Таблица 1 – Уровень реактивной и личностной тревожности у студентов 1, 3 и 5-х курсов

| Вид тревожности | Курс | Уровень тревожности | | | | | |
| | | Низкий | | Умеренный | | Высокий | |
		Количество студентов	%	Количество студентов	%	Количество студентов	%
Реактивная тревожность	1	8	15,1	18	33,8	27	51,1
	3	24	45,5	17	33,0	12	21,5
	5	23	43,5	18	33,5	12	23,0
Личностная тревожность	1	26	48,9	15	29,1	12	22,0
	3	13	25,0	29	54,5	11	20,5
	5	17	33,5	30	56,5	6	10

К третьему курсу студенты уже полностью адаптировались к своему статусу и социальной ситуацией, в которой происходит их профессиональное становление и жизнедеятельность. Третьекурсники уже ощущают себя будущими специалистами, понимают свои цели и задачи обучения.

Ситуация меняется к концу обучения в вузе, когда происходит следующий этап личностного и профессионального самоопределения: студенты скоро станут «молодыми специалистами» и им необходимо будет искать работу, адаптироваться к новым социальным условиям.

Вывод

Нами показано, что уровень тревожности среди студентов 1–3 курса выше уровня тревожности студентов 4–5 курса. Стрессовые ситуации, так остро переживаемые на первых курсах, могут повлиять и на учебный процесс. А значит, важным аспектом является адаптационный период к обучению в университете, что следует учитывать при составлении учебных планов.

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THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN ENHANCING PUBLIC HEALTH AWARENESS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic, characterized by substantial global mortality and morbidity that affected millions of people, was officially declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a pandemic from the period from March 11, 2020, to May 5, 2023 [1, 2]. During that period, not only those who contracted the virus but also others experienced a profoundly transformative

time. The prevailing sense of anxiety stemmed from the novelty of the situation, which forced people to engage in their independent search for information on the virus, its potential impact, and strategies to mitigate its effects. Consequently, the COVID-19 lockdown prompted people to allocate more time to social media platforms [3], leading to the rise of social media as the primary channel for acquiring information and seeking social support [4, 5].

Material and methods of research

To examine the impact of social media during the COVID-19 pandemic, a comprehensive assessment was carried out using a Google form that included a wide range of questions. This approach aimed to obtain supporting evidence for the findings reported in the research articles. PubMed, Google Scholar, and Science Direct were used as reliable sources to determine the pertinent questions to include in the questionnaire. To gather relevant information for comparison in this article, specific keywords such as "COVID-19 pandemic," "WHO COVID-19 pandemic duration", "social media and COVID-19" and "popular sources of information on COVID-19" were used during the search process.

Goal

The objective of this article is to present the findings derived from a recent survey conducted among both frequent social media users and nonusers, aiming to evaluate their primary sources of information during the pandemic period. The survey results further demonstrate the extent to which individuals relied on and implemented the information gathered through social media platforms. As healthcare professionals, we can use these results to advocate for greater responsibility and accuracy among social media influencers, as their dissemination of information can significantly impact the audience.

The results of the research and their discussion

The survey included a diverse group of participants, with 61.8% identifying themselves as women and 38.2% as men. The age range of the participants was 18 years and older, and the majority fell within the age range of 18 to 30. The country of origin of the participants revealed that 38.2% were from Sri Lanka, making it the largest group, followed by Belarus. Other countries such as Australia, Japan, the Maldives, India, Bangladesh, the United Kingdom, Kuwait, and the UAE also contributed data to the survey. Regarding living arrangements, the majority of participants (43.4%) reported living with their families, while the second most common living situation was living alone (31.6%). A lower percentage of participants indicated that they lived with their spouse (13.2%) or in a community setting (11.8%). In terms of geographic distribution, a significant majority of participants (84.2%) resided in urban areas within their respective countries, while the remaining 15.8% lived in rural areas. Based on the findings derived from our survey, Figure 1 presents an analysis of the participants' primary sources of information during the pandemic period.

1. What were your main sources of information regarding COVID-19? Каковы были ваши основные источники информации о COVID-19?
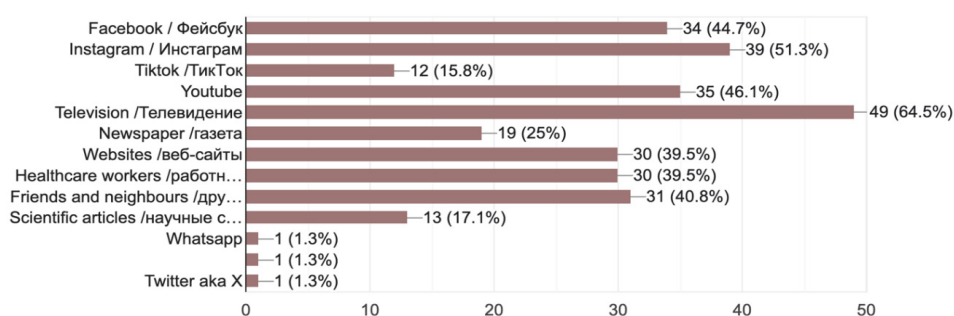76 responses

Facebook / Фейсбук — 34 (44.7%)
Instagram / Инстаграм — 39 (51.3%)
Tiktok /ТикТок — 12 (15.8%)
Youtube — 35 (46.1%)
Television /Телевидение — 49 (64.5%)
Newspaper /газета — 19 (25%)
Websites /веб-сайты — 30 (39.5%)
Healthcare workers /работн… — 30 (39.5%)
Friends and neighbours /дру… — 31 (40.8%)
Scientific articles /научные с… — 13 (17.1%)
Whatsapp — 1 (1.3%)
— 1 (1.3%)
Twitter aka X — 1 (1.3%)

Figure 1 – Primary sources of information of the participants during the pandemic period

Despite the overwhelming and vast influence of the Internet, comprehensive international reports on the media consistently identify television as the predominant and widely preferred medium for accessing health-related information [6]. Our survey results corroborate this finding. However, it should be noted that the graph provided above illustrates the significant contributions of Instagram and Facebook during the pandemic, with respective percentages of 51.3% and 44.7%. Although television remains the primary source at 64.5%, the data clearly indicate the substantial impact of social media platforms in disseminating health information during this period.

Information seeking during the COVID-19 pandemic has been widely regarded as an adaptive response. However, it is important to acknowledge that such seeker behavior may also have negative consequences on mental health [7], including increased anxiety. Our survey yielded the following results related to anxiety experienced during the process of searching for information amid the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 2).

2. Were you anxious before or after getting to know information from the above selected sources? Были ли вы обеспокоены до или посл... информации из выбранных выше источников?
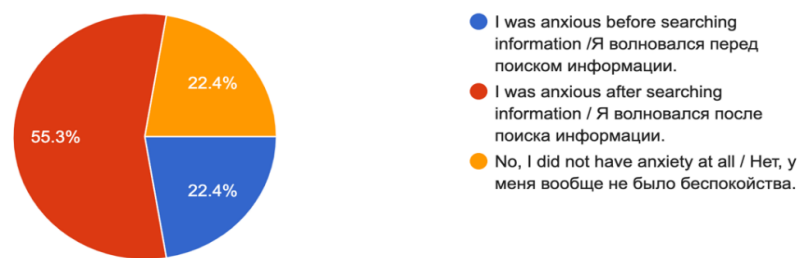76 responses

- I was anxious before searching information /Я волновался перед поиском информации.
- I was anxious after searching information / Я волновался после поиска информации.
- No, I did not have anxiety at all / Нет, у меня вообще не было беспокойства.

Figure 2 – Percentage of anxiety experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic

Regardless of the information acquisition method, a significant majority of 88.2% of the respondents ultimately chose to receive COVID-19 vaccination, while 11.8% did not. When examining the sources of vaccine-related information, the prevailing majority (34.6%) indicated that they obtained information through social networks, while the remaining sources included news outlets, healthcare workers, and hospitals. It is worth mentioning that people who opted for vaccination, regardless of possible complications, demonstrated a belief in information spread through social networks, thus prioritizing protection as their primary concern.

During our survey, we inquired about the participants' awareness of the Belarusian vaccine for COVID-19. The findings revealed that a significant majority of 74.6% indicated that they were unaware of its existence, while only 25.4% reported that they were aware. Furthermore, those who were aware primarily learned about the vaccine through their educational institutions, while the remaining individuals, who were healthcare workers, acquired this knowledge through the hospital system.

Finally, we were interested to determine whether the information individuals had learned about COVID-19 was accurate up to the present day. To explore this, we asked participants about their thoughts on the matter, and Figure 3 reveals such mixed sentiments. It is concerning to see that, despite making significant health-related decisions, a majority of 55.6% expressed the unfortunate need to revise their opinions.

5. Did the information you gathered during the pandemic days through the above mentioned sources change later? Изменилась ли впослед...дни пандемии из вышеупомянутых источников?

9 responses

Figure 3 – Percentage of people knowing the correct information

Conclusions

In conclusion, based on the information collected from our survey, it is evident that social networks have exerted a significant influence during the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, individuals have made crucial health-related decisions, such as receiving vaccinations, mainly based on information obtained from platforms like Instagram, where content can be posted by anyone with a simple click. The prevalence of anxiety among participants after accessing information highlights the importance of social media workers providing accurate and truthful information to their audiences. As healthcare professionals, it is imperative for us to emphasize the substantial impact that the media has in influencing people and to promote awareness among the general population about the potential risks associated with uninformed decisions.

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