

SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND PERCEPTION OF LIVE LECTURES BY MEDICAL STUDENTS*Nisha Narendran¹, Lally M. S.², Rajany Jose³*¹*Assistant Professor, Department of Paediatrics, Government Medical College, Thrissur.*²*Assistant Professor, Department of Pharmacology, Government Medical College, Manjeri.*³*Assistant Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Government Medical College, Thrissur.***ABSTRACT****BACKGROUND**

The current generation is rightly described as generation M (edia) highlighting the increasing time spent with media on any given day. The availability of mobiles and the absence of mobile jammers in lecture classes will seriously interfere with lecture attendance or concentration in lecture hours. We intend to take a survey on the level of social media use or use of smartphone for other non-academic uses by medical students during their lecture hours. We expect them to put forward their views as to how they perceive live lectures and what can be done to improve the effect of live lectures in this era of widespread and anytime media use.

Aims of the study were-

1. To conduct a survey among medical students in preclinical postings regarding use of social media use during live lecture hours.
2. To assess their perception regarding conventional lecture duration and the factors, which could improve their concentration during lecture hours.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted among the participants. Approval was obtained from the Institutional Research Committee. All the 135 participants of the study were administered a semi-structured prevalidated questionnaire to assess their perception regarding live lecture and a survey regarding use of social media was taken. The collected data was entered into MS Excel and analysed using Epiinfo version 7. Percentages were used to quantify the results.

Settings and Design- The study was conducted among third semester students attending pharmacology lectures in Government Medical College, Thrissur.

RESULTS

77 (57%) participants agreed of using social media regularly in lecture hours. Majority used it to chat or connect with friends and in gaming either because of addiction or to avoid boredom. They were a majority in opinion that the hot noon time lectures should be cut short in duration. They preferred the use of newer technology based methods to be adopted for lectures being more effective.

CONCLUSION

There should be active intervention from the authorities to conduct mass surveys and assessments regarding integration of e-learning with traditional teaching methods among medical students of our country. The region specific changes accommodating the changing social persona of young adults have to be considered while planning the lecture schedule in medical education in our part of the world.

KEYWORDS

Social Media, Lectures, Students, Medical, Lectures.

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OBJECTIVES

1. To conduct a survey among medical students in preclinical postings regarding use of social media use during live lecture hours.
2. To assess their perception regarding conventional lecture duration and the factors, which could improve their concentration during lecture hours.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design - Cross-sectional Study.
 Study Duration - One year.
 Study Setting - Department of Pharmacology, Government Medical College, Thrissur.
 Study Subjects - Students of third semester of Government Medical College, Thrissur, KUHS, Kerala.
 Sample Size - Purposive sampling was done. 135 students of third semester attending pharmacology was included as participants.

Study Procedure-

Ethical Committee approval was obtained from Government Medical College, Thrissur, before starting the study. All the participants of the study was administered a semi-structured pre-validated questionnaire to assess their perception regarding live lecture and a survey regarding use of social media was taken. A written informed consent was from all the participants.

Data Analysis-

The data was entered into MS Excel and analysed using Epi Info version 7. Percentages were used to quantify the results.

RESULTS

Feature		Number (Percentage)
Age in years	19	23 (17)
	20	87 (65.2)
	21	22 (16.3)
	22 & >	2 (1.5)
Gender	Male	46 (34.1)
	Female	89 (65.9)
Attempts in premedical entrance exam to get admission	1	24 (18)
	2	94 (69)
	>2	17 (13)
Medical related degrees before	Yes	1 (<1)
	No	134 (99)
Married/single	Yes	2 (1.5)
	No	133 (98.5)
Have children	Yes	1 (0.7)
	No	134 (99.3)
Attempts at clearing first MBBS	1	130 (96.3)
	2	1 (0.7)
	>2	4 (3)

Table 1. Demographic Features of Participants

Question Asked	Response	Number (Percentage)
Hot climate affects comprehension at noon hours	Yes	132 (97.8)
	No	3 (2.2)
Live lectures are needed or not	Yes	6 (4.4)
	Difficult topics only	93 (68.9)
	No	36 (26.7)
Live lecture scheduled at what time is better	Morning	82 (60.7)
	Noon	21 (15.6)
	Distribute between morning and noon	32 (23.7)
Whether live lectures better than seminars at noon	Yes	68 (50.4)
	No	62 (45.9)
Lost concentration during lectures most of the time and felt repetition would have been good	Yes	120 (88.9)
	No	15 (11.1)
Noted down references	Always	10 (7.4)
	Sometimes	58 (43)
	Rarely	36 (26.7)
	Never	31 (23)
Refer the references mentioned during lectures	Always	1 (0.7)
	Sometimes	29 (21.5)
	Rarely	58 (43)
	Never	47 (34.8)

Table 2. Perception of Participants Following Conventional One-Hour Lecture

77 (57%) participants agreed of using social media regularly in lecture hours. Rest of them didn't use social media or smart phone during lecture hours.

Purpose of Using Smart Phones in Class	Number (%) (of the Total Phone Users in Lecture Hours)
Chat with friends both nearby and at long distances on social media	77 (100)
Gaming to avoid boredom/addiction	39 (50.64) ²
Connect to strangers to improve their friends circle	22 (28.57)
For buying and selling things online	24 (31.16)
Paying bills	3 (3.8)
Checking mails	68 (88.31)
Entertainment as downloaded movies and videos	31 (40.25)
Personal blog and video uploads	3 (3.8)

Table 3. Purpose of Smart Phone Use During Lecture Hours

DISCUSSION

The students in preclinical postings are either adolescents or young adults. The spread of social media platforms has taken a negative effect as well on these budding doctors.

The field of medicine requires the prospective medical service provider to put in a lot of effort in understanding concepts and learn various aspects of medical physiology biochemistry, anatomy, microbiology, pharmacology, etc. in a relatively short span of 4½ years. This requires them to be able to attend to all their expected duties without losing much time for even self-care. The use of social media is more in this age group and is quite as expected that the medical students start spending more time in social media.

Emerging adults tend to use social media regardless of which geographic region they belong to. Coyne et al have found that they spend more time using media than doing any activity with most of the time being spent on the internet and listening to music.³ 39 (50.64%) among the participants of the study were interested in gaming as well indicating that they are still not aware of the responsibility needed to complete the medical graduation effectively. They use smart phones, which can be used as a computer. They use it to connect to and chat with friends both nearby and at long distances to connect to strangers to improve their friend's circle, which quite often may land them up in troubled and messy situations. The young adults are exposed to unwanted "information explosion," which makes them vulnerable to socially unacceptable behaviour not so later in life.⁴ They use social media and smart phones for buying and selling things online, paying bills, web conferencing, checking mails, entertainment as downloaded movies and videos. They may use it for personal blog and video uploads. All these can be done at the click of a personal mobile phone anytime, anywhere.

This is quite expectedly being done by the medical students too. 130 (96.3%) cleared their first MBBS examination in first attempt. 83 (61.5%) had scored more than 66% in first MBBS exam. This might indicate that the majority participants included were capable of learning at comparable levels if exposed to a topic. 93 (68.9%) opined that they would prefer live lecture based on difficulty level of topic only. Previous studies with regard to perception of live lectures also gives similar results from students of other medical schools.⁵ In the present study, 132 (97.8%) agreed that the hot climate affects their comprehension of lecture topic as it is conducted at noon hours regularly.⁵ (3.7%) participants chose live lecture at noon hours over seminars, which have more student participation. This may indicate that the current generation of medical students may be able to use other modalities of lectures as used in a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) or podcasts or online lectures to maximum effect in less difficult topics. Early studies have given unsatisfactory results with video lectures in medical education.⁶ But, the present day medical students are exposed to smart phones, technology and social media, so early that they are almost like an indispensable part of their lives. Studies are needed to assess the efficacy of such technology being officially introduced in medical education. 102 (75.6%) thought that live lectures should be a maximum of less than 10 minutes in duration for a topic to be covered. Interestingly, when asked how much time they could concentrate well in a lecture class, only 62 (45.9%) agreed

they could listen for 11-20 minutes. 43 (31.9%) could listen for up to 30 minutes. This data puts stress on the time tested and proven fact that lectures should not be more than 20-30 minutes to get full attention of the students. 77 (57%) participants agreed of using social media regularly in lecture hours. Rest of them didn't use social media or smart phone during lecture hours. This maybe the reason why students opt for lesser number of lectures or duration of lectures. The traditional one hour lectures at noon hours per se maybe a contributing to social media use. If not put to full use by majority, it is a waste of resources and energy for medical teachers too. It is time to adopt other technology-based learning incorporating recorded lectures in medical curriculum.^{7,8} This enabled the students to learn at their own time and pace in a comfortable environment. In fact, there are different innovative ways, which can be used with help of social media to enhance the learning experience of medical students.^{9,10,11} Such changes can promote other activity-based learning or group discussions, which may invoke more interest in students as well as take them off their use of smart phones during the learning process. This will promote self-directed learning in the long run also.

CONCLUSION

1. Majority of participants agreed that they prefer lectures lasting less than 30 minutes and they preferred 1 or 2 topics a day. They suggested that they prefer live lectures for difficult topics for more teacher - student interaction in such topics. This may necessitate a change in present schedule of one-hour lectures conducted in Indian medical schools.
2. The alarming rate of increase of social media during lecture hours by emerging adult medical students, question the time spent by the medical teacher on the topic, this invites attention to resorting to recorded lectures for lighter topics at least. This measure may leave the teacher with more time to conduct medical research as well motivating undergraduates too into research.
3. There is a pressing need to institute mobile jammers in lecture classes to get some effect from the effort of the lecturers.
4. Effective diversion of smart phone and social media misuse among young medical students are to be the priority. Steps must be introduced to make use of technology in a useful way. It is high time the students be given formal training regarding the responsibility of being in medical profession and also about regulating their "social media life" fruitfully and safely.

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