

**INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON HEALTH MAINTENANCE
STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY COLLEGE STUDENTS IN KOCHI**



By

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**INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON HEALTH MAINTENANCE
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Thesis submitted to St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam in fulfillment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology

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CERTIFICATE

I certify that the thesis entitled "**Influence of Social Media on Health Maintenance Strategies adopted by College students in Kochi** " is a record of bonafide research work carried out by **Aswathy Praveen** under my guidance and supervision. The thesis is worth submitting in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Sociology.



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DECLARATION

I, **Aswathy Praveen**, hereby declare that the thesis entitled is "**Influence of Social Media on Health Maintenance Strategies adopted by College students in Kochi**" a bonafide record of independent research work carried out by us under the supervision and guidance of **Dr. Dora Dominick**. We further declare that this thesis has not been previously submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship or other similar title.

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Date 19-04-2024

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER – 1

INTRODUCTION

HEALTH

The idea of being healthy is not limited to individual choice, it is affected with environment, people around us and many more factors. According to Pindar, health is “harmonious functioning of the organs”, emphasizing the physical dimension of health, the physical body and the overall functionality, accompanied by the feeling of comfort and absence of pain”. This definition of health is popular and remains as a minimum necessity condition to be termed as a healthy person. But the idea of health doesn't limit here. The saying of a healthy mind lives in a healthy body conveys that the importance of being healthy is both emotionally and mentally. Maintaining a healthy life style is becoming a priority in people's life. The perception of health has changed over time in history. Today we cannot define health as just the absence of any disease. Technological advancement led to the availability of health information on a large scale to the majority population. People became aware and educated about diseases, treatments and medicines consumed by themselves. The alternatives and choices of medicines have increased.

The idea of being healthy is defined differently by different individuals. WHO defines health as a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. WHO considers health as a multi-dimensional aspect where physical, mental and wellbeing aspects are covered holistically. It aims for health promotion behavior in organizations and groups. Health of an individual is affected by various factors. There are social determinants which have a larger impact on people's health. These include income, education, lifestyles, social stresses like poverty, natural disasters etc. These social determinants affect disease prevention as well as health maintenance.

HEALTH CARE

Healthcare includes a set of services which prevent diseases and ensure better living. Healthcare services are not limited to medicines, they go beyond the accessibility and affordability of medical treatment. It is more focused on development and empowerment in infrastructure, education, nutrition etc. The major goals of healthcare services are increasing life expectancy, decreasing the growth of population, providing basic sanitation facilities etc. Healthcare services include

Environmental aspects, personal protection like periodical checkups, vaccination, health awareness etc. The curative care, injury management also comes under it. Developing countries like India is considered access to healthcare is a major issue. The underutilization of healthcare is very common in these countries. Due to the growing population and less standard of living the state governments in these countries provides health care services in a subsidy basis. The unequal access and lack of awareness leads to child deaths, malnutrition and spread of communicable diseases. Among the people and communities cultural and educational factors acts as a hindrance on disease identification and availing health care services. The poor quality of healthcare services provided by the state discourages the larger population to make use of it. It actually promotes the underutilization of healthcare services.

PUBLIC HEALTH IN INDIA

The history of India is considered, Indus valley civilization is a period which has got significant level of importance. The major features of these civilization were the planned cities with streets, drainage, wells, public bath tanks etc. It is of the view that people of Indus valley civilization gave more focus on health, hygiene and sanitation. Development of Ayurveda is regarded as another important aspect when it comes to the developments in public health. Apart from medicines and treatment, Ayurveda is concerned with a scientific lifestyle. It promoted healthy and peaceful living. Around 6th Century B C, the Buddhism and Jainism got spread across all parts of the country. This led to the spread of healthcare care services as well as a religious affair.

During colonial period the great advancements in medicine happened in India. The greatest innovation in the fields of medicines, advancements in the field of studies like microscopic studies in medicine, new trends in health care, better management and care of epidemics and so on. During the British period western medicine or modern medicine is introduced in India. This was in Bengal for the British army. Later in 1835 Calcutta medical college was established in India which widened the scope of public health facilities in the country. After that medical services in established. The institutional developments in the field of medicine like medical council of India can be seen throughout those years.

After independence India government focus on a planned development which healthcare was an integral part of the country. As a part of which union government expanded public health access

across various parts on the country. The legal aspect of the health is considered, the healthcare is vested in the state list which enabled state governments to make direct laws on health.

The public health in India is majorly based on the National health Policy of 1983. The shift of health as a policy decision enabled a problem solving approach in healthcare which helped to prioritize the issues which need an immediate attention. This had let to the development of policies to tackle maternal mortality, general mortality, life expectancy, trained birth attenders, family planning etc. In India, the availability of healthcare is unequal between rural and urban areas. Rural residents has fewer options than metropolitan residents, who can choose between public and private services options. India offers a massive public health network, with community-based sub centers operating inside it. The health sub-centers serve as a link between the community and the primary health centers (PHC) and are primarily staffed by barefoot health workers. Primary health care centers serves as the initial point of contact between the village community and the medical officer. Its mission is to offer the rural population integrated curative and preventive health care, with a focus on the health care's preventive and promotive components. With diagnostic tools and more, community health centers (CHCs) serve primarily as first referral sources and are better equipped.

HEALTH MAINTENANCE STRATEGIES

Strategies are specific plans which aimed at completing the tasks. Health maintenance strategies are routine plans and schedules in which an individuals are focusing on health maintenance activities like physical activities, healthy diet, medications, skincare and hair care routines etc. A guiding concept in healthcare, health maintenance places more emphasis on illness prevention and health promotion than it does on curing symptoms and sickness. It covers every aspect of screening, counseling, and other preventive treatments intended to reduce the likelihood of illness and death too soon and to ensure the best possible physical, mental, and emotional well-being for the duration of a person's natural life cycle. Removing challenges of a financial, physical, and psychological nature from getting health promotion and disease prevention services in clinical settings; using the media to disseminate health education messages; and advocating for health policies that lower the risk of injury, lower exposure to toxins in the air, water, and workplace, and assure the availability of recreational opportunities are numerous instances of how medical care is organized to promote health maintenance.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

WHO defines physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. Physical activity refers to all movement including during leisure time, for transport to get to and from places, or as part of a person's work. Both moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity improve health.

Engaging in a range of physical activities enhances physical function and lowers the chance of falls and related injuries in older persons. Incorporate exercises including aerobic, muscle-building, and balancing training. As part of an organized program, multicomponent physical activity can be performed at home or in a public place. Stair climbing, food shopping, and playing with your grandchildren are examples of everyday activities. A functional limitation occurs when an individual is unable to do daily tasks. Middle-aged or older adults who engage in physical activity are less likely to experience functional limits than those who do not.

HEALTHY DIET

Healthy or balanced diet is aimed at avoiding malnutrition and ensuring better immune system which prevents diseases, especially the lifestyle disease which are non-communicable in nature. Healthy diet can be explained as more balanced diet, proteins, vitamins, minerals and fats are composed in a fair measure. The change in lifestyle and busy work culture forces a large population of the globe to limit their eating habits to packed foods and easily available fast food. The taste aspect is dominating especially youth rather than being conscious about the health factor. The availability of junk food can be seen everywhere. So that adopting to healthy diet is extremely challenging. When healthy diet is becoming a policy decision, the alterations in agricultural policies are essential. This will enhance the availability and affordability of good food to larger population of the state.

WELLNESS PRODUCTS

Wellness products includes a range of health care products and cosmetic aimed at better physical and mental wellbeing of a person. This products are generally associated with the private sector in health care which aims at promotion of the product and profit making. Mostly these products are easy to use and result oriented. According to the article Twenty-first century health promotion: the public health revolution meets the wellness revolution, the private sector is producing wellness products which aimed at a productive category of customers who are ready to spend money on these products. In this articles the, Health and Wellness Segmentation Model classifies consumers as different categories such as first one is ‘well beings’ they are more concerned about their health and ready to spend more. The next category people are ‘food actives’ who focuses on achieving health goals by focusing food and exercise. The third category of people are said as ‘magic billets’, these individuals are seeking quick solutions to achieve desired health outcomes .The example is usage of supplements. The next category is called ‘fence sitters’, who follows an inconsistent behavior towards health maintenance. The last category of the people are called ‘eat, drink and merry’, these category of people are not concerned about the supplements .second category.

MEDICALIZATION

Medicalization is involves treating non- medicals problems as medical problems. That means medical help is needed to solve them. "Medicalization," according to Joseph Davis (2010:211), "is the name for the process by which medical definitions and practices are applied to behaviors, psychological phenomena, and somatic experiences not previously within the conceptual or therapeutic scope of medicine (Cockerham, 2016).

The medicalization leads to the expansion of scope of medicine. Taking of medical insurance, alcohol de-addiction centers etc. are the examples of medicalization. There is another concept which is contributing to medicalization that is, pharmaceuticalization. Pharmaceuticalization involves the use of advertisement or promotion towards doctors and consumers for buying drugs related with the medicalized areas.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter the previous studies about the topic is discussed. This helps understand the background, different dimensions and wide perspectives of the topic. This includes the changes in healthcare happened over time with the advancements in technology.

The idea of being healthy got changed over time. Rather than from the mere absence of disease, health is defined by different areas, the quality of life, stress management, preventive care, and mental health and so on. The concept of self-care is the one which is important here. The WHO's definition of self-care is "the ability of individuals, families and communities to promote health, prevent diseases and maintain health and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a healthcare provider (2014). The self – care is aimed at the physical as well as mental wellbeing of the individual. This includes a set of activities or procedures which provides improvement in the physical and mental health. There are seven pillars commonly termed as associate with self-care which includes, (i) knowledge and health literacy, (ii) mental wellbeing, self-awareness and agency, (iii) physical exercise, (iv) healthy diet, (v) risk avoidance and mitigation, (vi) good hygiene, and (vii) the rational use of products and services.

The knowledge about these self-care activities are reached to people by different mediums. The advertisements by televisions and print medias where earlier means of communication used for it. During the 2000s a new means of communication got developed and became a popular. Social media is a term collectively used for platforms in which people can share photos, videos, and enables communication worldwide and so on. In the beginning the social media platforms where used mail y fore maintain friendship or contact with the people who are geographically far away. As the time changes, the purpose and usage of the social media got changed. It slowly became a business oriented platforms where, marketing, trade promotion activities like advertisements are made. Online shops working through social Medias is quiet common thing in today's world. Large scale information is being shared though these social media. It is easier for individual to get health related information from social media. The studies shows that time that we spent in social media has a significant impact on shaping the behavior and habits of people. It is normal to search for disease or symptoms in social media. Sometimes people tend to be too much depended on health information got from social media.

The increasing popularity of social media sites like Facebook and Twitter has also given rise to commercial applications that offer radical new approaches to using social media for improved health. For instance, companies such Redbrick Health, StayWell, and Healthways have begun to use online social support platforms to help promote compliance with planned health regimens. Through widespread recruitment and regular interactions, these sites create communities that encourage increased participation in exercise and diet programs among their members. In a similar spirit, a recent Internet startup called PatientsLikeMe offers an extensive social media platform with online health profiles, patient information and disease histories, and interactive tools that allow members to share comprehensive reports with one another. Members of the site can participate in multiple disease-specific communities, allowing them to find information relevant to their individual medical needs. Not unlike the Listservs and patient support chat groups from the previous generation, patients can share information about their treatments and experiences, but with the important difference that the new, more sophisticated social media technologies allow participants to interact by comparing detailed records of ongoing health status, treatment programs, and recovery plans.(Centola,2014).

The changing role of social media as a business enhancement medium affects the content which are shared through that. The promoting features like likes, shares or comments decides the customer reach and profit formation through this social media pages. Through social media, marketers can interact in two-way communications with existing and potential customers and gain rich, unmediated consumer insights faster than ever before. Marketers also see the value of social media networking, brand referrals and information sharing. According to Facebook, the average user has 130 friends on the social network, and when people hear about a product or service from a friend, they become a customer at a 15% higher rate than when they find out about it through other means (comScore, 2011). Additionally, social media offers potential for generating awareness and interest through viral or rapid spreading of product and service experiences and opinions (Berger & Milkman, 2012). As a result, companies are proactively engaging in new social media marketing strategies and tactics (Neff, 2014). General Motors has moved 25% of its global marketing spending on the Cadillac brand into digital platforms compared to 17% three years ago, with an emphasis on video distributed through digital and social media (Learmonth, 2012). American Express has 1.5 million card members participating in its Sync program that lets members match their cards to their Facebook, Foursquare, and Twitter social media accounts for browsing offers and making transactions (Klaassen, 2012; Hudson,2016).

The marketing side of social media is highly attached with the online shops associated with it. The wide variety of choices of products, worldwide shipping and the affordable prices offered makes online shopping much preferred option among consumers. There are studies which measure the customer satisfaction from the shopping done from online shopping sites. The results of the study indicate online buying behavior factors are significantly and positively related to esatisfaction of the customer. Moreover, according to demographic characteristics it can guide the online business firms or organization to identify the problems to take actions in order to motivate more online shopping consumers in Malaysia. It also indicates that Malaysian buyers by online shopping save their time since time saving is the main objective of the online buyers. Therefore, it is necessary for the top managers to have special attention to the customers' time. The other finding shows that these four factors of online shopping behavior are highly prominent and they have a significant function in e-satisfaction in Malaysian firms or organization. Therefore, it is required to have an accurate consideration to online shopping behavior factors because online shopping behavior factors have a direct relationship with e-satisfaction. E-satisfaction of customer is the final consequence of meeting an expectation of consumer due to the product performance. The majority of the contented customers have a kind of purpose to repurchase the goods whether goods show their anticipation. As a result the websites with these factors will attract more e-customer satisfaction, and more ecustomer satisfaction means having more transaction which finally help the organizations to achieve more benefits (Mobarakabadia, Karamib, Farb, Yarkaramic, 2013). Today the health care products, medicines and wellness products also available for online purchase. Health life styles are choices made by an individual on his behavioral patterns which is reflected on the health. This behavioral pattern has a negative or positive impact on one person's health. This also includes checkups and health seeking behavior of that person.

Even the social media is associated with business and profit making, most of the studies suggest that the consumers are having more positive feedbacks on health information passed through it. Sometimes the doctors or experts also making contents on social media, this is considered as a valid information by the users. Especially the people with chronic illnesses are constantly following the health advises from social media. In particular, patients who have chronic diseases, disabilities, or cancers can find social media particularly useful because social media enables them to seek support from peers or experts to sustain their self-management of such long-term diseases (Merolli et al., 2013). All of these cases illustrate the fact that patients have been increasingly

using social media as an innovative technology approach for the social support exchange as well as to affect *self-management of chronic diseases*, indicating that patients' self-management is changing because social media is involved. It is clear that social media is now playing a key role in the self-management of chronic diseases and sits at the core of the social support exchange between patients on various social media platforms. We name this phenomenon social media-enabled healthcare (Lin, Kishore, 2021)

There are other set of activities which is outside the health care system that is, wearing a helmet or seat belt, stress management, avoiding alcohol and smoking etc. That means the disease preventive behavior of an individual also comes under here. But the nature of these practices changes over time. Today's development in technology have a major impact on changing lifestyle and fitness aspirations of the people. The most significant technological innovation here is the wearable technology. Gadgets like smart watches which has features to count the steps from measuring blood pressure made a large number of people to monitor their lifestyle. The more convenient, personified, custom made technologies has turned the health maintenance to a comfortable and easy process. The progress made on health can able to easily tracked and monitored by these technical devices. Various kinds of fitness apps began to dominate the markets. The specialized services, mentorships, diets, trackers etc. in an affordable rate attracted people of to use them. On the other hand, all of these technologies are so new that there is not yet conclusive scientific evidence on what is effective at changing behavior and increasing physical activity and what is just a gimmick. The rise of fitness and health tracking, monitoring, and connectivity is also giving rise to a host of concerns related to personal security and privacy, stress and anxiety, the impacts of digital versus face-to-face connections, and other issues. While trackers, apps, social media platforms, streaming services, etc., may be adding a level of convenience, motivation, and fun to exercise, it is also important to keep in mind that these technologies are not essential for people to be physically active. Hundreds of thousands of people around the world get enough movement each day with nothing more than a pair of shoes, a simple bicycle, or a ball and an empty field. In many ways, technologies are attempting to fill gaps in our built environments and lifestyles that prevent us from getting enough movement. As long as our environment continues to favor a sedentary lifestyle over movement and our busy lives keep us from exercising, we will be looking to technology to help reduce those barriers. (Johnston, Ophelia, 2021).

The Covid 19 pandemic in the November 2019 made a drafting swift on the health systems, healthy habits, vaccination and so on. The high mortality rate and infectious cases forced people to adapt to government instructions on health care. The use of mask, sanitizer and social distancing taught new lessons to people belong to all age groups of the population. The fact is these aspects has a significant influence on healthcare even after 5 years. In the midst of the current pandemic, handwashing is one of the most central forms of problem-focused coping. Indeed, the first piece of advice on the World Health Organization's (WHO) COVID-19 website is: "Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water" (WHO, 2020). Given that handwashing, when done properly, kills the virus (Hillier, 2020), it provides individuals with a mechanism to cope with the threat of COVID-19. This is important because anxiety typically triggers a loss of control (Bandura, 1988; Fiske et al., 1996; Spector, 1986), which can be alleviated by engaging in proactive forms of coping—such as handwashing—aimed at minimizing the threat.(Trougakos,Chawla,McCarthy,2020).

METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER-3

METHODOLOGY

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Study on **‘Influence of Social media on Health maintenance strategies adopted by college students in Kochi ‘** is aimed at understanding the effect of social media on health and lifestyle followed by college students, specifically in the age group of 18 to 25 years. It is also about how health information is accessing. The role of social media influencers in health maintenance strategies, trying out new products on health care, the priorities on choosing health maintenance products and services and time spend on health maintenance. This study majorly focuses on the health care strategies such as physical exercise, healthy diet, vitamins or medications, skincare, hair care that are adopted by the college students of Kochi without any consultation from a medical practioner.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

According to Economic times, in India people spends one fifth of the waking hours in internet. This includes use of social media, OTT plat forms and online games. A study on usage of Social networking sites by college students in India, 80% of the students are spending significant amount of time in social networking sites (Manjunatha, 2013). Nowadays the spread of social media created a significant level of changes in the reason for which students are these platforms. Connecting with the friends and maintaining relations ships were the earlier reasons for engaging in social media, now a days it has been changes to various another reasons such as accessing knowledge, earning money and popularity, conforming to social media trends on fashion and lifestyle etc.

As the health related information is an integral part of daily life situations the usage of social media platforms .The average usage of social media got increased during covid 19 pandemic, the people began to watch lifestyle vlogs, home remedies, food recipes etc. This has led to an era of social media influencers. The social media marketing provided a new profession of social media influencers who creates contents on various products. Sometimes the reviews on social media by the influencers act as a confirmation for the views to try these products. Although many scams and manipulations are happening the impact of online influence still continue. Life style vlogs are popular video genre especially on YouTube a large number of viewers are interested to watch these videos. Most of the time these videos shows daily schedule of an individual which include, the time of daily work out, meeting friends , eating dinner etc. But as we know, the contents shown on social media can be entirely false and particularly focused on a target audience. It is very common to see a commoner providing health related information with much confidence. The popularity and fame of the influencers most of the time convinces the viewers to purchase a particular product or try out a particular life style routine. As per the studies, people who belonging to the Gen Z (people who born between 1997 and 2013) population are spending a considerable

time on social media. So, this study is significant in the view that to understand the impact on social media and social media influencers on adopting health maintenance strategies.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The postmodern thinker Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyper reality talks about two concept of Hyperreality. The hyperreality is an idea which mean the true reality is replaced by the copies of the image. His major two concepts, simulacra and simulation. Simulacra are the small fragments, or signs and symbols that together make up the present appearances that we believe to be real. These are the real's replacement indicators. The combined effect of simulacra, or the blurring of reality's borders from its representations which serve as a substitute for the real thing and eventually develop their own truth which is what is known as simulation.

The concept of hyperreality holds great significance in explaining contemporary cultural situations. Due to its dependence on symbol exchange value , for example a particular car or brand acts as a status symbol consumerism can be considered a contributing elements in the production of the hyperreal state, or hyperreality. Hyperreality misleads awareness into separating from genuine emotional connection in favor of manufactured simulation and ceaseless replications of essentially meaningless appearance. Essentially, rather than engaging with any "real" world, a term that even Baudrillard could object to fulfillment or satisfaction can be achieved through imitation and simulation of a temporary simulation of reality. It can be difficult for children growing up today to imagine a world without computers, cellphones, Google, Netflix, or Instagram. There was a time, in our state of boredom, when we had to write down phone numbers to memory and ask others for directions. The widespread usage of digital gadgets and social media nowadays has rendered the internet appear and feel more real than it ever was. The barrier separating reality from imagery has broken. According to Baudrillard, an essential characteristic of contemporary society is the abundance of simulacra, or replicas that lack an original referent. Social media narratives, pictures, and information about health frequently act as simulations that influence people's views of wellness and health. Through social media platforms, where carefully chosen images of healthy behaviors, perfect bodies, and lifestyle choices are displayed as fact, younger generations interact with these simulations.

According to Baudrillard, simulations both create and reflect reality, including the identities of individuals and perceptions of the self. Youth may create idealized images of themselves in relation to social media and health maintenance based on the fictitious depictions of health and wellbeing that are shared on these platforms. Their efforts to safeguard or enhance their perceived well-being may be influenced by their search for of an idealized digital self-image, which may have an impact on their health-related activities. Baudrillard highlights the significance of display and performance in hyperreal cultures, where people participate in self-presentation and image consumption. Individuals engage in a wellness spectacle on social media, where they display their health-related behaviors for an audience. This display of food choices, exercise regimens, and self-care routines helps to create an artificially idealized health identity. The audience's techniques for maintaining their health may be influenced by the way their health is presented on social media, which may place more emphasis on appearance and confirmation than on actual well-being. Social

media can cause emotions of alienation and isolation from reality, according to Baudrillard, despite the fact that it is hyperconnected. The combination of their real-life experiences with the idealized health portrayals they see on social media may cause dissonance for the people. The alienation that occurs when students try to fit in with the unrealistic ideals of health and beauty that are spread online might show up as disordered eating patterns, extremely rigorous exercise schedules, or mental health problems.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the socio- economic background of the respondents.
- To understand various health maintenance strategies adopted by the college students.
- To investigate the influence of social media on the adoption of health maintenance strategies.
- To understand the impact of Covid 19 pandemic in health maintenance strategies.
- To find extend of the usage of health maintenance strategies.

DEFENITION OF CONCEPTS

Authorized definitions

- Health

According to World Health Organization (WHO). Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

- Health maintenance

Health Maintenance refers to personal activities intended to enhance health or prevent disease and disability. These include screening procedures, risk assessment, early intervention, and prevention (Hrachovec,1969;Murray,1989).

Operational definitions

- Health

According to this study, Health is defined as the state of an individual free from diseases.

- Health maintenance

In this study, health maintenance is defined as the routine strategies followed on physical exercise, diet, vitamins or medication, skincare, and hair care practiced by an individual without the consultation of a medical practiner or expert.

- College students

In this study college students are defined as individuals aged 18 to 25 years, currently enrolled in Under Graduation or Post Graduation programs at recognized educational institutions within Kochi city

- Social media

In this study, social media includes everything that people post on YouTube , Instagram, Facebook and Whatsapp , including photos, videos, status updates, articles, and blogs.

IDENTIFICATION OF VARIABLES

Independent Variables

Independent variables identified are age, gender, income of parent, locality.

Depended Variables

Dependent variables of the study are type of health maintenance strategies adopted, time spend on Health maintenance strategies and consumption and usage of health maintenance strategies adopted.

HYPOTHESIS

There are five hypothesis for the study.

H 1: Income of the parent affects the daily time spend on health maintenance strategies.

H 2: The gender has a relationship between daily times spend on health maintenance strategies

H 3: The gender of the respondents has an effect on the imitation of appearance, physique, self-care routine or eating habits of social media influencers

H 4: The time spend on social media by the respondents have an effect on daily time spend on health maintenance strategies.

H 5: The locality of the respondents is related with the daily time spent on health maintenance strategies.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Population

The population of this study consist of all the college students of Under graduation and Post-graduation students who are enrolled in the recognized educational institutes of Kochi city.

Sample and Method of Sampling

The sample consist of 52 males and 52 female from different colleges of Kochi city. The sampling technique used here is Simple random sampling.

Tool of data collection

The primary data collected through questionnaire is the most important source of data for this study. The tool of data collection was an online questionnaire made using Google forms distributed to the respondents through mail and whatsapp.

Analysis and interpretation

The data analysis is done using frequency tables, charts and diagrams for the better understanding of the data which is collected. The results are expressed in percentages and interpretation is made on the basis of the same.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The number of respondents of the study id limited to 104 respondents, which is very small number. For some questions in the online questionnaire, irrelevant or no answers is given by few respondents.

PLAN OF THE STUDY

The study consist of total five chapters.

The First chapter is the introduction which gives a detailed understanding about the subject dealing with the study.

The Second chapter consist of review of literature. This gives information from the previous studies conducted by researchers in this area.

The third chapter includes the methodology adopted in the study. This consist of objectives of the study, population, sample size and sampling techniques, variables, tool of data collection, hypothesis and limitations of the study.

The forth chapter is about the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the respondents. The data is presented in the form of tables, charts and diagrams and interpretations are made according to the percentage values obtained.

The fifth chapter consist of findings based on the objectives of the study and the conclusions which are made accordingly.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

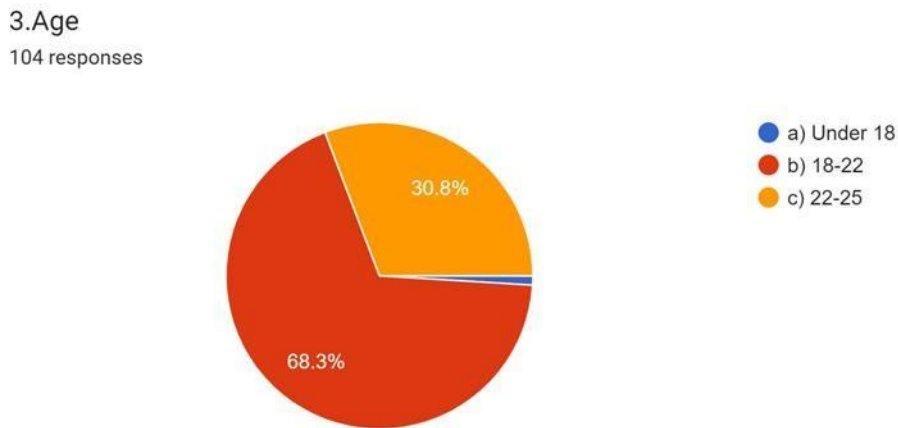
CHAPTER-4

ANALYSIS AND DATA INTERPRETATION

In this chapter, the data collected from the survey is presented in various tables and diagrams and diagrams. This figures and tables provides information in a clear and precise manner. This data analyses is deals with the socio economic profile of the respondents, their interactions and the time spend daily on social Medias and their behavioral patterns on searching for health related information on social media. The questions mainly aimed at to understand the socio- economic profile of the respondents, to understand the social media platforms they use on a daily basis, how often they search for health maintenance strategies on social media and the impact of social media influencers on their health maintenance.

Age of the respondents

Figure 4.1

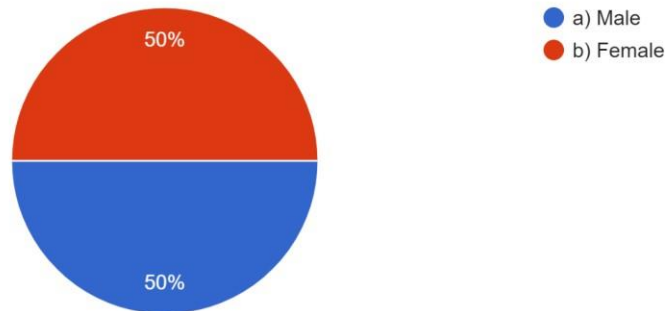


Among the 104 respondents 71 respondents are belongs to the age group 18 to 22. 32 respondents belongs to 22 to 25 years and one person belongs to under 18 age group.

Gender of the respondents

Figure 4.2

4. Gender
104 responses



The number of male respondents and female respondents are 52 each. Total 104 responses are recorded.

Educational Qualification of the respondents

Table 4.1

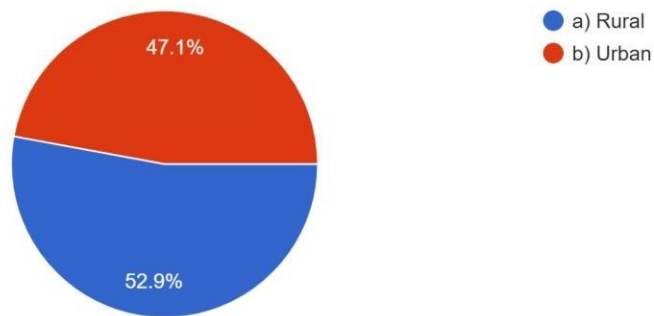
Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
UG Students	71	68.2%
PG Students	28	26.92%
Others (Diploma)	5	4.8%
Total	104	100

The majority of respondents are UG students, which consist of 68.2% of the total data. PG Students responded is 26.92% and remains 4.8% consist of responses from students who are doing Diploma.

Locality of the respondents

Figure 4.3

10. Locality
104 responses



The majority of the respondents of this study are from rural background (52.9%). Remaining respondents (47.1%) are from urban background.

Income of the Parent

Table 4.2

Income of the Parent	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 50000	35	33.7%
50000 – 1 Lakh	31	29.8%
1 Lakh – 2 Lakhs	18	18.3%
2 Lakhs – 3 Lakhs	4	3.8%
More than 3 Lakhs	15	14.4%
Total	104	100%

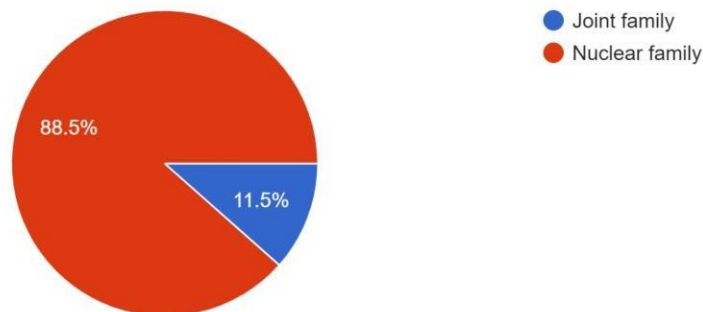
As the respondents are of college students, income of the parents are taken for the study. 33.7% of the respondents, are having an income of less than 50000 rupees. 29.8% respondent's income lies between Rs. 50000 to 1 Lakhs. 18.3% of the respondent's income lies between 1 lakh to 2 Lakhs. 14.4% of the respondent's income lies between more than 3 Lakhs. Only 4 respondent's income is between 2 lakhs to 3 lakhs.

Family type of respondents

Figure 4.4

9. Family type

104 responses



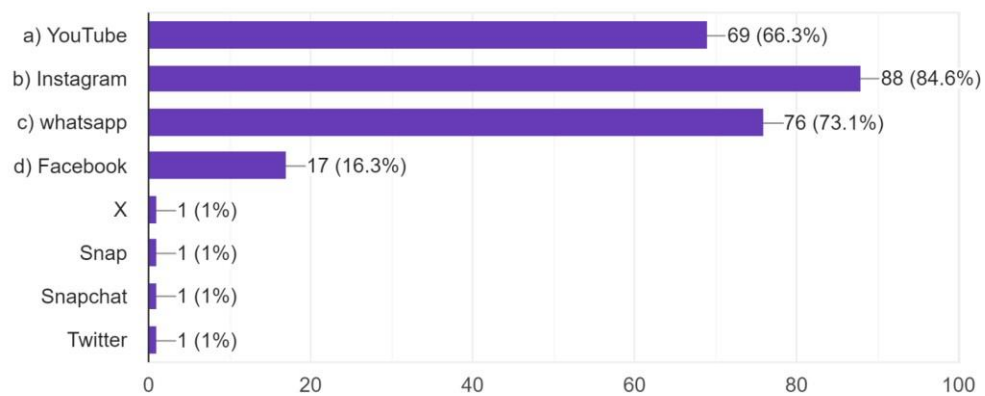
The majority of the respondents (88.5%) are belonging to nuclear families and only 11.5% respondents are belonging to joint families.

Social media platforms used on a daily basis

Figure 4.5

11. Which social media platforms do you use regularly?

104 responses



The popular social media platform among the respondents are instagram, 84.6% of the people are using it on a daily basis. Next preferable social media platform for the respondents are whatsapp (73.1%) and Youtube (66.3%)

Time spend on social media on a daily basis

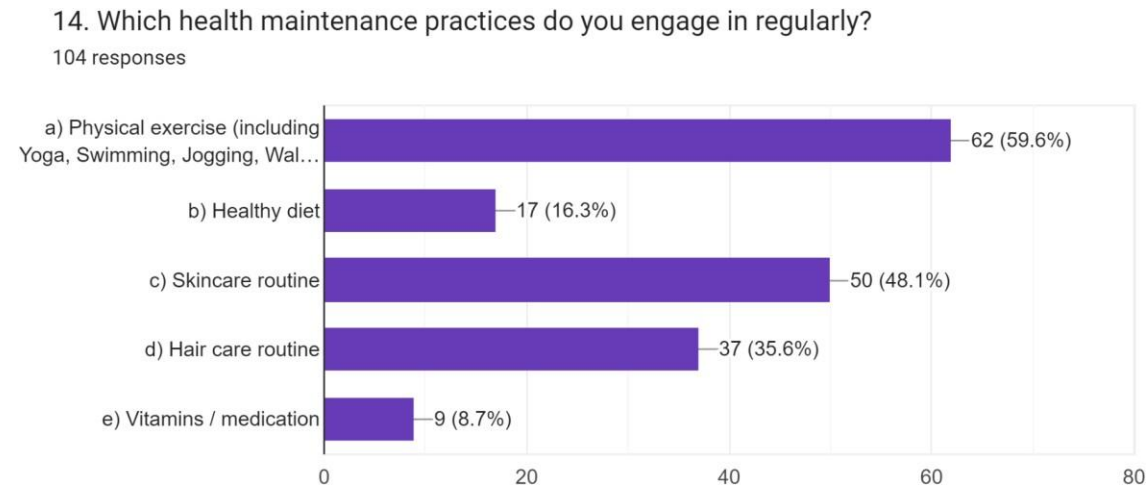
Table 4.3

Time spend	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	4	3.8%
1 to 2 hours	22	21.2%
2 to 3 hours	34	32.7%
3 to 4 hours	28	26.9%
More than 4 hours	16	15.4%
Total	104	100

The majority of the respondents spends 2 to 3 hours (32.7%) in social media platforms on a daily basis. 26.9% of people are spending 3 to 4 hours daily in social media. 2.1 % of respondents are spending 1 to 2 hours, 15.4% respondents are spending more than 4 hours. only 3.8% of the respondents are spending less than 1 hour in social media platforms on a daily basis.

Health maintenance practices

Figure 4.6



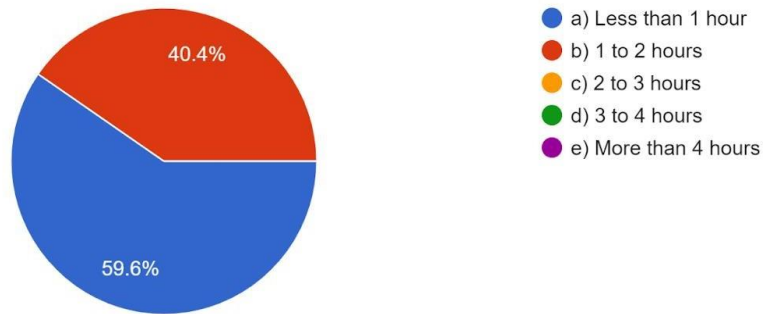
The majority of the respondents like to do physical exercise (59.6%) as their health maintenance strategy. Skincare (50) is the next preferred option by the respondents. 35.6% respondents are choosing Hair care routine as a healthy maintenance strategy. Healthy diet is only opted by 16.3% and only 8.7% opted for Vitamins or medications.

Time spend on Health maintenance strategies on daily basis

Figure 4.7

15. How much time do you spend on health maintenance strategies on a daily basis?

104 responses



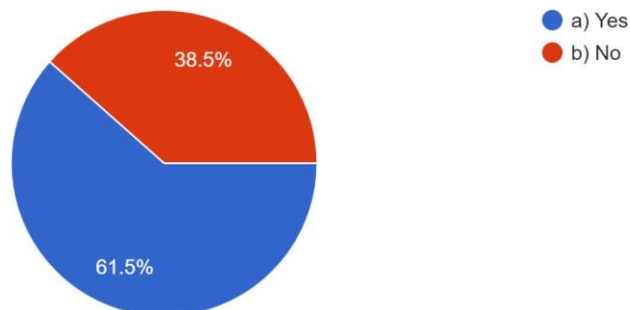
Majority of the respondents are spending less than 1 hour (59.65) on health maintenance strategies every day. Remaining respondents are spending 1 to 2 hours (40.4%).

Purchasing health maintenance products

Figure 4.8

16. Do you purchase various products for your health maintenance strategies (For example: Gym membership, Fitness equipment, Skincare products, Nutrition gummies, Protein powder etc.)

104 responses



61.5% of the total respondents agreeing that they purchases various health maintenance products.

Elements for choosing health maintenance products.

Table 4.4

Elements for choosing health maintenance products	Frequency	Percentage
Products in latest trends in social media	21	20.1%
By random choice	27	25.9%
By reasonable price	46	44.2%
By Research	5	4.8%
By the reviews	5	4.8%
Total	104	100

As respondents are students, reasonable price (44.2%) is the most selected option for this question. 25.9% people are randomly trying products. 20.1% respondents are choosing latest trends in social media. 4.8% each respondents are doing a research or analyzing the reviews for choosing health maintenance products.

Frequency of purchase of health maintenance products

Table 4.5

Frequency of purchase of health maintenance products	Frequency	Percentage
Weekly	4	3.8%
Monthly	41	39.4%
Whenever the product is on a discount on online shops	43	41.3%
Whenever in need	10	9.6%
When the product is over	5	4.8%
When shopping with Mom	1	0.96%
Total	104	100%

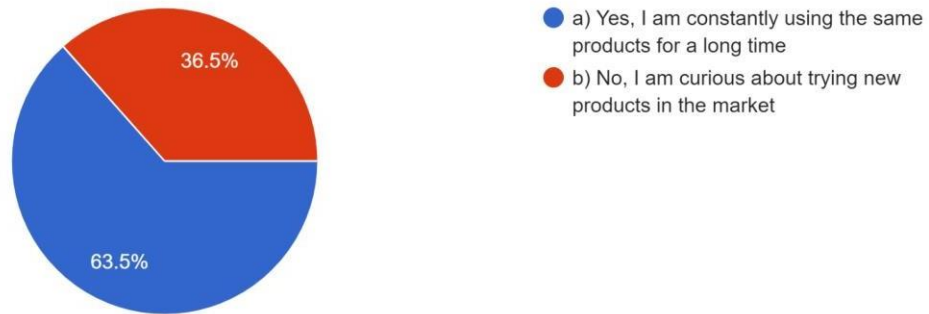
41.3% of respondents prefer to buy health maintenance products whenever they find a discount on online shops. 39.4% respondents are buying these products on monthly basis. 9.6% respondents are buying the products whenever they feel it is in need. 4.8% respondents said that they purchase these products whenever the current products gets over. 0.96% says they purchase this products when shopping with Mom, this shows the financial dependency of the respondent.

Consistency in the usage of Health maintenance products

Figure 4.9

19. Are you consistent in the usage of these products?

104 responses



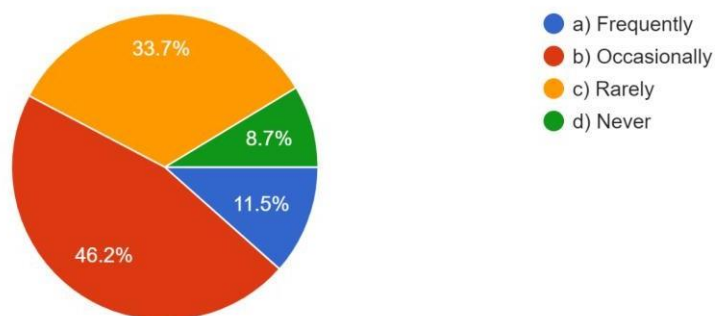
For a majority of 63.5% of the respondents says that they are constantly using the same products for a long period of time.

Frequency of searching new health maintenance products

Figure 4.10

20. Do you constantly look for new products in the social media?

104 responses



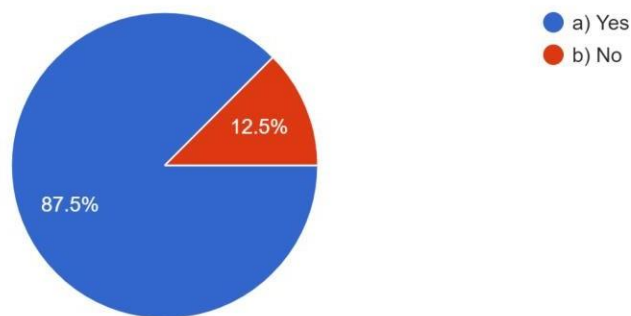
4.6.2% of the respondents says that they occasionally search for health maintenance products. 33.7% of the respondents opted for rarely purchase. 8.7% of the people never purchased Health maintenance products. 11.5% of the respondents are frequently searches for the new health maintenance products in the market.

Utilization of Health maintenance products

Figure 4.11

21.a) Do you completely use the purchased product and services?

104 responses



A larger majority respondents are using the purchased products fully.

Impact of Covid19 on health maintenance strategies.

Table 4.6

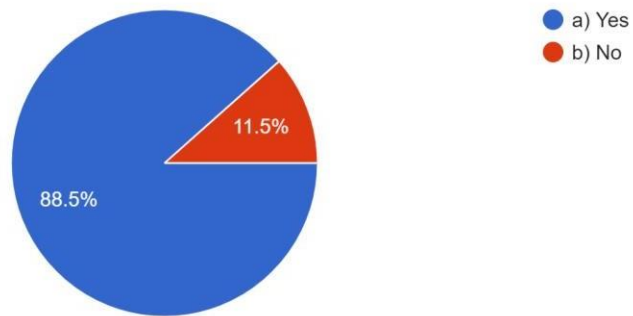
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	0.96%
Disagree	23	22.11%
Neutral	61	58.6%
Agree	18	17.30%
Strongly Agree	1	0.96%
Total	104	100%

The majority of the respondents (58.6%) are responded as neutral, which indicates neither agreeing nor disagreeing to the impact of covid 19 pandemic on health maintenance strategies. Only 0.96% of respondents strongly agree that covid19 pandemic had affected their health maintenance strategies.22.11% of the people disagree on the impact of Covid 19 on health maintenance, while 17.30% agreeing that covid had some impact on health maintenance strategies adopted by them. Only 0.96% of respondents strongly disagree on the impact of covid19 on health maintenance strategies.

Searching health related information in social media

Figure 4.12

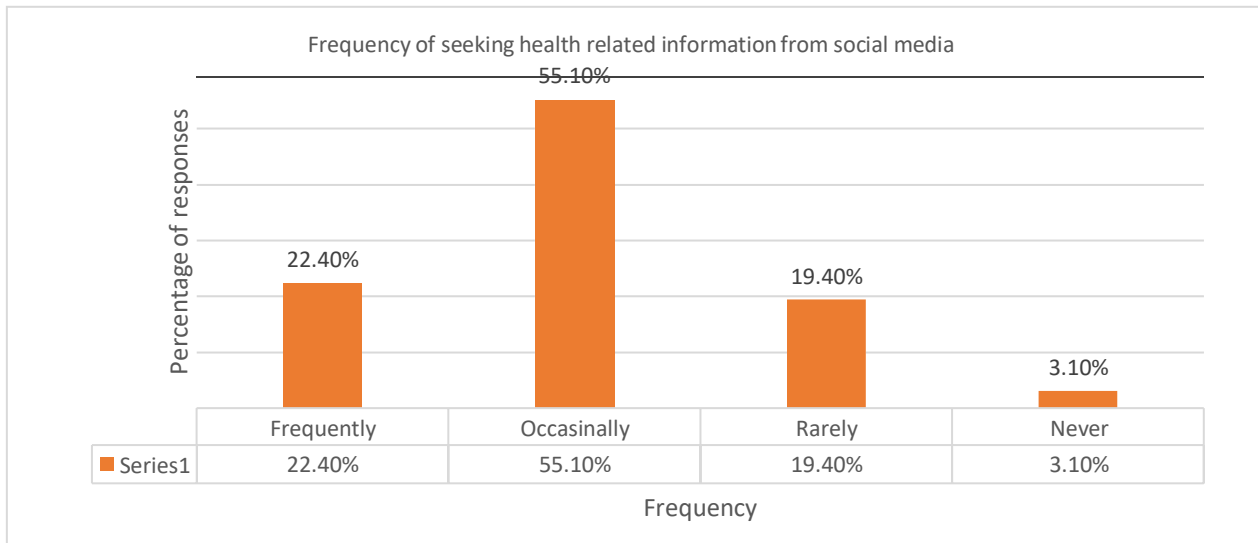
23.a) Do you look for health-related information or advice through social media platforms?
104 responses



88.5% of the respondents are seeking health related information or advice on social media platforms.

Frequency of seeking health maintenance information from social media

Figure 4.13



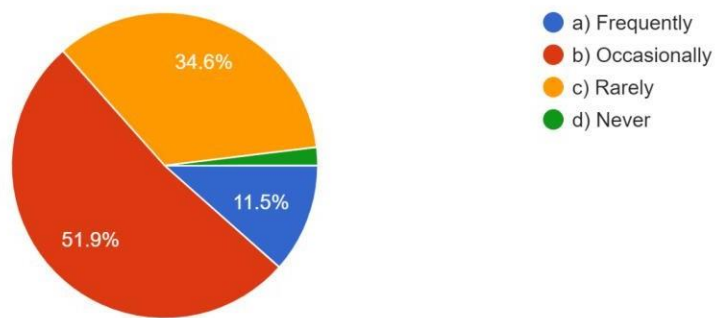
55.1% of the total respondents occasionally search for health related information. 22.45 respondents are frequently seeking health related information from social media. 19.4% respondents rarely searching on social media for health maintenance information and only 3.1% of the respondents never searched for health related information in social media.

Frequency of following health maintenance information found from social media

Figure 4.14

24. Have you ever followed health advice or practices you found on social media?

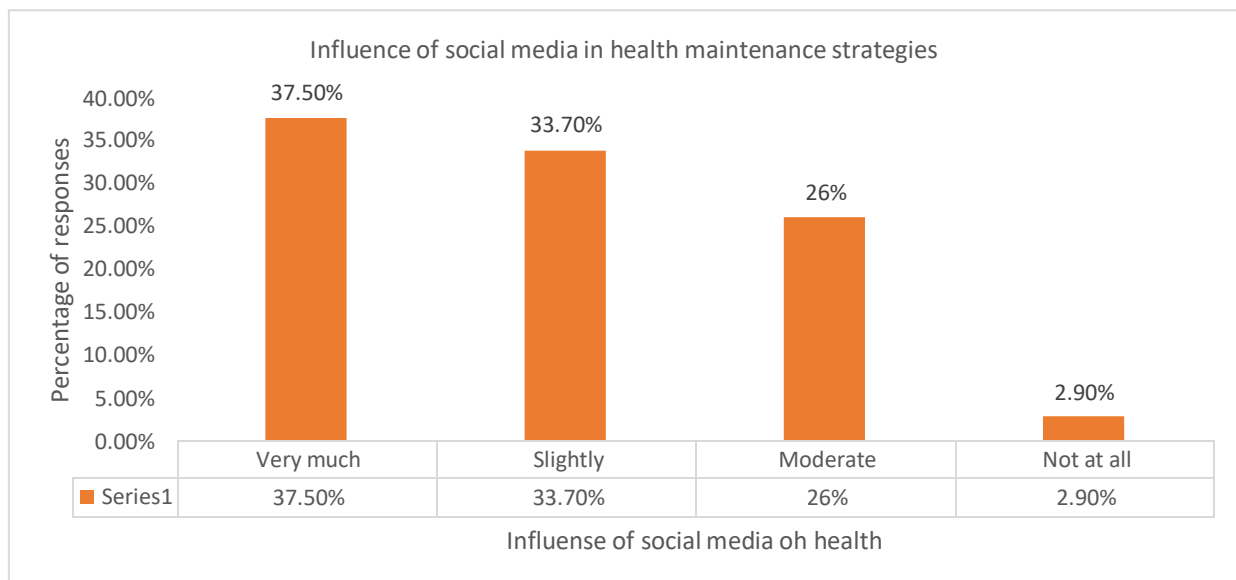
104 responses



The majority of the respondents (51.9%) are occasionally following the advices and practices on health found from social media. 34.6% of the respondents rarely follows health advices from social media. 11.5% of the respondents are frequently following the advices found from social media. Only 1.9% of the respondents are never followed health information from social media.

Influence of social media on health maintenance practices

Figure 4.15



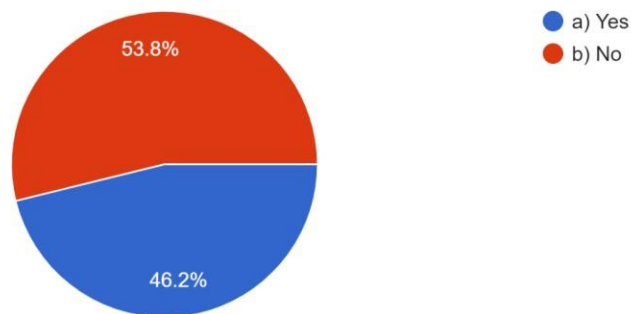
The majority of the respondents (37.50%) responded that social media is very much affected their health maintenance strategies. According to 33.70% of the respondents social media slightly affected their health maintenance practices.

Responses on following social media influencers for health maintenance strategies

Figure 4.16

26. Do you follow any particular Social media influencer/Influencers to get informed about health maintenance strategies or products?

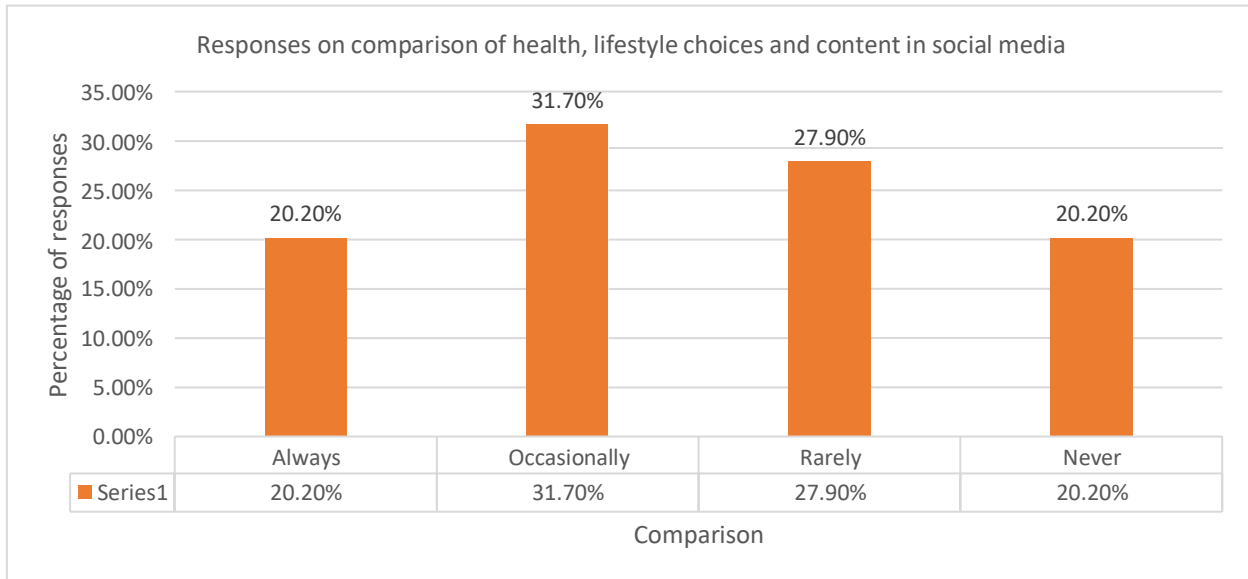
104 responses



Majority of the respondents are not following particular influencers for getting information about health maintenance strategies.

Responses on comparison of health, lifestyle choices and content in social media

Figure 4.17



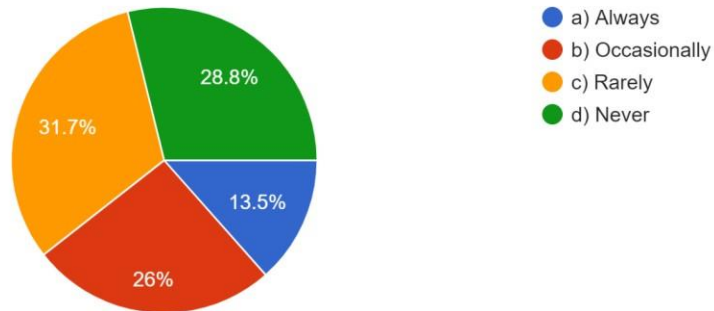
Most of the respondents (31.7%) are comparing their lifestyle, and health with social media contents. 27.9% of the respondents rarely compare their health and lifestyle choices. Equal amount of respondents (20.20%) each are always and never compare their lifestyle and health with social media content.

Responses on imitating the characteristics of social media influencer

Figure 4.18

28. Have you ever tried to imitate the appearance, physique, self-care routine or eating habits of a social media influencer?

104 responses



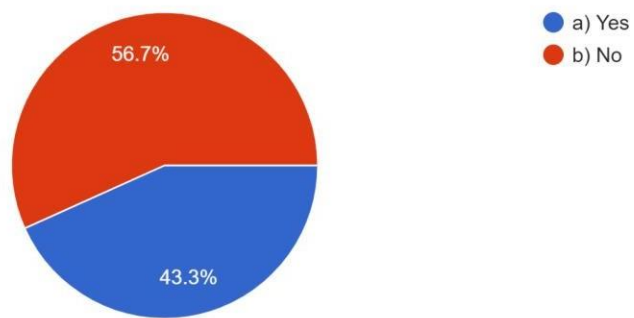
Majority of the respondents (31.7%) are rarely imitating the characteristics of social media influencers. 28.8% of the responders never imitated the characteristics from social media influencer. 26% of the responders occasionally imitates social media influencers and 13.5% of the responders always imitates social media influencers.

Responses about conforming to social media trends

Figure 4.19

29. Do you conform to the trends shown on social media?

104 responses



Most of the respondents (56.7%) are not conforming to the trends shown in social media.

Priorities for choosing social media influencers who are providing health related information

Table 4.7

Priorities	Frequency	Percentage
Person with matching gender	6	5.7%
Number of followers	17	16.3%
Recommendations from friends and family	27	25.9%
By checking the comment section	44	42.3%
By the feeling of genuinity	6	5.7%
Quality of content	4	3.8%
Total	104	100%

42.3% of the respondents are checking the comment section before choosing a social media influencer. 25.9% of the respondents are taking recommendations from friends and family about influencers. 16.3% of people are considering the number of followers of the influencers. 5.7% respondents each choosing respondents by considering person with matching gender and by the feeling of genuinity. 3.8% of the respondents are considering quality of content provided by the social media influencers.

There are five hypothesis for this study.

H 1: Income of the parent affects the daily time spend on health maintenance strategies.

Table 4.8

Income of the Parent	Time spend on health maintenance on a daily basis		Total
	1 to 2 hours	Less than 1 hour	
1 lakh -2 lakh	3	15	19
2 lakh – 3 lakh	4	1	4
50000- 1 lakh	16	16	32
Less than 50000	12	24	36
More than 3 lakh	6	7	13
Total	41	63	104

*level of significance = 0.05

Pearson Chi-Square = .130

According to table the distribution of individuals across different income brackets (ranging from "Less than 50,000" to "More than 3 lakh") and the time they spend daily (ranging from "Less than 1 hour" to "1 to 2 hours").

As the value obtained (0.130) is greater than the level of significance, there is relation between Income of parent and daily time spend on health maintenance strategies. So, the hypothesis is accepted.

H 2: The gender has a relationship between daily times spend on health maintenance strategies.

Table 4.9

Gender	Time spend on health maintenance on a daily basis		Total
	1 to 2 hours	Less than 1 hour	
Female	15	37	52
Male	26	26	52
Total	41	63	104

*level of significance = 0.05

Pearson Chi-Square = 0.27

In this chi-square result, we're looking at the relationship between gender and the time spend on health maintenance strategies on a daily basis. As the value obtained (0.27) is greater than the level of significance, there exist a relation between gender and daily time spend on health maintenance strategies. So, the hypothesis is accepted.

H 3: The gender of the respondents has an effect on the imitation of appearance, physique, self-care routine or eating habits of social media influencers

Table 4.10

Gender	Imitation of lifestyle of social media influencer				Total
	Always	Never	Occasionally	Rarely	
Female	5	19	14	14	52
Male	9	10	14	19	52
Total	14	29	28	33	104

*level of significance = 0.05

Pearson Chi-Square = 0.196

In this chi-square result, we're looking at the relationship between gender and the imitation of appearance, physique, self-care routine or eating habits of social media influencers. As the value obtained (0.196) is greater than the level of significance, there exist a relation between gender and imitation of lifestyle of social media influencer. So, the hypothesis is accepted.

H 4: The time spend on social media by the respondents have an effect on daily time spend on health maintenance strategies.

Table 4.11

Time spend on social media	Time spend on health maintenance on a daily basis		Total
	1 to 2 hours	Less than 1 hour	
1 to 2 hours	5	18	23
2 to 3 hours	14	20	34
3 to 4 hours	17	11	28
Less than 1 hour	1	3	4
More than 3 hours	4	11	15
Total	41	63	104

*level of significance = 0.05

Pearson Chi-Square = 0.045

The table shows the counts of individuals categorized by two variables: time spent in social media and time spend on health maintenance on a daily basis. In this chi-square result, we're looking at the relationship between Time spend on social media and Time spend on health maintenance on a daily basis. As the value obtained (0.196) is less than the level of significance, there is no significant relation between gender and imitation of lifestyle of social media influencer. So, the hypothesis got rejected.

H 5: The locality of the respondents is related with the daily time spent on health maintenance strategies.

Table 4.12

Locality	Time spend on health maintenance on a daily basis		Total
	1 to 2 hours	Less than 1 hour	
Rural	20	35	55
Urban	21	28	49
Total	41	63	104

*level of significance = 0.05

Pearson Chi-Square = 0.499

According to the above table the relationship between of time spend on health maintenance on a daily basis and locality, distinguishing between rural and urban areas. As the value obtained (0.499) is greater than the level of significance, there is significant relation between the locality of the respondent and the time spend on health maintenance on a daily basis. So, the hypothesis is accepted.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER-5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The socio-economic profile of the respondents to this study is that the majority of them belong to the age group of 18 to 22 years. It includes 52 male and 52 female respondents. The majority of them are under graduate students. More than half percentage of the respondents belong to rural areas. The major portion of the respondent's parent's income is less than Rs. 50000. A significant majority of them are from rural backgrounds.

From the study, it is understood that Instagram is the most used social media platform among college students in Kochi city. The majority of the students spend 2-3 hours on social media on a daily basis. As health maintenance strategies are considered, most of the students are considering physical exercise, followed by skincare practices. For this strategy, the majority of the students are taking less than an hour. Because of the busy schedule of the college, they may be having difficulty spending more than an hour on health maintenance. The majority of the college students are purchasing products for health maintenance by looking at the reasonable price of the products. This is mainly because of the financial dependency of the students on their parents. One of the respondents says that health maintenance products are purchased only when going shopping with mom. Most of the respondents opted to occasionally search on social media about health maintenance. This can be based on changing social media trends. Even the majority of respondents use their purchased products fully. Sometimes they fail to use it because it is not suited for them, because of a because of a lack of time, a lack of expected results, or because of boredom from using the same products. The recommendations from friends and family are another important reason for students to purchase health maintenance products. The students are consistently using the same products, but they are occasionally searching for new health maintenance products on social media.

One of the objectives of the study was to find the impact of Covid19 on the health maintenance strategies adopted by college students. According to the data collected, respondents are neither

agreeing nor disagreeing with the impact of Covid19. The students don't have an understanding of how covid19 affects their health maintenance. This has no effect on health maintenance practices.

A significant portion of the respondents are occasionally following the health maintenance strategies found on social media as per their needs. In the study 'Social media enabled healthcare- A conceptual model of social media affordance, online social support, and health behaviors and outcomes', they talk about how individuals are using social media as a major source of health related information. They name this behavior as Social media enabled health care. More than 50% of the respondents are not following any particular influencer for health related information. This indicated that as per the requirement of the information, individuals are applying the health information received from different influencers. Only 20% of the respondents never compared their lifestyle choices with social media influencers. All others compared themselves with social media influencers at least once. Most of respondents are trying to imitate the appearance, physique, self-care routine or eating habits of the social media influencers. The concept of human body, facial features and beauty is got changes by social media and the content they presented through it. The new aspirations like hourglass shaped body, smile correction ceremony and so on seen through social media, creates a 'sense of real beauty' within the young people which is much distant from the natural aspect. This is how Jean Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality works through social media. . More than 50% of the college students are not conforming to the social media trends on health maintenance. This is mainly because of the lack of money or earnings. The priorities for choosing a social media influencer most of them are responded as checking the comment section. This is involves lot of risks. The social media as a business promotion platforms, the validity of these comments are questionable. There can be paid comments also. The anonymity and lack of actual proof for the claims is another important factor here. The theory of risk society by Ulrich Beck can be related here. He describes risk as inevitable element of modern society. Beck explain about technology related risks and technological hazards. He also talks about the lack of faith in experts and science by the common people. As the social media works on an advanced technical sphere, it involves lot of risks. The spread of social media to various applications in life makes it an unavoidable part of society. There is a need for digital literacy especially among the younger generations.

CONCLUSION

As per the data received from the study, college students in Kochi are using social media to obtain health related information. As the priority for choosing a particular influencer, students are focused on the comment section to assess the genuineness of the influencer, but the anonymity and commercial aspects associated with social media make it more complicated. This can be associated with the risks of 'Risk Society' described in the theories of Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens. They consider this a characteristic of modern technology.

The value received on the chi-square test showing a significant relation between the locality of the respondents (rural / urban) and the time spend on health maintenance on a daily basis. Students are choosing health maintenance strategies and products according to reasonable prices, and most of them are not conforming to social media trends. This is because of the financial dependency of students on their parents. This study also found that there exists a significant relationship between the locality of the students (rural or urban) and the time spent on social media on a daily basis.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Topic – Influence of Social media on Health maintenance strategies adopted by college students of Kochi

1. Name of the Student -
2. Course of the Student -
3. Age -
 - a) Under 18
 - b) 18-22
 - c) 22-25
4. Gender -
 - a) Male
 - b) Female
 - c) Other (please specify)
5. Religion -
 - a) Hindu
 - b) Christian
 - c) Islam
 - d) Others (Please specify)
6. Educational Qualification -
 - a) UG Student
 - b) PG Student
 - c) Other (Specify)
7. Income of the Parent -
 - a) Less than 50000
 - b) 50000- 1 lakh
 - c) 1 lakh -2 lakh
 - d) 2 lakh – 3 lakh
 - e) More than 3 lakh
8. Occupation of the Parent -
9. Family type -
 - Joint family
 - Nuclear family

10. Locality -
- a) Rural
 - b) Urban

11. Which social media platforms do you use regularly?

- a) YouTube
- b) Instagram
- c) whatsapp
- d) Facebook
- e) others(please specify)

12. How much time you spent in social media on a daily basis?

- a) Less than 1 hour
- b) 1 to 2 hours
- c) 2 to 3 hours
- d) 3 to 4 hours
- e) More than 4 hours

13. Do you engage in health maintenance strategies? (e.g., exercise, diet, yoga, vitamins/medication, wellness activities like skincare, hair care etc.)

- a) Frequently
- b) Occasionally
- c) Rarely
- d) Never

14. Which health maintenance practices do you engage in regularly?

- a) Physical exercise (including Yoga, Swimming, Jogging, Walking etc.)
- b) Healthy diet
- c) Skincare routine
- d) Hair care routine
- e) Vitamins / medication
- g) Others (please specify)

15. How much time do you spend on health maintenance strategies on a daily basis?

- a) Less than 1 hour
- b) 1 to 2 hours
- c) 2 to 3 hours
- d) 3 to 4 hours
- e) More than 4 hours

16. Do you purchase various products for your health maintenance strategies (For example: Gym membership, Fitness equipment, Skincare products, Nutrition gummies, Protein powder etc.)

- a) Yes
- b) No

17. How do you usually choose products for health maintenance strategies?

- a) Products in latest trends in social media
- c) By random choice
- d) By reasonable price
- e) Others (please specify)

18. How often do you purchase these products?

- A) Weekly
- b) Monthly
- c) Whenever the product is on a discount on online shops
- d) Others (please specify)

19. Are you consistent in the usage of these products?

- a) Yes, I am constantly using the same products for a long time
- b) No, I am curious about trying new products in the market

20. Do you constantly look for new products in the social media?

- a) Frequently
- b) Occasionally
- c) Rarely
- d) Never

21. a) Do you completely use the purchased product and services?

a) Yes

b) No

21. b) If no, why?

22. Read the statements given below and choose the most appropriate options:

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am trying to be consistently follow my health maintenance strategies after Covid 19 pandemic					
I shifted to a balanced diet after the Covid 19 pandemic					
I began to use more skincare and/ hair care products after the Covid19 pandemic					
I frequently search for my skincare and/hair care products online after Covid19 Pandemic					
I got a gym membership / I began to do home workout or yoga after pandemic					
I began to use staircases whenever possible than elevators after Covid 19 pandemic					
I began to eat more junk foods after Covid 19 pandemic					
I am taking multivitamin tablets after Covid 19 pandemic					

23. a) Do you look for health-related information or advice through social media platforms?

a) Yes

b) No

23. b) If yes, how often do you seek health-related information on social media?

a) Frequently

b) Occasionally

c) Rarely

d) Never

24. Have you ever followed health advice or practices you found on social media?

a) Frequently

b) Occasionally

c) Rarely

d) Never

25. To what extent do you think social media has influenced your health maintenance strategies?

a) Very much

b) Slightly

c) Moderate

d) Not at all

26. Do you follow any particular Social media influencer/Influencers to get informed about health maintenance strategies or products?

a) Yes

b) No

27. Do you compare your own health and lifestyle choices with what you see on social media?

a) Always

b) Occasionally

e) Rarely

f) Never

28. Have you ever tried to imitate the appearance, physique, self-care routine or eating habits of a social media influencer?

- a) Always
- b) Occasionally
- c) Rarely
- d) Never

29. Do you conform to the trends shown on social media?

- a) Yes
- b) No

30. What are your priorities for choosing a social media influencer who provides health related information?

- a) Person with matching gender
- b) Number of followers
- c) Recommendations from friends and family
- d) By checking the comment section
- g) Others(please specify)