



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Facebook Users' Perceptions of Facebook Information Dissemination for Drug Abuse Prevention in Afghanistan

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ABSTRACT

The consumption of drugs remains a huge public health and social problem, particularly among young people. At the same time, the proliferation of social media has created new opportunities for the spread of health information and the promotion of public awareness. The study examined Facebook users' perception of Facebook as a source of information for preventing drug misuse in Afghanistan. The study adopted a quantitative research design using a well-structured online questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. Data were collected from 305 respondents through an online questionnaire using convenience sampling and were analyzed using SPSS. The questionnaire comprised demographic questions and twelve items to measure respondents' impressions of Facebook information dissemination on drug misuse prevention. The instrument demonstrated a high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.890). Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, normality assessment and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), including Welch's ANOVA where appropriate, were carried out. The results showed that the respondents generally considered Facebook a medium for providing credible information and for enhancing the public's awareness of drug misuse prevention. Participants perceived Facebook as a positive tool for transmission of preventive messages, awareness campaigns, information on the detrimental effects of drug misuse and preventive measures. There were no major statistical differences in the perceptions between the age groups, education levels, or daily Facebook use. The study found that Facebook is generally considered a good medium for delivering information on the prevention of drug misuse. Useful evidence for policymakers, public health organisations and media agencies who want to improve digital health communication and public awareness campaigns in Afghanistan is provided by the findings.

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Introduction

Drug abuse is a significant public health and social problem worldwide. Drugs misuse, their widespread availability and the social and economic implications emerging from them are important challenges facing many countries. Previous research have demonstrated that drug

misuse has negative consequences on personal health, and also results in criminality, family problems, unemployment and social instability (Ahmad et al., 2022). International institutions such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) stress that effective drug abuse

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prevention involves, among other things, raising public awareness, introducing public health campaigns, and encouraging healthy social participation of youth ([INCB, 2023](#); [WHO, 2024](#)).

Drug abuse and substance dependence continue to be a major public health problem in Afghanistan with serious health and social consequences every year ([World Health Organization, 2024](#)). Furthermore, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports that approximately 27,000 Afghans were classified as high-risk drug users by the close of 2023 ([UNDP & UNODC, 2023](#)).

Meanwhile, the fast growth of digital technology has changed patterns of communication across Afghanistan. According to [DataReportal \(2025\)](#), the number of internet users at the beginning of 2025 was roughly 13.2 million people which is about 30.5% of the national population. At the same time, about 4.05 million people were active social media users, or about 9.4% of the total population. Facebook is the primary social media site in Afghanistan, with roughly 4.05 million active users, making up the bulk of social media users in the country ([DataReportal, 2025](#)). Media platforms can have an important role in framing the perceptions, social behaviour, values, and attitudes of youth through continuous dissemination of information and social messages ([Miakhel, 2026](#)).

Moreover, drug misuse by youngsters has been connected with several types of criminal conduct such as kidnapping, armed robbery and other criminal actions ([Ahmad et al., 2022](#)). World Health Organization defines a drug to be any substance that when introduced into the human body produces harmful or undesirable effects on one or more physiological functions (WHO Expert **Problem Statement**

Young people in Afghanistan have taken to social media platforms, particularly Facebook, as a channel for communication and information sharing. [DataReportal \(2025\)](#) recorded that the number of internet users in Afghanistan at the start of 2025 was close to 13.2 million, representing about 30.5% of the country's population. Meanwhile, there were around 4.05 million active social media users, which was about 9.4% of the overall population. Facebook was the most popular social media platform with almost 4.05 million users in Afghanistan.

While Facebook is widely used, there is, however, little empirical evidence on how Facebook users in Afghanistan perceive the platform as a medium for disseminating information on drug misuse prevention. Drug misuse remains a major public health problem, especially among the youth, with both physical and mental health and social development consequences. Public awareness and access to correct health information have long been considered crucial components of drug misuse prevention initiatives.

While prior international research have indicated the value of social media for public health communication, there is limited empirical evidence on public perceptions of Facebook information dissemination for drug misuse prevention in

Committee on Drug Dependence, 1969). Likewise, [Stanikzai \(2014\)](#) considers drugs as any natural or manmade chemical compounds that cause harmful effects on a person's physical health, mental well-being, social life and economic condition resulting in adverse behavioural changes. Similarly, [Habibi \(2014\)](#) says that any chemical that has an adverse effect on one or more functions of the body after entering the body is a drug.

Recent worldwide research has shown that social media is a powerful tool for public health communication. [Naslund et al. \(2020\)](#) conducted a systematic review and found that social media platforms are effective in rapidly spreading public service announcements on mental health and in assisting individuals in locating pertinent support services and health resources. Social media has also become an integral part of modern life and can influence users' cognitive processes and perceptions, particularly among university students ([Aslami & Miakhel, 2025](#)). Similarly, the International Narcotics Control Board ([INCB, 2023](#)) proposes that countries and international organizations embrace social media platforms, especially Facebook, in increasing public awareness of drug abuse and strengthening prevention efforts through digital communication.

With the fast growing number of internet users and the widespread use of Facebook in Afghanistan, the platform has become a significant medium for health-related information, including drug abuse prevention messages. However, little empirical evidence exists on how Afghan facebook users' perceives Facebook as a source of information about drug abuse prevention. Thus, this study seeks to investigate facebook users' perceptions of information dissemination on Facebook for drug misuse prevention and to examine whether these impressions vary among chosen demographic categories.

Afghanistan. Therefore, there is a lack of evidence to comprehend the perception of Facebook-based information transmission by the Afghan public. This study addresses this gap in the literature by examining facebook users' perceptions of Facebook information dissemination for drug abuse prevention, and whether perceptions differ across selected demographic characteristics.

Significance of the Study

This study is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, Afghanistan has a young population, with a median age of around 17 years, and a growing number of young people are actively using Facebook and other social media platforms ([DataReportal, 2025](#)). Knowledge on public perceptions of information dissemination on Facebook can provide valuable insights on how digital communication is perceived as a source of information on drug abuse prevention.

Second, prior research has suggested that social media platforms may promote health communication by enhancing awareness, public participation, and access to health information ([Naslund et al., 2020](#); International Narcotics Control Board [\[INCB\], 2023](#)). Analysis of public perceptions of these communication efforts provides useful evidence for the evaluation of current information dissemination practices.

Third, Facebook may provide a relatively cheap and accessible platform to disseminate health information to large segments of the community, especially given the limited public health resources in Afghanistan. Understanding the perceptions of Facebook users on these information dissemination efforts can help public institutions, health organizations and media agencies to better understand users' perceptions and to inform the planning of future health communication campaigns.

Finally, there is a relative scarcity of empirical research on public perceptions of Facebook information dissemination for drug misuse prevention in Afghanistan. This study adds to the existing literature by giving empirical evidence regarding public perceptions of Facebook as a medium for information dissemination. The findings can guide the communication priorities of policymakers, inform the development of prevention messages by public health authorities based on the information needs and concerns reported by users, and improve the clarity, relevance, and accessibility of prevention-related content shared on Facebook by media organizations. These insights can inform the planning of more audience-centred drug misuse prevention communication initiatives in Afghanistan.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze facebook users' perception fo information dissemination for drug usage prevention in Afghanistan.
2. To examine public perceptions on the role of Facebook in disseminating information for raising awareness, shaping attitudes and garnering support for drug abuse prevention.
3. To investigate if the public perceptions of information dissemination through Facebook vary by demographic characteristics of respondents (age and educational level) and Facebook usage patterns(daily usage).

Research Questions

1. Public perceptions on Facebook information dissemination for drug misuse prevention in Afghanistan?
2. How do respondents consider the function of disseminating information on Facebook to increase awareness, shape attitudes, and help drug misuse prevention?
3. Do the respondents' age, level of education and daily use of Facebook affect the perception of the spread of information on Facebook?

Literature Review

In recent years, the function of social media in the dissemination of health information and promotion of preventative behaviors has attracted more and more attention. Previous research consistently indicate that Facebook and other social networking platforms can be successful in increasing public awareness, supporting health communication efforts, and influencing attitudes and behaviors related to drug misuse prevention.

[Rafique et al. \(2024\)](#) studied drug abuse awareness among 450 secondary school pupils in Islamabad, Pakistan. Their study showed that social media dramatically increased students' knowledge and awareness of the risks of drug usage, confirming the efficiency of digital tools in health education.

A similar study was conducted by [Ajiogu \(2025\)](#) using Facebook as a health communication platform among university students in Nigeria. The study found the prevalence of drug misuse was significantly reduced by exposure to Facebook awareness messaging. Reported drug use decreased from 35.5% to 12.5%. The findings show that Facebook can act as a useful communication medium for promoting healthy behaviors.

On the contrary, Omobolanle (2025) talked about the possible dangers of using social media excessively. The research observed a link between inappropriate and unmanaged social media use and drug abuse, and an increased cognitive involvement reduced this risk. These findings suggest that the positive effects of social media are mostly contingent upon the quality and content of the information that is consumed.

Social media also has wider public health value, as demonstrated in a number of studies. [Kim et al. \(2017\)](#) showed that big data from social media may be utilized to monitor conversations about drugs, spot emerging patterns, and inform evidence-based public health initiatives. Their findings show that internet communication platforms can provide useful information to politicians and health groups.

Similarly, [Njati et al. \(2022\)](#) also found peer-generated preventative messaging using Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp to be helpful in promoting good behavioural change among university students in Kenya. Similarly, [Buller et al. \(2019\)](#) found that social media campaigns were more effective than traditional media at drawing the attention of young people and encouraging preventive behaviors, especially when messages were repeated and users were actively engaged.

From a theoretical point of view, [Valente et al. \(2004\)](#) claimed that social networks affect individual health behaviors through interpersonal communication and social relationships. In support of this, [Lastun \(2013\)](#) observed that social network analysis offers a useful paradigm for understanding and preventing drug usage by studying how behaviors diffuse via social networks.

Previous research findings suggest that Facebook has great potential for raising public awareness, fostering good attitudes and supporting the prevention of drug usage by effectively disseminating information. However, most available research have focused on intervention programs, university students, or outside Afghanistan. There is less empirical evidence available about the public perception of Facebook information dissemination for drug usage prevention in Afghanistan. Therefore, this study addresses this research gap by investigating Afghan Facebook users' perceptions on the function of Facebook in the dissemination of information for drug usage prevention.

Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional research approach to investigate the public impression of the broadcast of Facebook information for drug misuse prevention in Afghanistan. Quantitative technique was regarded appropriate as it allows for systematic gathering and statistical analysis of numerical data in exploring the perspectives, attitudes and experiences of the respondents concerning the topic of the research.

Data were obtained using a structured questionnaire designed based on the aims of the study. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first piece gathered demographic data of respondents such as age, education level and Facebook usage patterns. The second section consisted of twelve Likert-scale items on the respondents' perceptions of Facebook's involvement in the dissemination of information for drug abuse prevention. The questionnaire was distributed online through Google Forms and was shared among Facebook users in different areas of Afghanistan.

The content validity of the instrument was established by reviewing the questionnaire by five experts in media, communication and research methodology. Their opinions and suggestions were taken into account in the final version of the questionnaire. The experts confirmed that the items in the questionnaire were relevant, straightforward and sufficiently representative of the aims and constructs of the study.

The study used a non-probability convenience sampling procedure. Data collection was performed in November 2025 through a structured online questionnaire developed by Google Forms and sent through WhatsApp groups and Facebook Messenger. Eligibility required participants to be Facebook users; the questionnaire specifically instructed non-

Facebook users not to participate. The respondents were from different provinces of Afghanistan although the names of the provinces are not recorded. The initial target sample size was 385 respondents calculated by the formula of Cochran. However, due to fewer participants in the data-collection period, the target was not reached. After excluding the incomplete responses, 305 valid questionnaires were included in the final analysis. The sample consisted of approximately 25 respondents per item of the questionnaire. The KMO value of .894 and a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($\chi^2 = 1547.514$, $df = 66$, $p < .001$) confirmed the suitability of the data for component extraction. However, given the smaller sample size than originally planned and the convenience sampling, the results are based on the perceptions of Facebook users that participated and cannot be generalised to the entire Afghan population.

The questionnaire was distributed online, therefore participation was entirely voluntary and a convenience sampling method was used. The final data set included only respondents who completed all items in the questionnaire.

Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 27). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations) were used to describe the demographic features of the respondents and their perceptions on Facebook information dissemination for drug misuse prevention. The internal consistency of the measuring scale was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis. We employed Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation as a data reduction method to explore the underlying structure of the questionnaire items. PCA is different from common-factor EFA. The goal of common-factor EFA is to find latent constructs that explain common variance among the observed variables. The suitability of the data for component extraction was tested using the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed to see if mean perception scores differ between age groups, educational level and categories of daily Facebook use. Homogeneity of variances was tested using Levene's test. Since this assumption was violated for the daily Facebook-use groups, Welch's ANOVA and the Brown-Forsythe test were also used as robust alternatives to evaluate the differences in the group means. All statistical tests were two-tailed and statistical significance was assessed at the 0.05 level.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was measured by Cronbach's Alpha. Reliability analysis The reliability analysis in Table 1, has shown a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.890, indicating excellent internal consistency among the twelve items of the questionnaire. This finding lends support to the high reliability of the measurement scale used to measure respondents' perceptions of Facebook information dissemination for drug abuse prevention.

Table 1. Reliability and Construct Validity of the Measurement Scale

Construct	Items	KMO	Bartlett's χ^2	df	Sig.	Variance Explained (%)	Cronbach's α
Public Perceptions of Facebook Information Dissemination for Drug Abuse Prevention	12	0.894	1547.514	66	< .001	56.47	0.890

Table 1 summarizes the results of reliability and construct validity analysis of the measurement scale employed in this investigation. The aggregate Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.890, which indicates excellent internal consistency of the twelve questionnaire items and confirms that the instrument was highly reliable for measuring respondents' impressions of Facebook information distribution for drug misuse prevention.

To further assess construct validity, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed using Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.894, indicating that the sample was highly appropriate for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 1547.514$, $df = 66$, $p < .001$), indicating that the correlation matrix was suitable for factor extraction. The analysis yielded two factors with eigenvalues greater than one, which accounted for 56.47% of the total variance. In addition, all the questionnaire items had acceptable factor loadings, giving sufficient evidence for the construct validity of the measurement scale.

These results overall suggest that the assessment instrument has good psychometric qualities, with high reliability and adequate construct validity. Thus, the questionnaire was deemed appropriate for measuring respondents' perceptions

of information dissemination on Facebook for drug abuse prevention and for the subsequent statistical analyses presented in this study.

Findings

This section provides the major findings of the study based on the statistical analysis of the collected data. Results are presented using descriptive statistics, normality assessment and comparison group analyses to summarize participants' perspectives on Facebook's involvement in the dissemination of information for drug usage prevention. The findings are discussed in relation to the study's research aims and queries which are to highlight public opinions of Facebook as a medium for providing drug misuse prevention information and to examine potential differences in these attitudes based on certain demographic factors. The results provide empirical support to the perceptions of respondents that Facebook is a platform for raising public awareness and dissemination of drug usage prevention information in Afghanistan.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Gender	Male	305	100.0
Age	18 years and below	65	21.3
	19–24 years	135	44.3
	25–29 years	69	22.6
	30 years and above	36	11.8
Educational Level	High School Graduate	43	14.1
	Bachelor's Degree	227	74.4
	Master's Degree	35	11.5
Facebook Usage	Yes	305	100.0
Daily Facebook Use	1–2 hours per day	182	59.7
	3–4 hours per day	53	17.4
	5–6 hours per day	29	9.5
	More than 7 hours per day	41	13.4

Demographic characteristics of study participants are shown in Table 2. A total of 305 persons participated in the study, and all participants (100%) were male.

The 19–24 age group was the most represented, making up 44.3% (*n* = 135) of the overall study participants. The next group was 25–29 years old (22.6%, *n* = 69), 18 years old and under (21.3%, *n* = 65), and 30 years old and above (11.8%, *n* = 36). These results show that the majority of the participants were in young adult life.

With regard to educational credentials, the majority of the participants (74.4%, *n* = 227) had a Bachelor's degree, 14.1% (*n* = 43) were high school graduates and 11.5% (*n* = 35) held a Master's degree. This means that the sample was mostly made up of people with college degrees.

All participants (100%, *n* = 305) reported that they used Facebook, which means that the entire study cohort consisted of Facebook users.

In terms of time spent on Facebook per day, the majority of the respondents (59.7%, *n* = 182) said that they use Facebook for 1–2 h each day. Moreover, 17.4% (*n* = 53) used Facebook for 3–4 hours per day, 13.4% (*n* = 41) reported using Facebook for more than seven hours per day, and 9.5% (*n* = 29) said they spent 5–6 hours on Facebook per day. The findings suggest that Facebook was highly used by the respondents with most of them reporting daily involvement.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Facebook Information Dissemination in Drug Abuse Prevention

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Facebook provides the public with reliable and credible information on drug abuse prevention.	305	1	5	3.91	.647
I feel that Facebook is an excellent communication platform for minimizing the problem of drug addiction	305	1	5	4.01	.669
Facebook's information dissemination messages increase public awareness of the harmful effects of drug abuse.	305	1	5	3.93	.722
Facebook publishes effective campaigns aimed at preventing the cultivation and production of illicit drugs.	305	1	5	3.81	.744
Public awareness videos and news posts shared on Facebook positively influence people's attitudes and behaviors toward drug abuse prevention.	305	2	5	3.96	.713
Facebook has strengthened anti-drug efforts by attracting the attention and engagement of young people.	305	1	5	3.82	.756
Anti-drug messages disseminated through Facebook pages and news groups are effectively communicated and contribute to drug abuse prevention.	305	2	5	3.86	.700
Government and media awareness messages disseminated through Facebook enhance public understanding of drug-related laws and regulations.	305	1	5	3.89	.664
Facebook users are able to report illegal drug-related activities through the platform.	305	1	5	3.84	.746
Facebook comment sections provide opportunities for people to exchange opinions and discuss drug abuse prevention.	305	1	5	3.78	.783
Through Facebook's information dissemination, I have learned new approaches and strategies for preventing drug abuse.	305	1	5	3.71	.809
Facebook's information dissemination has strengthened drug abuse prevention efforts by promoting recreation, sports, and other positive alternatives for young people.	305	1	5	3.89	.780

Descriptive statistics of respondents' opinions on the role of Facebook in spreading information for drug usage prevention are presented in Table 3. Overall, the 12 questionnaire items were all reported positive attitudes, with mean scores ranging from 3.71 to 4.01 on a five-point Likert scale.

The statement, "I feel that Facebook is an excellent communication platform for minimizing the problem of drug addiction" had the highest mean score ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.669$). This indicates that the participants, to a great extent, perceived Facebook as a suitable medium to communicate messages concerning the prevention of drug misuse. Similarly, participants had positive opinions on the impact of public awareness movies and news items shared on Facebook on attitudes towards drug abuse prevention ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 0.713$). The respondents agreed that Facebook communication on the spread of information helps to increase public awareness of the harmful effects of drug misuse ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 0.722$). They said that Facebook provides trustworthy and credible information on drug usage prevention ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.647$).

Participants reported positive views on government and media awareness campaigns on Facebook which increased public awareness on drug-related laws ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.664$). The same average score ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.780$) was obtained

with respect to the dissemination of drug abuse prevention information on the statement that Facebook promotes recreation, sports, and other positive options for youth.

Positive perceptions were found in the distribution of anti-drug messages through Facebook pages and news groups ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.700$), users' capability to report illegal drug-related activities on the platform ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.746$), Facebook's support for anti-drug awareness initiatives among youth ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.756$), and the advocacy of campaigns to prevent the cultivation and production of illegal drugs ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.744$).

The average scores of Facebook comment sections for a platform for discussing drug abuse prevention ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 0.783$) and acquiring new strategies for drug abuse prevention via Facebook information sharing ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 0.809$) were somewhat modest but affirmative.

Generally, all the mean ratings were above the mid-point of the five-point Likert scale (3.00), indicating mainly positive public perceptions of Facebook's contribution to information delivery for prevention of drug use. Furthermore, the standard deviation values (0.647-0.809) are quite moderate, indicating that the participants' replies are uniform enough for the questionnaire items.

Table 4: Summary of Normality Assessment

Test	Result	Decision
Kolmogorov–Smirnov	$p < .001$	Non-normal
Shapiro–Wilk	$p < .001$	Non-normal
Skewness	-1.488	Acceptable
Kurtosis	2.744	Acceptable
Sample Size	$N = 305$	Parametric tests appropriate

Figure 1. Normal Q-Q Plot of the Composite Variable

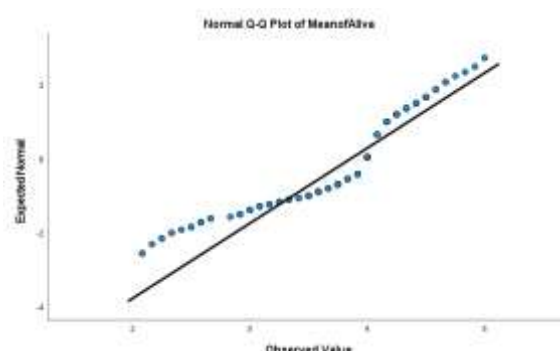
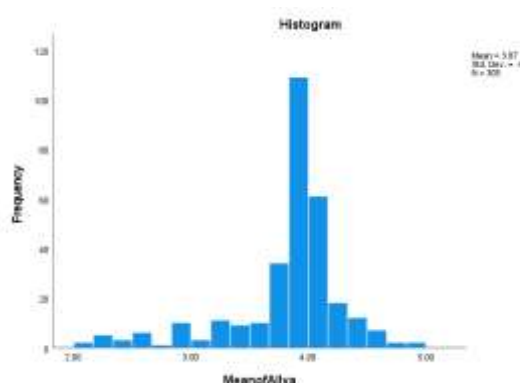


Figure 2. Histogram of the Composite Variable



The normal distribution of the composite variable (MeanofAllva) was examined using statistical and visual methods. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test (Kolmogorov–Smirnov = .253, $p < .001$) and the Shapiro–Wilk test (Shapiro–Wilk = .834, $p < .001$) were statistically significant, demonstrating that the data were not perfectly normally distributed. The histogram

showed a near bell shaped distribution, with a slight negative skew. The Normal Q – Q Plot showed only slight deviations from the reference line. In addition, the skewness value of -1.488 and kurtosis value of 2.744 were within the acceptable range for social science studies. Because of the large sample size ($N = 305$), the data were sufficiently normal to allow parametric statistics including Pearson correlations and multiple linear regression to be used.

Table 5. Assessment of Multiple Linear Regression Assumptions

Assumption	Diagnostic Test	Recommended Criterion	Obtained Value	Decision
Linearity	Scatterplot	Random linear pattern	Visual inspection	Satisfied
Multicollinearity	Tolerance	> 0.20	0.533	Satisfied
	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)	< 5.00	1.875	Satisfied
Normality of Residuals	Kolmogorov–Smirnov	$p > .05$	.200	Satisfied
	Shapiro–Wilk	$p > .05$	.205	Satisfied
Homoscedasticity	Scatterplot	Random distribution with constant variance	Visual inspection	Satisfied
Independence of Errors	Durbin–Watson	1.00–3.00	1.393	Satisfied
Influential Observations	Cook's Distance	< 1.00	0.091	Satisfied

The results in Table 4 reveal that all the assumptions for multiple linear regression were met. The findings showed no multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity or significant outliers. Additionally, the residuals were normally distributed and independence of errors was verified. So, the data were appropriate for the multiple linear regression analysis.

Table 6. One-Way ANOVA Results by Age Group

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.971	3	.324	1.351	.258
Within Groups	72.147	301	.240		
Total	73.118	304			

A one-way ANOVA was used to determine if there were differences in public perceptions of Facebook's role in providing information for drug abuse prevention across age demographics. Levene's test confirmed the assumption of homogeneity of variance ($p = .529$). No statistically significant differences were seen among age cohorts, $F(3, 301) = 1.351$, $p = .258$. The respondents' perceptions did not vary much among ages.

Table 7. One-Way ANOVA Results by Educational Level

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.564	2	.282	1.173	.311
Within Groups	72.554	302	.240		
Total	73.118	304			

To determine whether public impressions of Facebook's information dissemination for drug usage prevention changed by respondents' educational attainment, a one-way ANOVA was done. Levene's test showed that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met ($p = .601$). ANOVA results demonstrated no significant differences between participants with different educational backgrounds, $F(2, 302) = 1.173$, $p = .311$. Thus, there was little difference in the society's perception according to the educational attainment.

Table 8. Welch ANOVA Results by Daily Facebook Usage

Test	Statistic	df1	df2	p	Decision
Welch	2.155	3	86.223	.099	Not Significant

Levene's test found a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances ($p = .028$). Welch's ANOVA was therefore performed. There were no statistically significant differences in public perceptions with regard to Facebook's information dissemination for drug misuse prevention among the different categories of daily usage, Welch's $F(3, 86.223) = 2.155$, $p = .099$.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to explore social perceptions on the use of Facebook in spreading information for prevention of drug use in Afghanistan. The findings indicate that most of the participants saw Facebook as a good medium for providing reliable information and raising public awareness on drug misuse prevention. Participants had a favorable impression of Facebook's delivery of awareness messages, instructional materials, public service announcements, and information on the adverse effects of substance usage and preventive measures.

The results showed that participants perceived Facebook as an effective platform for communicating government and media awareness messages, supporting anti-drug campaigns, facilitating public discussion, and reporting illegal drug-related activities. Moreover, the respondents' perception did not statistically differ across the age groups, educational level, or the frequency of Facebook use, signifying that such positive perceptions were relatively comparable across different demographic groups.

The results suggest that Facebook users who participated in the study perceived Facebook as a useful media for the dissemination of information on drug abuse prevention. The findings provide empirical evidence that could help policymakers, public health organisations, media practitioners and other relevant stakeholders in designing more effective digital communication strategies and improving public awareness programs related to drug abuse prevention in Afghanistan. However, the results should not be generalised to the entire Afghan population since the 305 respondents were all males, and most had a bachelor's degree, and convenience sampling was used.

Discussion

The findings of the study indicate that the participants' subjective perceptions of Facebook as a platform for sharing information on drug use prevention in Afghanistan were rather positive. Average scores ranged from 3.71 to 4.01 on a five-point Likert scale, implying that Facebook was seen as an effective medium by the participants for dissemination of information on drug usage prevention, increasing public awareness and communicating prevention messages. However, these scores reflect the perception of the study respondents and not the efficacy of the Facebook in the prevention of drug abuse.

The statement on Facebook as an effective communication platform for reducing drug abuse received the highest mean score ($M=4.01$). This finding signifies respondents' perceptions, not actual efficacy, but it does imply that most of the participants found Facebook an appropriate medium for the diffusion of drug usage prevention material. Similarly, participants reported positive perceptions that Facebook awareness campaigns improve understanding of the adverse effects of substance use and that awareness films and news articles help improve attitudes towards drug addiction prevention. These results

are consistent with those of [Ajiogu \(2025\)](#) who suggested that health communication through Facebook was associated with increased awareness and more health conscious behavioral intentions among university students. These findings are consistent with those of [Ajiogu \(2025\)](#) and indicate that Facebook can be a useful channel for health-related awareness in the studied populations.

Participants also viewed Facebook as a reliable source for drug misuse prevention information. They agreed that awareness campaigns by the government and media on Facebook increase understanding of the law and prevention programs related to drugs among the public. The findings are consistent with the results of [Rafique et al. \(2024\)](#) that social media platforms can raise public knowledge and awareness of the risks of drug misuse.

Furthermore, the participants held a positive view of Facebook pages, news groups and awareness activities as channels for disseminating information linked to prevention. They also acknowledged Facebook's support for the development of recreational activities, sports and other positive opportunities for young people. These findings are mostly in line with the work of [Njati et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Buller et al. \(2019\)](#), who pointed out that social

media campaigns and human interaction can improve health promotion if preventative messages are sent consistently through trustworthy communication channels.

Although all survey items received positive participant responses, the somewhat lower mean score for learning new prevention strategies ($M = 3.71$) suggests that Facebook users may perceive room for improvement in the quality, diversity, and practical value of prevention-related material. This finding highlights the need for more in-depth, evidence-based and practical educational resources on Facebook.

These findings should be considered in light of previous research that has identified potential risks of social media. Omobolanle (2025) suggested that customers could be adversely affected by exposure to false or harmful web content. Therefore, any attempts that assure the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the information disseminated will contribute to the improvement of the public's perception of Facebook as an important channel of communication.

The findings of the current study support the opinion of [Kim et al. \(2017\)](#), [Valente et al. \(2004\)](#), and [Lastun \(2013\)](#) who argued the role of social media in improving health communication, increasing the spread of information, and encouraging public participation. This study contributes to the body of knowledge by offering empirical evidence on participating respondents' perceptions of Facebook's contribution to the dissemination of information for drug use prevention in Afghanistan.

The one-way ANOVA tests did not show statistically significant differences in respondents' perceptions based on age group, educational level, or categories of daily Facebook use. As such, the study did not find sufficient statistical evidence to indicate differences in mean perception scores between these groups. But the lack of statistically significant differences does not mean perceptions were equal across all groups.

Unlike some previous studies that examined intervention programs or experimental communication campaigns, the current study focused on the participants' experiences based on their daily contacts with Facebook in Afghanistan. Therefore, The study contextualises the evidence of how the participating respondents perceived Facebook as a channel of dissemination of drug-prevention information. The findings can assist policymakers, public health organizations, and media corporations in developing audience-centric digital communication strategies and improving future efforts in

drug misuse prevention. However, because all 305 respondents were male, most held a bachelor's degree, and convenience sampling was used, the findings should be interpreted in light of the sample characteristics and should not be generalized to the entire Afghan population.

Recommendations

The following suggestions are put forward based on the results of this research:

- Implement concentrated Facebook campaigns to increase public awareness on the prevention of drug misuse, with special emphasis on the youth. Government institutions and public health organisations should regularly publish prevention messages, short educational videos and practical information on the health and social consequences of drug misuse.
- Improve quality of education materials by providing credible, evidence-based and culturally appropriate information in films, info graphics and other digital awareness materials. Health professionals should review these materials before publication to ensure their accuracy and reliability.
- To promote public participation through constructive discussions, community involvement and exchange of experiences in the area of drug misuse prevention through Facebook. Facebook page administrators should organize question-and-answer sessions, moderate discussions, and respond to users' questions by sharing verified prevention information.
- Promote inter-agency collaboration between government authorities, public health organizations, academic institutions, media entities and policymakers to create integrated digital messaging campaigns on substance misuse prevention. These stakeholders should coordinate campaign planning, share verified educational resources, and assign clear responsibilities for preparing and distributing prevention messages.
- Consistently share prevention messages on official Facebook accounts and authenticated media outlets that are credible and evidence-based, to ensure the reliability and precision of digital information. Media organizations and page administrators should verify drug-related claims before publication and promptly correct misleading information.

- Further studies are encouraged that use longitudinal, analytical or experimental study designs to analyze the effectiveness of information dissemination on Facebook and its effect on drug abuse prevention outcomes. Future researchers should also include more diverse samples, including women and participants from different educational and geographical backgrounds, to improve the generalizability of findings.

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