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Use of Social Media (Facebook) for Promoting Health Education in Correlation with Uses and Gratification Theory

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Introduction

In the era of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT), the system has now more shifted from real (personal) to virtual where communication became a 24x7 phenomenon. As an information system, social media is built upon a set of internet, communication and computing technologies, as well as a set of ideological beliefs about how information should be created, accessed and distributed. The voice or words transmitted as an information in social media. Information is patterned matter-energy that affects the choices available to an individual making a decision.

India is a developing nation that is making remarkable progress toward development through the information strategy, the process through which communication technologies are used as a means of furthering socio-economic development. Gradually, over recent decades, we have realized that telephones, the internet and other communication technologies can greatly increase business activity by connecting individuals and organizations into the global economy.

Since 2004, social media has picked up popularity across the globe over the last decade with networks like Orkut, Hi5, Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Youtube etc. started the trend of interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication consists of face-to-face exchange between two or more individuals. The message flow is from one to a few individuals, feedback is immediate and usually plentiful, and the messages are often relatively high in socio-emotional content.

Objectives of the study:

Social media is being the most favourable User Generated Contents (UGC) platform, where users create, distribute and analyse their contents and motivate people to seek media for gratification and:

1. It helps people to acquire information to aid the thinking and understanding process, i.e. based on Cognitive approach.
2. It relates the emotions or feelings of people such as happiness, fear or pleasure, i.e. based on Affective approach.
3. It helps to promote one's own image, reputation or status to build credibility, i.e. based on Personal Integrative approach.
4. It refers to interact with family, friends and connect to others, i.e. based on Social Integrative approach.
5. It helps relating to diversion and stress relief, i.e. Tension release approach.

Understanding and Definition of Social Media -

Many of us, as a social media user try to understand in many ways. A social media is a simple application that lives within our desktop or web browser. It consists of a login page, a user account, a profile, a group and a bunch of games and tools to make the time we spend with our friends. The sophisticated hardwares and softwares ensure that the application (s) must functions constantly like applications exist in several forms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube etc. both in desktop and mobile platforms.

Definition:

According to Lazworld – "A category of sites that is based on user participation and User Generated Content (UGC) they include social networking sites like LinkedIn, Facebook or Myspace, social bookmarking sites like Del.icio.us, social news sites like Digg or Simply, and other news sites that are centred on user interaction.

Tvb.org define that social media is "online technologies and practices the people use to share opinions, insights, experiences and perspective with each other."

According to Capilanou, "Social Media are works of user-created video, audio, text or multimedia that are published and shared in a social environment, such as a blog, wiki or video hosting site."

Anvil Media define, "An umbrella term that defines, "An umbrella term that defines the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and the construction of words and pictures."

According to Bottle PR, "Software tools that allow groups to generate content and engage in peer-to-peer conversations and exchange of content."

Axel Schultze defines that Social Media is the collection of tools and online spaces available to help individuals and businesses to accelerate their information and communication needs."

Uses of Gratification Theory (UGT) and Correlation with Social Media:

Uses and gratification theory seeks to understand why people seek out the media that they do and what they use it for. UGT differs from other media effect theories in that it assumes that individuals have power over their media usage, rather than positioning individuals as passive consumers of media. UGT explores how individuals deliberately seek out media to fulfil certain needs or goals such as entertainment, relaxation, or socializing.

This theory first surfaced in the 1940s but it credited primarily to the research of communications professor Jay Blumler and sociologist Elihu Katz in the 1970s.

There are three basic understanding of this theory

1. The audience takes an active role in selecting a medium, as well as interpreting it and integrating it into their lives.
2. Different types of media compete against each other and against other sources of gratification for viewers' attention.
3. The medium that provides the most satisfaction for a person will be used more often than other types.

Methods of the study

Observational method has been applied to study about the implication of UGT theory on social media users. Analysis of the study has presented on the basis of contents posted on health related Facebook page and its engagements. Most active Facebook pages with three keywords *Health, Health Tips and Daily Health Tips* are selected for the study and contents related to health tips, diet, nutrition, seasonal & chronic disease and all other similar contents deeply analysed by the researcher.

Analysis:

Facebook Pages related having Keywords: Health, Health Tips, Daily Health Tips		
Keyword: Health	**Keyword: Health Tips**	**Keyword: Daily Health Tips**
1. Health Café	1. Health Digest	1. Daily Health Tips
2. Health	2. Health Tips	2. Health Digest
3. Health Care	3. The Healthy Food Tips	3. Health Plus
4. Healthy Track		4. Your Health's Care
5. Medical Medium		5. My Health Tips
		6. My Daily Health Tips
		7. StyleCraze Health Tips
		8. Health – Tips for Healthy Life
		9. Daily Health & Beauty Tips

1. **Cognitive Approach –** doctors, patents and general attendees have shared the information, knowledge and other relevant experiences related to a particular disease. It has been noticed that Facebook event is the most favourable option through which medical seminar, conference, discussion and talk show are being organized to address the common and serious diseases with the help of PowerPoint and audio visual presentation. Doctors who were either the speaker or general listeners have exchanges information to each other which later transformed into knowledge. The exchanges of information have extended in the form of shares, like and comment by the users. Here, UGT theory has proving that social media cognitively engage its users to share & exchange information and knowledge.

2. **Affective Approach –** These days, on social media, if your content is creative, appealing and attractive to persuade or convince some, by doing or practicing this, your health **problem** can be healed, you won the hearts of your both active and passive Facebook friends. In resultant, credible contents are more shared, viewed and comments on social media platform. As a content creator and disseminator you will get instant feedback. Therefore, page manager has also shared other social media profile or page or website contents, if it appealing to users.

3. **Personal Integrative –** Social media is the best virtual engaging tool which helps to build credibility very fast, easy & convenient and at the same time it can also diminished the credibility of the content very fast if content is not in good faith. In all mentioned pages, it's been noticed that users by uploading and sharing credible contents related to a particular disease(s) can help to build a strong reputation, that's why, Public Relations (PR) practices these days have been shifted on social media platforms. Individual doctor, all types of hospitals, clinics and nursing homes both in rural and urban have created Facebook page and maintaining by uploading regular contents to engage the users.

4. **Social Integrated Approach –** In UGT theory, social integrated approach explains about sharing feeling of family and friends. In all of these mentioned pages, doctors and patients are being treated like a family and friends. Doctors and patients shared self-clicked photos and videos contents of before, during and after treatment procedure. Patients shares their happiness, anger or sorrow through video testimonials about the doctor who have helped to cure the disease.

5. **Tension Release –** Many a times happens that after posting a photo or video content, the user always feels happy to know that the particular post has got many likes, shares, reach and comments publicly. These days video and graphical contents are in demand, social media users are consuming more of such contents cherish and relieve tensions. Therefore, all of these mentioned pages loaded and lauded with graphical and video contents inform of health tips both in nature serious and humour.

Conclusions – UGT is a theory that gave a complete credence to technology and it is very significant to this study considering Facebook as an offshoot of technology. While surfing the uploaded and shared contents of listed Facebook pages, it is clearly understood that, even, in modern times, communication theories are connected with technology and its relevance can suffice that communication can shift its approach where technology helps to communication message effectively with the audience(s). Social media is a democratic platform to voice opinions and create communes. Facebook page is the extension of profile without any friend restrictions. Knowledge is the outcome of information and persistent assimilation of knowledge results in wisdom which social media has been trying to establish to its credible users.

Health is one of primary concerns for everybody. Doctors and patients are establishing the connect and communication to reach out and exchanging helps to eradicate the common or rare disease.

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