

SPECIAL ISSUE

Social Media and Health

Amber Harris Bozer

Department of Psychological Sciences, Tarleton State University, Stephenville, TX, 76042
bozer@tarleton.edu

The editorial team of *The Journal of Social Media in Society* is pleased to present this special issue on health and social media. The objective of this special issue is to elucidate relationships between health and social media including but not limited to: (1) social media as a mechanism to document health, (2) social media for health education, and (3) how social media can influence health in a myriad of ways. At the time this special issue is in preparation, we are in the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic. This special issue is a reflection of just some of the ways that health can be impacted by, measured by, and studied using social media.

For example, Salafia and DiPlacido studied the role of social media and influence on vaping in college students, as cigarette use is declining and vaping is increasing amongst college students. A survey of 104 college students yielded relationships between vaping and social media use, positive perceptions of electronic cigarettes, and social norms related to electronic cigarettes. While social norms were not a mediator between social media use and vaping, they were a moderator, and social norms did mediate the relationship between perceptions of vaping frequency.

Vaterlaus, Patten, and Spruance investigated social media use in more than 500 adults living in the United States during the early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a qualitative approach, the authors identified four themes: (1) social media provided a safe medium for connection, (2) social media amplified emotional intensity, (c) social media was an important source for updates related to COVID-19, and (d) social media was being used as a way to fill time. Their findings underscore the positive impact of social media as a support tool during the early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Coyne, Santarossa, Dufour, Greenham, and Woodruff investigated conversations on Instagram surrounding the ESPN Body Issue about men athletes from 2016 and 2017. Content and text analyses of 13,920 records indicated that there were more records categorized as “hegemonic masculinity” than “non-hegemonic.”

McColgan and Paradis explored the impact of social media usage on social physique anxiety and exercise self-presentation. Social media activity of women was tracked for one week using an app, and survey data were collected that indicate there was no relationship between factors such as time of social media use, self-presentation in exercise, and social physique anxiety. But, increased scores in self-presentation, specifically the dimension of impression motivation, were related to increased usage of Twitter.

Finally, Langstedt and Hunt provide an exploration of motivations and personality factors during the early portion of the COVID-19 pandemic in addition to examining the impact of social networking sites on hobby adoption as it relates to social distancing and isolation. Loneliness and neuroticism were the strongest predictors of social media use.

I am thankful for the work of everyone who has made this issue possible, particularly during the back-drop of a global pandemic that has challenged the speed of review pipelines and publishing across the globe. This includes Dr. Andrew Wolfe and Dr. Matthew Laurent for their time as co-editors of this special issue, Dr. Sarah Maben for her guidance and contributions, and the reviewers: Drs. Andrea Green, Sarah Maben, Andrew Wolfe, Janet Johnson, Barbara Sharf, Subi Gandhi, Kelsey McKentyre, Colin Pennington, Brandi Allison Watkins, Matthew Pittman, Lu Tang, Jimmie Manning, Eric Langstedt, Pamela Roberts, Jennifer Dias, and Jubilee Dickson. The editors of *The Journal of Social Media in Society* recognize the impact of social media on health, and hope that you will enjoy this special issue dedicated to this very important topic that is at the forefront of the world's most pressing challenges.

References

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