

Perception of Young People in Uyo Metropolis on Social Media Health-Related Information

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Abstract

Social media possess enormous potentials as tools for public health communication. While several studies have reported a growing interest of young people in sourcing information for their health and wellbeing from the social media, little is, however, known regarding young people's perception of health-related information sourced from the social media. This research helps to address this gap by exploring how young people in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, perceive health information accessed on social media. The study, which is anchored on perception theory, draws on a survey of 120 young people (aged 18-35) in Uyo metropolis selected via stratified and purposive sampling procedures. The findings reveal that young people in Uyo generally source health-related information from social media. While some young people perceive health-related information accessed on social media as credible and authentic, others perceive such information as false and misleading. The study, however, concludes that while people can become more knowledgeable about their medical conditions through health-related information accessed on the social media; healthcare professionals remain the most credible sources of health information.

Keywords: Health Promotion, Education, Social Media, Perception, Young People, Health Communication