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Attitude Towards Health Information Privacy and Electronic Health Records Among Urban Adults

1. **Bashayr Khallaf Aldhafeeri, Medical Secretary**
2. **Aishah Fahhad Mana Aldhafeeri, Medical Secretary**
3. **Jawaher Fehaid Alanazi, Medical Secretary**
4. **Mohammed Saud Bardi Alanazi, Medical Secretary**

ABSTRACT

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is considering transitioning to an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system. This study argues for the importance of assessing public readiness to ensure the successful implementation and effectiveness of the EHR system in the country. A survey was conducted to gauge participants' concerns about the security of their health records; results showed that 40.5% expressed concern, and 38.8% were very concerned. Additionally, participants were asked to rate their level of trust in healthcare institutions in Saudi Arabia on a scale from 1 to 10, with 66.1% rating at level 5 or below.

Keywords: Health Information Technology, Electronic Health Records, developing countries, Manual Health Records, concerns, security, Health Information Exchange

INTRODUCTION

The Government Communication Center in the Hama region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has initiated efforts to enhance tourism promotion through the use of infographics on Twitter. This study focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of infographics in promoting tourism destinations, specifically in the Hama region. Infographics are visual representations of information that combine text, images, and graphics to convey messages effectively. In the context of tourism promotion, infographics can be powerful tools for capturing attention, highlighting key attractions, and engaging potential tourists.

The use of social media platforms like Twitter has become increasingly popular for destination marketing due to their wide reach and interactive nature. By leveraging infographics on Twitter, tourism authorities can showcase the unique features of the Hama region, including its cultural heritage, historical sites, natural landscapes, and recreational activities. These visual representations not only inform potential tourists but also create a visually compelling narrative that encourages them to explore and experience the destination.

This research paper aims to analyze the impact of using infographics on Twitter for tourism promotion in the Hama region. It will examine factors such as engagement metrics (likes, shares, comments), reach (number of views), and user feedback to assess the effectiveness of infographics in attracting tourists to the region. Additionally, the study will explore best practices and strategies for designing and sharing infographics on Twitter to maximize their promotional value.

METHODS

A descriptive cross-sectional study was undertaken involving urban and suburban adults . Convenient sampling was employed to recruit male and female participants aged 18 years and above. Data collection was conducted using an online questionnaire.

RESULTS

Among the 234 responses received, 227 were deemed adequately complete for analysis. Of these, only 27.3% expressed satisfaction with the existing health document maintenance systems . Concerns regarding the security of health records were notable, with 40.5% of respondents stating they were concerned and 38.8% very concerned. The majority (66.1%) rated their level of trust in health institutes as 5 or lower on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being the lowest level of trust and 10 the highest).

Regarding ownership of health records, 43.2% of respondents believed that patients, families, and doctors should share ownership. However, others expressed concerns or reluctance to share. A significant portion (60.8%) believed that computerization would reduce errors in handling health records. Concerning security, 42.7% considered electronic records more secure, while 40.1% believed they would be equally secure as the current manual system.

Regarding IT practices, 20.7% admitted to never using password protection, even for important documents. Concerns about unauthorized access during electronic data transfer were high, with 45.4% very concerned and 41% somewhat concerned. Interestingly, even those not using password protection expressed concern about unauthorized access during data transfer.

Opinions on electronic health record systems were generally positive, with 83.3% believing they would prevent data loss and 92.1% thinking they would improve care quality. Regarding record availability, 63.9% preferred their entire health record to be available electronically, while others preferred only a part.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate a generally positive and encouraging level of preparedness among the surveyed population regarding the future implementation of an electronic health records (EHR) framework. It is notable that these responses were collected before any public awareness campaigns or advertising about such a system had begun, suggesting intrinsic interest and readiness among the participants.

The high familiarity with computers and IT among the subjects, as expected in an online research context, is a positive indicator. However, it's important to note that this research focused on urban and suburban populations, which may not fully represent the broader IT literacy levels , where a significant portion of the population may not be as familiar with technology. Despite this limitation, the methodological approach is justified as the initial digitalization of the health system is likely to begin in urban settings, making this research relevant and providing valuable insights into the preparedness of local residents in these areas.

Further studies encompassing a more diverse range of demographics, including rural populations and those with varying levels of IT literacy, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the broader public's readiness for EHR implementation. Additionally, ongoing education and training programs will be essential to bridge any existing gaps in IT literacy and ensure the successful adoption of digital health systems across the country.

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