

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS

by:

Rose Ann B. Paguio

Teacher I, Limay National High School

The use of social media has become essential in almost everyone's life, influencing various aspects of our daily routines, including physical activity. These platforms have been instrumental in promoting physical activity through various campaigns and challenges. Social media influencers and fitness enthusiasts frequently share workout routines, tips on maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and inspirational content in order to motivate their followers to lead more active lives. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are filled with fitness tutorials and live workout sessions, making it easier for individuals to access exercise guidance from the comfort of their homes. Additionally, social media groups and communities provide a sense of accountability and support, which can be crucial for maintaining consistent physical activity.

Despite the positive trends, there are also negative implications associated with social media use and physical activity. The portrayal of idealized body images and fitness standards can lead to unrealistic expectations and body dissatisfaction among users. This can result in decreased motivation and even harmful behaviors such as over-exercising or disordered eating. Furthermore, excessive screen time and passive consumption of social media content can contribute to sedentary lifestyles, counteracting the benefits of physical activity promotion.

Recent studies have shown that social media interventions can effectively promote physical activity and healthy behaviors. These interventions often involve structured programs that utilize social media platforms to deliver content, track progress, and provide feedback. For example, challenges that encourage users to share their workout

achievements or dietary habits can create a sense of community and competition, motivating participants to stay active. However, the success of these interventions depends on the quality of the content presented and the level of engagement of the participants.

To maximize the positive impact of social media on physical activity, it is essential to address the challenges and leverage the opportunities presented by these platforms. Health professionals and fitness influencers should focus on promoting realistic and inclusive fitness goals, emphasizing the importance of overall well-being rather than just aesthetics. Additionally, creating more interactive and engaging content can help maintain users' interest and encourage a long-term commitment to physical activity. Policymakers and researchers should continue to explore innovative ways to integrate social media into public health strategies, ensuring that these platforms are used effectively to promote healthier lifestyles.

It can be concluded that social media significantly influences physical activity, with both positive and negative implications. By understanding these trends and addressing the associated challenges, we can harness the power of social media to promote healthier and more active lifestyles.

References:

<https://ijbnpa.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12966-021-01138-3>

<https://bmcpublikealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-021-11398-0>

<https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2024-02027-001>

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.17269/s41997-023-00754-9.pdf>