

Comparative study of use of social networking sites by medical students & resident doctors and its correlation with perceived social support, social integration and stress management

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Abstract

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Introduction

In the modern era with internet becoming an integral part of our life to interact with people by shearing myriad of information; this poses a question if medical students and residents' use of SNS(Social Networking Sites) differ and if so in what ways and to what extent online social interaction can give support and help cope with stress.

Aims

Comparative study of use of social networking sites by medical students & resident doctors and its correlation with perceived social support, social integration and stress management.

Results

Data suggests that 90.3 percent (93 out of 103) of residents use SNS compared to 91.3 percent of medical students(95 out of 104).About 55.76 %students as compared to35.9% residents accepted that they posted photographs on SNS just to get or seek attention from peers. 28.2%of residents said they spent less time on movies compared to only 9.2 % of students. 12.5%students had increased spending of time on virtual computer games compared to 9.1 %of resident doctors. Residents had decreased interest in academic activities(24.3%) compared to only9.6% of students who accepted less attendance in college lectures as a result of

using SNS. some reported uses like finding lost/old friends (90% in both), overcoming social anxiety (16% Female, 13% Male), beating boredom(4.7% Female, 5.9% Male).

Methodology

The study was conducted in tertiary care hospital during August 2011 after obtaining the approval of the Institutional Ethic Committee. Survey conducted in Medical college students(n= 104) and Resident Doctors(n= 104) in tertiary hospital setting under heading "let's talk about communication". Subjects were assessed randomly after obtaining informed consent form, through semi-structured proforma and various scales, including Relationship questionnaireData was analyzed using multivariate analysis.

Conclusion and discussion

Major finding of study is most of Medical Students(91%) and Resident doctors(90%) are using Social Networking Sites (Facebook is most preferred(90%)). We don't find significant difference in time and frequency of usage of SNS in Groups. Half of Medical students actively capture photos to get attention whereas Many Resident doctors prefer SNS over movie going, music. Many Medical Students prefer Virtual Gaming over Outdoor games. Medical educators need to become more involved in proactively using such sites to teach; this could include both discussion and mentoring. Our study confirms there is significant positive relationship between no. of real life friends and improvement in relationships due to social networking sites this suggests that if social networking sites use wisely can increase social support and improve social stress management.