



Social Media: An Opportunity for Developing Countries to Change Healthy Behaviors

ARTICLE INFO

Article Type
Editorial

Authors

Soheylizad M.¹ MSc,
Moeini B.*² PhD

How to cite this article

Soheylizad M, Moeini B. Social Media: An Opportunity for Developing Countries to Change Healthy Behaviors. Health Education and Health Promotion. 2019;7(2):57-58.

ABSTRACT

This article has not abstract.

Keywords This article has not keyword

¹Public Health Department, Public Health Faculty, Hamadan University of Medical Sciences, Hamadan, Iran
²Social Determinants of Health Research Center, Hamadan University of Medical Sciences, Hamadan, Iran

*Correspondence

Address: Social Determinants of Health Research Center, Hamadan University of Medical Sciences, Shahid Fahmideh Street, Hamadan, Iran. Postal Code: 6517876739
Phone: +98 (81) 38380025
Fax: +98 (81) 38380509
babak_moeini@umsha.ac.ir

Article History

Received: July 02, 2018
Accepted: September 16, 2018
ePublished: April 09, 2019

CITATION LINKS

[1] Harnessing social media for health information management [2] Social media for health promotion in diabetes: study protocol for a participatory public health intervention design [3] Number of social media users worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in billions) [4] The current state of social media research for eParticipation in developing countries: A literature review [5] Social media and applications to health behavior [6] Effect of an Educational Program Based on the Health Belief Model to Reduce Cell Phone Usage During Driving in Taxi drivers

Social media can be defined as Internet-based tools and platforms that allow individuals and communities to interact with each other and generate, publish, and share information, knowledge, ideas, and experiences [1]. Social media include different technological approaches such as blogs, microblogging (e.g., Twitter), social networking (e.g., Facebook), video- and file-sharing sites (e.g., YouTube), e-games, and wikis [2].

Current statistics (Diagram 1) indicate that the use of social media has increased in recent years, so that the number of social media users has risen from 0.97 billion in 2010 to 2.46 billion in 2017, and this number is projected to reach 3.02 billion in 2021 [3]. Some features of social media, such as easy and comprehensive access, less government monitoring and control, and the possibility of two-way interactive communication when using it have made social media an attractive alternative to traditional media. This has led to a significant increase in the use of social media in developing countries [4].

health, and improve management of their health status [1]. The results of studies indicate that social media-based interventions, in developed countries, have been effective in changing healthy behaviors and improving health status [5]; the formation of habitual behaviors through these interventions may be reinforced, which prompts and facilitates the repetition of healthy behaviors. Furthermore, such interventions are economically cost-effective [2]. If interventions for changing healthy behaviors have been designed and implemented, using the principles and concepts of theories and behavioral change models, their chances of success will increase and the change in behavior will be stronger and more durable over time [6].

In conclusion, given the growing use of social media in developing countries and the limited financial resources in these countries, there is a good opportunity for health interventions to change healthy behaviors. That way, the interventions are developed, designed, and implemented, using social media based on the theories and behavior change models.

Number of Users in Billions

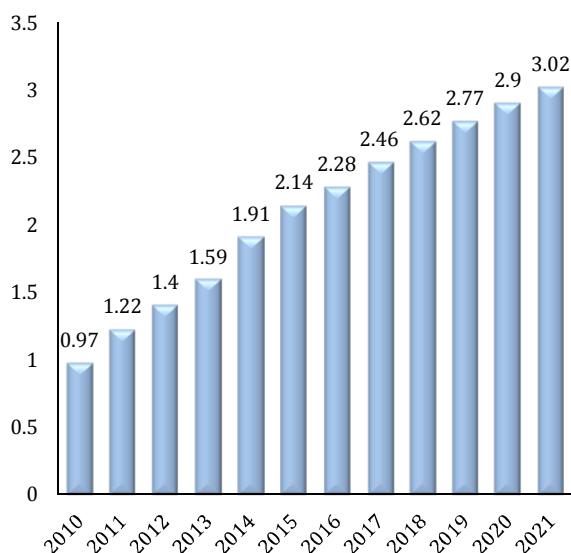


Diagram 1) Number of social media users worldwide from 2010 to 2021

On the other hand, social media has the potential to empower people to create a healthy lifestyle, make better and more informed decisions about their

References

- 1- Zhou L, Zhang D, Yang C, Wang Y. Harnessing social media for health information management. *Electron Commer Res Appl.* 2018;27:139-51.
- 2- Gabarron E, Bradway M, Fernandez-Luque L, Chomutare T, Hansen AH, Wynn R, et al. Social media for health promotion in diabetes: study protocol for a participatory public health intervention design. *BMC health serv res.* 2018;18(1):414.
- 3- Statista. Number of social media users worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in billions) [Internet]. Hamburg: Statista; 2018 [cited 2018 Jan 16]. Available from: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/>
- 4- Dini AA, Sæbø Ø. The current state of social media research for eParticipation in developing countries: A literature review. 49th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS), 5-8 Jan, 2016, Koloa HI, USA. Piscataway: IEEE; 2016.
- 5- Maher C, Ryan J, Kernot J, Podsiadly J, Keenihan S. Social media and applications to health behavior. *Curr Opin Psychol.* 2016;9:50-5.
- 6- Moeini B, Rezapur-Shahkolai F, Faradmal J, Soheylizad M. Effect of an Educational Program Based on the Health Belief Model to Reduce Cell Phone Usage During Driving in Taxi drivers. *J Educ Community Health.* 2014;1(2):56-66.