



Inclusion of social media as an educational tool on sexually transmitted infections among university students

Inclusión de las redes sociales como herramientas educativas sobre las infecciones de transmisión sexual en estudiantes universitarios

Inclusão da mídia social como uma ferramenta educacional sobre infecções sexualmente transmissíveis entre estudantes universitários

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Dear Editor:

This letter arises from the study published by Carrillo et al. (1) in this journal in 2024. Our objective is to highlight the intention and results of that study and contribute to the discussion on the importance of social media as a facilitating tool for education and communication regarding sexually transmitted infections among the university population.

Sexual and reproductive health refers to a state of physical, mental, and social well-being related to sexuality, which does not merely imply the absence of disease, dysfunction, or disability. In the same way, it requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual intercourse, as well as the opportunity to enjoy rewarding and safe sexual experiences, free from any form of coercion, discrimination, or violence (2).

On the other hand, social media platforms are online spaces where individuals interact as friends, relatives, or because of other interests. Nowadays, these networks have captured the attention of young people and have facilitated communication and experience-sharing among individuals from diverse cultures and backgrounds, thereby promoting a sense of global community (3).

In this context, health education adopts approaches to acquire knowledge, competencies, and skills that strengthen health promotion and disease prevention. It also allows individuals to identify their needs and knowledge gaps, being able to develop their own resources and acquire skills to make decisions and achieve health-related goals, while fostering a personal interest in learning and self-improvement (4).

Currently, studies on sexual and reproductive health conducted among adolescents and young adults have focused on risky sexual behaviors. These can be described in different ways, such as unprotected vaginal, anal, and oral sex, sexual intercourse with casual or unknown partners, use of psychoactive substances such as alcohol, and early sexual intercourse (5).

Therefore, it is essential to mention the study conducted by Carrillo et al. (1), which aimed to determine perceptions about sexual practices and sexually transmitted infections among young students of the Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería in Lima, Peru. The authors concluded

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that these young individuals have moderately favorable perceptions regarding sexual practices and sexually transmitted infections.

These findings are relevant for researchers and readers, as they encourage further exploration of students' perceptions on this topic. In this regard, the inclusion of social media becomes an indispensable pillar in the search for new results, since its use, together with the immersion of health communication and education, has a parallel connection to issues of sexual practices and sexually transmitted infections.

Finally, this letter also encourages young people from different higher education faculties to participate in these projects and learn about their imminent results in the field of health. In this way, they will have better tools for making decisions that promote their health and encourage appropriate practices concerning sex education and its derivatives.

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