

## Are Students' Being Distracted Drivers

**Mini-Abstract:** The life of a nursing student can be very fast paced. Trying to keep up with friends and family while studying can be a challenge. Learn how frequently students are driving distracted, are on social media, and have personal devotions.

**Background:** Nursing school can be a very stressful time for students. They are learning a vast amount of new content and trying to synthesize this information and put it into their nursing practice. Many learners are juggling school, work, families, children, and spouses to finish their bachelor's degree. These busy lives can lead to being distracted while they are driving. One study found that students who had higher levels of impulsivity were inclined to be texting while driving (Hayashi, Rivera, Modico, Foreman, & Wirth, 2017). In order to combat distracted driving, law enforcement has put laws into effect. Texting while driving laws have been found to be beneficial and decrease texting behaviors (Qiao & Bell, 2016). Some may not be texting, they may just be check to see what their friends are doing. Social media can be good for connecting to friends and family however, there can be many negative aspects also. Students who spent eight or more hours a day had higher levels of anxiety (Kurtuncu, 2014). Most people keep their cell phones near them to be able to respond to messages quickly.. University students felt a strong urge to reply to messages quickly and they were most comfortable when their cell phones were lying beside them at night (Vorderer, Krömer, & Schneider, 2016).

Students in the RN to BSN completion program participated in this study. The purpose of this study explored how frequently students texted while driving, time spent on social media, and frequency of personal devotions.

**Methods.** An exploratory mixed method design was utilized. Participants voluntarily completed an online survey which was emailed to the students. Students completed the online survey on their smartphones or computers. The online survey instrument was created in Google Forms and the data populated a Google Sheet. Descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages were conducted. For the qualitative data descriptive thematic analyses were conducted with constant comparison methods.

**Results:** Of the 147 participants 59% self-reported texting while driving in the past 7 days. When asked about social media frequency, 78% reported spending 1 - 4 hours/day. Over one-third (37%) of the students self-reported having their personal devotions 4 - 7 days/week. The findings from this study will add to the body of knowledge currently available on distracted driving.

**Implications.** Nurse educators not only train the nursing student in the art and science of nursing, but also play a role in developing and supporting the mind, body and soul of the student through cultivating future personal and professional practices. It is the Christian educator's responsibility to train the nurses of tomorrow, but predominantly to connect the students to the source of unlimited strength and comfort -Jesus Christ. These students are the future health care

providers and it is our responsibility to equip them with necessary tools to be effective Christian nurses. Students' need to be inspired to spend quality time in developing a God-centered relationship through daily personal devotions, as well as devoting ample time to academic studies, and significantly less time on social media.

#### References

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