

The role of social media in enhancing collaboration between hospitals and patients in Indonesia

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received : 3 July 2025

Accepted : 21 July 2025

Available : 31 July 2025

Keywords:

Collaboration hospitals and patients, Health Education, Hospitals media, Patients education, Social Media

ABSTRACT

Social media has become essential in daily life, particularly in healthcare, with over 4.9 billion users globally in 2023. These platforms enhance collaboration between hospitals and patients, acting as tools for communication, patient engagement, health promotion, and strengthening provider-patient relationships. This study utilised a literature review of various journals and scholarly articles on social media in health, helping researchers identify trends and challenges in hospital-patient collaboration through these platforms. Recent studies provided insights into enhancing patient engagement via social media. A qualitative approach was employed to analyse data, comparing results from different studies and summarising findings. The analysis aims to uncover patterns in social media use by hospitals and its effects on patient relationships. Research shows that hospitals using Instagram can boost patient awareness of services, leading to better collaboration. Social media also facilitates patient education, improving health understanding and satisfaction. Social media effectively enhances interaction between hospitals and patients, though challenges like privacy and data security must be addressed. Clear policies are essential to ensure safe, beneficial interactions. Overall, social media is vital in fostering a collaborative healthcare environment.



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1. INTRODUCTION

The general background concerning the role of social media in the healthcare sector has become increasingly significant, particularly with the rising number of social media users worldwide. According to data from

Statista (2023), the global number of social media users has surpassed 4.9 billion, exhibiting substantial growth each year. This indicates that social media has evolved beyond a mere communication tool to become a potential platform for enhancing collaboration between hospitals and patients. In the context of healthcare, social media can serve as a bridge connecting patients with healthcare providers, facilitating quicker and more effective information exchange.

Previous literature indicates that the utilisation of social media within the healthcare sector has garnered increasing research attention. McKinsey & Company (2020) noted that social media plays a pivotal role in patient engagement, with 60% of patients reporting a greater likelihood of seeking health information through these platforms. Furthermore, research conducted by Kumar and Gupta (2020) revealed that social media can enhance health promotion and patient engagement, providing better access to relevant information and supporting improved decision-making. Consequently, social media is not merely a communication tool but also a mechanism that can strengthen the relationship between patients and healthcare providers.

However, despite numerous studies highlighting the advantages of social media, challenges remain in its implementation. For instance, concerns regarding patient privacy and data security often hinder hospitals from fully leveraging social media. According to the American Medical Association (2021), 35% of healthcare professionals feel uncomfortable using social media due to the risks associated with patients' personal information. Therefore, it is essential to explore how hospitals can address these challenges and harness the potential of social media to enhance collaboration with patients.

The research problem to be discussed in this article encompasses how social media can be effectively employed by hospitals to improve collaboration with patients, as well as the challenges encountered in this process. This study will also identify the factors influencing the successful utilisation of social media within the healthcare context.

The objective of this study is to explore the role of social media in enhancing collaboration between hospitals and patients, as well as to provide recommendations for hospitals to effectively utilise social media. This article aims to contribute new insights to the literature on the use of social media in healthcare, focusing on how social media can serve as a powerful tool for strengthening the relationship between patients and healthcare providers. Thus, this article offers an original perspective and provides new insights into the potential of social media in enhancing collaboration within the healthcare sector.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Use of Social Media in Health

Social media has become an essential platform for communication and collaboration between hospitals and patients. According to a report by Statista (2023), the number of social media users worldwide reached over 4.7 billion in 2023, indicating significant growth from previous years. This creates substantial opportunities for hospitals to leverage social media as a tool to enhance patient engagement. Research by Kumar and Gupta (2020) demonstrates that social media serves not only as an information channel but also as a platform for fostering better relationships between healthcare providers and patients.

However, despite the numerous benefits, the use of social media in the health context also presents challenges. For instance, inaccurate or misleading information can easily spread through these platforms, as highlighted by Roozenbeek et al. (2020) in their study on vulnerability to misinformation regarding COVID-19. Therefore, it is crucial for hospitals not only to engage in social media but also to educate patients on how to recognise valid and trustworthy information.

2.2. Patient Engagement Through Social Media

Patient engagement in healthcare is becoming increasingly important, and social media offers an effective means to achieve this goal. McKinsey & Company (2020) notes that social media can enhance patient engagement by providing relevant information and supporting interactions between patients and healthcare providers. For example, hospitals can utilise platforms such as Instagram to share patient stories, information about services, and important health announcements.

Data from the Pew Research Center (2021) indicates that approximately 80% of adults in the United States seek health information online, with many using social media as a source. This suggests that hospitals active on social media can reach a larger patient base and increase awareness of the services they offer. However, it is important to remember that not all patients have equal access to technology and social media, and efforts to reach all segments of the population must be considered.

2.3. Case Study: Effectiveness of Social Media Use

Several case studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of social media in enhancing collaboration between hospitals and patients. For instance, research by Yunita Fenilho et al. (2023), which analysed the use of Instagram by hospitals, found that this platform can increase patient awareness of

available services and facilitate better communication. In the study, hospitals that were active on Instagram reported a significant increase in patient visits.

Additionally, research by Sari (2020) found that the use of social media can positively impact the increase in hospital visits. By leveraging targeted social media campaigns, hospitals can attract patient attention and encourage them to seek care. This indicates that effective social media strategies can contribute to the overall improvement of public health.

2.4. Strengths and Weaknesses of Previous Research

Although numerous studies have been conducted regarding the role of social media in health, several strengths and weaknesses warrant attention. A primary strength of previous research is the diversity of approaches employed to explore this topic. For example, the study by Gonzalez et al. (2020) provides a comprehensive review of the impact of social media on patient engagement, while Bouchard & LaValley (2021) focus on the relationship between patients and healthcare providers.

However, a common weakness in this research is the lack of longitudinal data that could demonstrate the long-term effects of social media use. Many studies rely solely on surveys or cross-sectional data, which may not provide a complete understanding of the dynamics involved.

3. METHODS

In this study, the approach employed is a descriptive qualitative analysis method that focuses on a literature review. This method has been chosen as it provides an in-depth understanding of the role of social media in enhancing collaboration between hospitals and patients. Through the analysis of existing literature, the researcher can explore various perspectives, data, and relevant findings from diverse sources to construct a robust argument regarding this topic.

3.1. Research Design

Descriptive qualitative analysis allows the researcher to investigate how social media is utilised within the health context, as well as its impact on interactions between patients and healthcare providers. According to McKinsey & Company (2020), social media serves not only as a communication platform but also as a tool to enhance patient engagement. This aligns with findings from the Pew Research Center (2021), which indicate that approximately 80% of adults seek health information online, including through social media.

In this context, the researcher will collect and analyse articles, journals, and reports from credible sources. For instance, research by Kumar and Gupta (2020) demonstrates that social media can enhance patient engagement in health promotion, which is a primary focus of this study. Additionally, Sweeney (2021) underscores the importance of social media in building relationships between patients and healthcare providers, which will be further explored in the subsequent sections.

3.2 Data Collection

The data utilised in this research has been gathered from various sources, including journal articles, research reports, and statistical data from credible institutions. One of the primary sources is Statista, which reports that the number of social media users worldwide increased from 2.07 billion in 2015 to 4.48 billion in 2023 (Statista, 2023). This increase indicates that social media has become an integral part of everyday life, including in the health context.

In data collection, the researcher will also utilise articles that discuss the use of social media in health contexts, as investigated by Gonzalez et al. (2020). This study highlights the impact of social media on patient engagement in healthcare services, as well as how health information can be disseminated more effectively through these platforms. Furthermore, research by Rahmawati (2021) provides concrete examples of how health webinars conducted on social media can raise public awareness about important health issues.

It is important to note that data collection is not limited to academic research but also encompasses relevant case studies. For example, research by Yunita Fenilho et al. (2023) illustrates how hospitals can introduce their services through Instagram, one of the most popular social media platforms. This approach will provide broader insights into how hospitals can leverage social media to enhance collaboration with patients.

3.3. Data Analysis

Following the data collection, the next step involves analysing the information that has been gathered. This analysis will be conducted by identifying key themes that emerge from the existing literature. For instance, one theme that will be explored is how social media can enhance communication between patients and healthcare providers. Research by Bouchard & LaValley (2021) indicates that the use of social media can strengthen the relationship between patients and providers, thereby increasing trust and collaboration.

Additionally, the analysis will include an evaluation of the effectiveness of social media in conveying health information. As noted by Zikmund-Fisher et al. (2021), social media can serve as an effective educational platform, where patients can obtain accurate and relevant information about their health conditions. Consequently, this analysis will provide a clearer picture of how social media can play a role in enhancing patient engagement.

In the data analysis, the researcher will also consider factors that influence the use of social media in health contexts, such as user demographics and the types of platforms employed. For instance, research by Roberts (2021) indicates that younger patients are more likely to actively use social media to seek health information compared to older patients. These findings can offer insights into more effective communication strategies for various age groups.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of this research, the researcher will implement several steps. First, the researcher will conduct data triangulation by comparing information from various different sources. This is crucial to ensure that the findings obtained do not rely solely on a single source but encompass diverse perspectives that can provide a more comprehensive overview.

Second, the researcher will perform critical analysis of each source utilised, including evaluating the research methodologies employed in those studies. For example, the research conducted by Junaidi (2022) on social media responses at Cipto Mangunkusumo Hospital will be analysed to understand how the approaches used can be applied in a broader context.

Third, the researcher will also consider cultural and social contexts in this analysis. This is important as the use of social media in health contexts may vary depending on cultural norms and societal practices. By considering these factors, the researcher can ensure that the findings obtained are relevant and applicable across various contexts.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Enhancement of Communication between Hospitals and Patients

In the current digital era, social media has emerged as one of the most effective communication tools between hospitals and patients. According to data from Statista (2023), the number of social media users worldwide has surpassed 4.9 billion, indicating a substantial potential for interaction between healthcare providers and patients. Social media enables hospitals to

disseminate information in real-time, including updates regarding new services, health protocols, and other critical information that can aid patients in making informed decisions about their health.

A concrete example of utilizing social media to enhance communication is the campaign conducted by Pertamina Central Hospital, which leveraged the Instagram platform to disseminate information about health services and health webinars. Fenilho et al. (2023) demonstrated that the use of Instagram not only increased the visibility of the hospital but also encouraged direct interaction with patients, which, in turn, bolstered patient trust and satisfaction with the services provided.

Furthermore, research by McKinsey & Company (2020) revealed that 70% of patients are more likely to use social media to seek health information compared to traditional sources. This underscores the necessity for hospitals to adapt to changing patient behaviours and to utilise social media as a primary communication channel. Consequently, hospitals that are active on social media can be more responsive to patient needs and provide more relevant and timely information.

Overall, enhancing communication through social media not only increases patient engagement but also strengthens the relationship between hospitals and the communities they serve. By effectively leveraging these platforms, hospitals can bridge information gaps and improve the overall patient experience.

4.2. Empowering Patients through Health Information

Social media also plays a crucial role in empowering patients by providing better access to health information. The Pew Research Center (2021) noted that approximately 80% of adults in the United States seek health information online, with social media being one of the primary sources. With broader access to information, patients can make more informed decisions regarding their healthcare.

In this context, hospitals can utilise social media to provide beneficial health education. For instance, an educational campaign conducted by the American Medical Association (2021) demonstrated how hospitals can enhance patient knowledge about specific diseases and preventive measures through informative and engaging content on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. This not only raises awareness but also encourages patients to be more proactive in managing their health.

A study by Kumar and Gupta (2020) found that patients who engage in online health communities tend to have a better understanding of their

medical conditions and are more active in adhering to recommended care. This indicates that social media can serve as a platform for sharing experiences and support among patients, thereby strengthening their social networks. Empowering patients with accurate and appropriate information, hospitals can enhance patient engagement levels and help them feel more responsible for their health. This is a crucial step towards improving overall health outcomes.

4.3. Enhancing Patient Engagement and Service Experience

Patient engagement is a key aspect of improving healthcare service experience. Social media provides an ideal platform for enhancing this engagement. Research by Gonzalez et al. (2020) indicates that high patient engagement can lead to increased patient satisfaction and better health outcomes. By using social media, hospitals can create spaces where patients can provide feedback, share experiences, and interact with healthcare providers.

Additionally, Sari (2020) noted that social media campaigns focusing on promoting specific services can increase the number of visits to hospitals. For instance, when the COVID-19 vaccination campaign was launched, hospitals that were active on social media reported a significant increase in vaccination registrations. This illustrates that social media functions not only as a communication tool but also as an effective marketing instrument for healthcare services.

Enhancing patient engagement through social media, hospitals can create a better service experience that is more responsive to patient needs. This is beneficial not only for patients but also for hospitals in building reputation and trust within the community.

4.4. Managing Crises and Improving Responsiveness

Social media also plays a pivotal role in crisis management within the healthcare sector. During emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitals with an active social media presence can provide rapid and accurate information to the public. Junaidi (2022) highlighted how Cipto Mangunkusumo Hospital successfully utilised social media to deliver timely updates and address public inquiries regarding COVID-19, which in turn helped alleviate panic and confusion within the community.

Nevertheless, challenges in crisis management via social media must also be acknowledged. Misinformation or inaccurate information can spread rapidly, undermining the hospital's communication efforts. Therefore, it is essential for hospitals to have a clear communication strategy and a team trained in managing crisis situations on social media.

Social media as a tool for crisis management, hospitals can enhance their responsiveness and provide necessary support to patients and the community. This is a vital step in building resilience within the healthcare system and improving public trust.

4.5. Building Stronger Relationships between Patients and Service Providers

Finally, social media can contribute to the development of stronger relationships between patients and healthcare providers. According to Bouchard & LaValley (2021), interactions occurring on social media can enhance relationships between patients and providers, as patients feel more connected and heard. This can create a more positive environment where patients feel comfortable sharing their concerns and questions.

One way to foster these relationships is by using social media to share patient success stories. When patients share their positive experiences on social media platforms, it not only provides recognition to the service providers but also inspires other patients to be more active in their healthcare. This creates a strong support community between patients and service providers. This is an important step towards creating a more inclusive and responsive healthcare system that meets patient needs.

5. CONCLUSION

In this study, it can be concluded that social media plays a crucial role in enhancing collaboration between hospitals and patients. By effectively utilising these platforms, hospitals are able to significantly boost patient engagement, provide improved health education, and foster stronger relationships with their communities. While there are certainly challenges and risks associated with the use of social media, hospitals can optimise the advantages it offers by adopting the right approach and implementing clear policies. The findings of this research indicate that, in order to navigate the increasingly digital landscape of healthcare in the future, hospitals must integrate social media into their communication strategies and patient engagement initiatives. This integration not only facilitates better interaction between healthcare providers and patients but also allows for a more informed and involved patient population. Therefore, it is essential for hospitals to recognise the potential of social media as a valuable tool in their overall strategy for delivering care and maintaining community relationships. By doing so, they can ensure that they remain relevant and effective in a rapidly evolving healthcare environment.

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