POLICY ON THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN HOSPITALS IN BUILDING COMMUNICATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract. Social media is necessary for almost everyone, including in health services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, social media was widely used to build hospital communications. However, the benefits come with risks, as communication spreads so quickly. A proper policy is needed. This study aims to determine the benefits of social media in building communication in hospitals and the policies that govern it. The method used is a literature study. A literature search, through Science Direct, ProQuest, Google Scholar, and other databases (Google scholar, NIH/NLM, JMIH), with the keywords "social media" AND "communication" AND "policy" AND "hospital" AND "COVID-19 Pandemic", obtained 520 articles completely. According to the inclusion, exclusion, and duplication selection criteria, there were twelve included articles. The results prove that social media plays a role in hospital internal and external communication. The use of social media, in addition to improving hospital communication with all employees, also plays a role in improving communication between hospitals and patients, especially in providing information, telemedicine, helping health promotion to change behavior, influencing patient visits, overcoming limited facilities and access and as a new method that efficient way to reach bigger people during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, a policy that regulates the use of social media is needed. Guidelines based on the principles of maintaining patient privacy and confidentiality, providing correct information, conveying the source of contact information in every information submitted, using clear language, and verifying data.

Keywords: Social Media, Communication, Policy, Hospital, COVID-19 Pandemic


Kata kunci: Media Sosial, Komunikasi, Kebijakan, Rumah Sakit, Pandemi COVID-19
INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the use of social media (SM) has become an important requirement along with technological advances. Social media is a communication medium that plays a role in life, such as sharing information, exchanging messages, and sharing content such as photos or videos, as one of the most frequently used web-based activities today. The development of social media in recent years has greatly impacted communication, especially long-distance communication, which has created new opportunities so that people can easily connect. Social media users in 2019 were around 2.9 billion worldwide, and it is projected that the number will continue to increase in 2023 to 3.4 billion.(1)

Almost every industry is affected by social media. In the health sector, social media is also increasingly needed to support health services and as a means of communication for hospitals. For hospitals, social media can be used to improve internal hospital communication and communication with the community. Social media is also used for networking, professional education, organizational promotion, patient care, patient education, and public health programs.(2)

However, with the use of social media that is easily accessible, all information can be disseminated without going through filtering and can be done by everyone. This has risks for patients and health professionals. Potential risks include the spread of unqualified information, damage to professional image, violation of patient privacy, violation of the health profession's boundaries, and legal problems. (1) In 2013, an obstetrician in America made an obscene comment about a patient; its comments went viral and were featured on the news. Thousands of people petitioned, and the doctor endured several professional and personal consequences but was not fired. (3)

Some studies show that the number of privacy and confidentiality breaches committed by health professionals who use social media tends to be low. As investigated by Thompson et al. at the University of Florida, out of more than 1000 physician profiles evaluated, only 12 ethical violations were found, which accounted for less than 2% of physician profiles.(4) Another study also analyzed Twitter accounts and found that from 314 doctors, each with more than 500 followers, only 3% of their total tweets could be considered unprofessional, and 0.7% of them represented a potential privacy violation.(4) Although breaches are rare, healthcare professionals must always protect the privacy and confidentiality of patients.

Health authorities have published guidelines and recommendations for the use of social media. In 2011, the American Medical Association published its policy on professionalism on social media. Then in 2013, the General Dental Council in the UK published a document entitled, Guidance on using social media.(3) Medical curricula must address e-professionalism, professional internet ethics, and digital ethics, as the use of social media in healthcare is the new norm among millennial of healthcare providers.

A proper policy is needed in the use of this social media. The choice of topics in this systematic review follows the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, as social media users continue to increase worldwide, especially in the healthcare industry. The results of this review are expected to have implications for healthcare professionals.

The failure to achieve Patient Safety Goals in hospitals occurs because the Clinical Governance implemented by Koja Hospital is still not right and is not following government regulations. Thus, if the implemented of clinical management is still not right, the result of patient safety will not be good either. Because clinical governance is based on the four pillars theory of the NHS-UK and Law number 44 of 2009, the four pillars consisting of clinical leadership, clinical audit, clinical effectiveness (Guideline), as well as education, training and continuing professional development will be used as the basis for conducting this research.

METHODS

In writing a literature review, after setting the title, the following steps are taken: (1) Conduct a search through the search database using Science Direct, ProQuest, Springer, and other sources (Google Scholar, NIH/NLM, JMIH); (2) Read the title and abstract of each paper; (3) Gathering information from the abstracts of the selected articles; (4) Assessing the suitability of the selected article with a predetermined title. The search was carried out using keywords, namely "social media" AND "marketing strategy" AND "hospital" AND "COVID-19 Pandemic". Selected articles were published from 2019-2021. Then an assessment is carried out according to the eligibility criteria.

Article Screening

Eligibility selection is carried out by assessing the suitability of the article abstract with a predetermined title. Inclusion criteria, namely: (1) Research, especially in the field of hospitals that assesses the use of social media; (2) Is a scientific journal, (3) Conducted in the last 2 years; (4) In English; and (5) in full-text form. Meanwhile, the
exclusion criteria are (1) inaccessible articles, (2) research assessing the use of social media not during the COVID-19 pandemic, and (3) thesis. The following is a diagram of the article selection procedure:

![Diagram of article selection procedure]

**RESULTS**

After doing a search using the Science Direct, ProQuest, and Google Scholar search databases according to keywords, 520 full-text articles were obtained. The article was published from 2019-2022. Then, screening was carried out from the predetermined inclusion criteria, got 122 articles, and an assessment was made of the suitability of the abstract with the title of the article that had been determined. After that, a selection was made for duplication until 12 articles were obtained. After getting the article by following the flowchart, accessing the full text of the selected article, and seeing the references that can be used as additional references. Then, a comprehensive review of each article was carried out, to see reviews related to hospital communication. From 8 articles, it was found that research was conducted in Saudi Arabia, Spain, Switzerland, Indonesia, Taiwan, and China. Other references were added related to the title of this literature review.

**Table 1. Summary of Article Review Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Author and Title</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Farsi D (2020)</td>
<td>Describe the use of MS and how it has become an important tool used in the healthcare industry.</td>
<td>A review of the sourced literature discussing the use of MS in any form of health care.</td>
<td>MS is categorized as health promotion, career development or practice promotion, recruitment, medical education, telemedicine, scientific research, influencing health behavior, and public health care issues.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Schiavone Beniamino, Vitale Andrea, Gallo</td>
<td>Present the official Facebook profiles of</td>
<td>Survey the number of Facebook posts in May and October</td>
<td>In Italy, only 28% of hospitals have an official Facebook page, of which</td>
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<td>Study</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
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<td>Mena, Russo Gianluca Salvatore, Ponticelli Domenico, Borrelli Mario</td>
<td>Overview of Facebook Use by Hospitals in Italy: A Nationwide Survey during the COVID-19 Emergency</td>
<td>Hospitals in Italy (n = 1351) and assess how much social media is used. (second pandemic wave) 2020. 20.6% are public hospitals and 79.4% are private hospitals. From these hospitals, the use of Facebook every week is 49.1% and is more often done by public hospitals.</td>
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<td>3. M Beier, Sebastian Früh. (2020) “Technological, Organizational, and Environmental Factors Influencing Social Media Adoption by Hospitals in Switzerland: Cross-Sectional Study”</td>
<td>Develop a comprehensive model of hospital use of social media in the health care system and test the model with empirical data from Switzerland. Collected empirical data on 283 hospitals in Switzerland and identified the accounts they operate on seven different social media platforms (Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, XING, and YouTube).</td>
<td>In Switzerland, hospitals that have a high number of patients tend to use social media. However, they are less likely to use their social media accounts if they are linked to a hospital network.</td>
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<td>4. Yulhasmida; S Jacob; TA Lubis “Patients Visiting Intention: A Perspective of Internal and Social Media Marketing in Kambang Jambi Hospital”</td>
<td>Examine the influence of internal marketing on social media and patient visit interest and the influence of social media on patient visit interest at Kambang Jambi Hospital. Respondents are employees at Kambang Hospital. Questionnaire distribution with google docs application. Respondents answered a questionnaire (13 indicators of internal marketing variables, 4 indicators of social media variables and 4 indicators of patient visit interest variables).</td>
<td>There is a significant influence of internal marketing on social media and an indirect influence of internal marketing on the interest of patient visits through MS. This shows that internal marketing can influence patient visit interest through social media.</td>
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<td>5. Chi-Horng Liao (2020), “Evaluating the Social Marketing Success Criteria in Health Promotion: A F-DEMATEL Approach”</td>
<td>Identify various social marketing success criteria to improve Health promotion. Using the F-DEMATEL method to evaluate the success of social marketing to implement health promotion effectively.</td>
<td>To succeed, practitioners must consider patient needs for social marketing in health promotion. Marketing mix design and strategy are needed to communicate the benefits of behavior change.</td>
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<td>6. Carlos DH Pedrosa et al. (2020), “Analysis and study of hospital communication via social media from the patient perspective”</td>
<td>Analyze patients’ opinions about the online communication strategy of hospitals in Spain. Conducting a qualitative analysis through focus groups, gathered about twenty patient association representatives. Conduct a content assessment of the</td>
<td>People value hospital communication through social media, even though they don’t know how it works. People find it difficult to understand certain messages. To improve communication, patients demand that they...</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Juana Alonso-Cañadas et al. (2020)</td>
<td>Twitter activity of the most influential hospitals in Spain.</td>
<td>Consider improving the quality of life and well-being of the community from their perspective.</td>
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<td>“Committed to Health: Key Factors to Improve Users' Online Engagement through Facebook”</td>
<td>Know social media user participation and assess what factors increase online engagement.</td>
<td>Conducted an analysis of 19,817 Facebook posts from 126 health organizations. Factors associated with social media posting play an important role in the involvement of social media in health organizations.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Adrian Wong et al. (2021)</td>
<td>Review the use of social media during the current pandemic.</td>
<td>Literature review The use of social media during the COVID-19 pandemic as a means of communication, education, and health care continues to increase until it becomes part of the modern health care system. The pros and cons are still debated. The risks and benefits need to be carefully considered.</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>“The use of social media and online communications in times of the COVID-19 pandemic”</td>
<td>Review the use of social media during the current pandemic.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Khalifa S Al-Khalifa et al. (2021)</td>
<td>To find out the opinion of dentists on the use of social media (MS) in daily practice and the expected limits of its use in Saudi Arabia.</td>
<td>A cross-sectional study was conducted in May and June 2020 on a sample of dentists in Saudi Arabia. Research subjects participated voluntarily. The survey questionnaire contained 16 questions, and data were entered into MS Excel and transferred to SPSS. Most respondents (80%) believe that MS plays an active role in patients' decisions regarding selecting health care providers. The mean score of dentists' opinion on MS use was significantly lower among participants who worked more than 50 hours per week compared to other participants (p = 0.014).</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>“The use of social media for professional purposes among dentists in Saudi Arabia”</td>
<td>To find out the opinion of dentists on the use of social media (MS) in daily practice and the expected limits of its use in Saudi Arabia.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Deema Farsi et al. (2022)</td>
<td>Discusses how social media has been used in the healthcare industry from a patient perspective and explains the main issues surrounding its use in healthcare.</td>
<td>A total of 91 studies were reviewed, supplemented by 1 textbook chapter and 13 web references. The studies were mainly from the United States (n=40), followed by Europe (n=13), and the least from India (n=1). WhatsApp or WeChat is the most investigated social media platform by the public/patients.</td>
<td>Social Media and Health Care (Part II): Narrative Review of Social Media Use by Patients</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Vittorio Gebbia et al. (2021)</td>
<td>Discusses the pros and cons of using unregulated WhatsApp instant messaging, in the context of e-</td>
<td>Instant messaging systems in cancer care lead to better patient care. Very useful in rural areas and low and middle-income countries. The COVID-19 pandemic.</td>
<td>WhatsApp Messenger use in oncology: a narrative review</td>
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on pros and cons of a flexible and practical, non-specific communication tool medicine, as an interprofessional and doctor/patient communication tool in oncology. the rapid transition to telemedicine for cancer patients and providing immediate benefits by reducing the risk of unnecessary exposure to infection.

| 12 | Garret Garofolo-Gonzalez et al. (2021) “Social Media Use Among Foot and Ankle Orthopedic Surgeons” | This study evaluate the use of social media among foot and ankle orthopedic surgeons (F&A), and the impact of that social media presence on several physician ranking websites (PRW). Orthopedic surgeons were randomly selected and identified using the AAOS.org website (123 orthopedic surgeons). Descriptive statistics, unpaired t-tests, and linear regression were used to assess the effect of social media on PRW scores. | Facebook (48.8%), Twitter (15.4%), YouTube (23.6%), LinkedIn (47.9%), situs web pribadi (24.4%), situs grup (52.9%), and Instagram (0%). Facebook users were older, who used the site younger (P < .05). With YouTube pages having a higher Healthgrades score than those without (P < .05). |

**DISCUSSION**

From the search results, nine articles were evaluated regarding using social media to build communication to support hospital communication activities. Farsi(1) research states that social media use is categorized as health care promotion, career development, recruitment, professional networking, telemedicine, and public health care issues.

Today, the healthcare industry places social media as an important channel for health care promotion, research, increasing patient visits, marketing, and branding. The role of the patient becomes more active in health care which will affect behavioral and social factors. Social media is also a new, more efficient method to reach a larger population, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.(1) According to Bakhsh W (2014) discussed in Garofolo's (2021) research, online social platforms have reshaped communication in healthcare and contributed to the shift toward patient satisfaction-based models.(5)

Using Facebook in hospitals is very important in Italy as a communication tool. Research conducted with 1352 hospitals found that almost half of the hospitals have a Facebook page and use social media every week. Facebook is a simple tool and can be useful for promoting health and fighting fake news in the health sector, although many hospitals in Italy are still lagging in their use.(6) This is also true, as stated by Smailhodzic et al. in Schiavone (6), who reported that social media use improves the relationship between doctor and patient. Patients will feel more satisfied with doctor and hospital services. This is very important as one of the strategies in hospital marketing.(6) Such a study was conducted among dentists in Saudi Arabia, showing that most of the sample dentists believed that social media played an active role in patients' decisions to choose health care facilities. Social media is also critical to success in attracting patients and marketing practices.(7)

Meanwhile, research in Switzerland shows hospitals with a stronger market focus on patients with Voluntary Health Insurance (VHI) tend to use social media platforms for private individuals (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or YouTube), doctors, and health professionals (LinkedIn). On the other hand, hospitals are places of education or training. Overall, hospitals in Switzerland choose social media platforms based on stakeholder groups.(8)

In this digital era, people use the internet for health communication. There is no denying that patients often search about health care on social media and that society relies heavily on it for health care information. There may not be any examples to support this, as recently seen during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is some information in the literature related to this subject, as presented by Varady NH (2019) in Garofolo's study (2021). The study showed that 80% of patients use the internet for health-related questions.(5) Another study in 2013 found that the first motive for patients to use health-related social media is to seek information about health, disease, or treatment of disease; Twitter is the most used platform for this information.(3)
In recent years, health services have been delivered remotely through telemedicine applications, the best access to care for some people, such as those who are isolated or in rural areas. This method is not only efficient but also saves time and money. Furthermore, in the study by Faris et al. (2022) in 2016, telemedicine consultation reduced geographic barriers to initial clinical consultation. Most patients were encouraged to have clinical examinations. The study by Gebbia (2021) showed that the instant messaging system (WhatsApp) in cancer care facilitates improved communication and support between patients, nurses, and doctors, and consequently, better patient care. These benefits are particularly useful in rural areas and low- and middle-income countries to overcome some economic and distance barriers to care.

The role of social media is also needed in health promotion campaigns. It is used to raise awareness about public health problems and change individual behavior. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, almost every social media platform contributes to the dissemination of information related to the pandemic. Health authorities have used their social media accounts to effectively share scientific information and combat what has been described as an infodemic. Social media is also a public platform to share their thoughts and experiences regarding vaccination. While social media can make evidence-based information accessible to the public and promote positive health behaviors, it is also a significant factor in spreading vaccination hesitancy, thus posing a threat to global public health.

On the other hand, from Wong (11) research, people's economic conditions are also affected. People who live in affluent cities are more likely to use social media networks. However, this social media also opens the way for users to overcome the limitations of economic facilities, so they have access to hospitals to get health information. The potential of social media is very large to be able to reach a wider community. This is very important to build communication between hospitals and patients.

Social media also plays a role in building internal communication within the hospital. It is stated that the hospital will not satisfy its customers if it is not able to satisfy its employees. Effective communication between management and employees is required; mutually respectful communication and the message conveyed should be clearly understood. Hospitals without good communication internally, their employees will not be able to establish good communication with the community.

The use of social media has the risk of reducing patient privacy and confidentiality, so a guideline is needed in its use, as conveyed by Peck J, social media in nursing education: responsible integration for meaningful use (14). From the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) issued Nurse's Guide to the use of social media (2011) to regulate the use of social media in the health care environment by nurses. General guidelines for the use of social media, namely were only conveying information from credible sources, complying with federal privacy laws of the states, respecting copyright laws, directing patients who wish to join safer communication networks, protecting patient information through “de-identification”, and always respecting the patient. In terms of privacy settings that need to be considered, namely: using secure privacy settings, separating personal and professional profiles, not making false or misleading claims, ensuring correct identity, and being on professional sites.

The medical community considers the use of social media in health care to have potential risks, namely reduced privacy, and confidentiality, thus forgetting the ethical aspects. The use of social media is possible to give bad ratings or comments. Health care organizations or hospitals must have clear policies regarding the use of social media. Doctors and staff know what's appropriate and what is not on social media.

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, social media plays an important role in hospital communication and information delivery. This literature review proves that social media is very important in building communication in hospitals, for better internal and external communication. Social media plays a role in health promotion, recruitment, telemedicine, research, increasing patient visits, marketing, building branding, fighting fake news, improving relationships between doctors and patients, and increasing public awareness to change individual behavior. This can be a recommendation in making internal policies in hospitals regarding the use of social media.

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