instructors	-0.03	(-0.17, 0.11)	0.647

Table 2. Multivariate linear regression assessing the relationship of various demographic variables on academic performance.

Discussion

- The most popular social media platforms among pharmacy students were Facebook and Instagram, which aligns with the top popular social media platforms used in the U.S.¹⁻⁸
- Pharmacy students report using an average of 3.9 ± 2.2 (range 0 to 10) social media accounts.
- An average of one to four hours daily are spent on social media by pharmacy student.
- The most common uses for social media among first and second-year pharmacy were social, professional, and academic.
- The use of social media, when posting questions to peers online to help better understand the lecture, had a negative predictive relationship to pharmacy GPA.
- Prior undergraduate GPA was a positive predictor of pharmacy school GPA.
- The majority of students agreed or strongly agreed that online social networks distracted them from studies.

Conclusion

- Social media is commonly used among pharmacy students for both social and academic purposes.
- Posting questions to peers on social media was a negative predictor of academic performance.
- The majority felt social media use distracted them from their studies.
- It merits further research in using Facebook, the most widely used application, as a possible academic learning tool.
- Limitations of study: single site (may not be generalizable to other parts of the U.S.); participants limited to didactic students
- Pharmacy schools may want to develop strategies to mitigate the negative effects of social media use but also think about using social media to enhance traditional didactic lectures.

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