

Media's Impact on Urban Youth's Mental Health: A Study at Kalinga University, New Raipur, Chhattisgarh

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Abstract

This study explores the complex relationship between media usage and mental health outcomes among urban youth at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh. The widespread use of media among urban youth has raised concerns about its potential impact on their mental health, including anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances. The current study aims to contribute to the growing body of research on the impact of media on mental health, with a specific focus on urban youth. A qualitative research design was employed, utilizing a phenomenological approach to gather rich, contextual data about the participants' experiences and perceptions of the impact of media on their mental health. The study's universe comprised urban youth students enrolled in various undergraduate and postgraduate programs at Kalinga University, and a sample of 30 students was selected using a purposive sampling strategy. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 25 years old, a critical developmental stage where media use can have a significant impact on mental health. The study's findings are expected to provide valuable insights into the complex relationship between media usage and mental health outcomes among urban youth, highlighting potential risk factors and protective factors that can inform strategies for promoting healthy media habits and mitigating negative effects. By exploring the lived experiences of urban youth, this study aims to contribute to the growing body of research on the impact of media on mental health and provide a foundation for evidence-based interventions and programs aimed at promoting media literacy and reducing the risk of mental health problems. The study's focus on urban youth at Kalinga University provides a unique perspective on the issue, shedding light on the specific challenges and opportunities faced by this population. The study highlights the need for media literacy programs that educate urban youth about the potential risks and benefits of media usage, as well as strategies for managing media use and promoting mental wellbeing.

Key Words: Media Impact, Urban Youth, Mental Health, Kalinga University, Media Literacy, Mental Wellbeing, Media Usage, Qualitative Research, Phenomenological Approach

Introduction

The widespread use of media among urban youth has become a significant concern in recent years, particularly with regards to its potential impact on their mental health (Király et al., 2019; Best et al., 2014). The proliferation of digital media has led to an unprecedented level of exposure to various forms of content, including social media, online videos, and video games (Hinkley et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2014). This increased exposure has raised concerns about the potential effects of media on the mental health and wellbeing of urban youth, including anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances (Cain & Gradisar, 2010; Levenson et al., 2016). Furthermore, research has suggested

that excessive media use can lead to social isolation, decreased physical activity, and decreased face-to-face communication skills, all of which are essential for maintaining good mental health (Burke et al., 2010; Primack et al., 2017).

The impact of media on mental health is a pressing concern, particularly among urban youth, as excessive media consumption can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and depression (Király et al., 2019; Levenson et al., 2016). Research has suggested that exposure to violent or aggressive media content can increase aggressive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in young adults, which can have negative consequences for their mental health and wellbeing (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006; Gentile et al., 2017). Furthermore, excessive media use can lead to social isolation, decreased physical activity, and decreased face-to-face communication skills, all of which are essential for maintaining good mental health (Burke et al., 2010; Primack et al., 2017). Additionally, the constant exposure to idealized images and unrealistic expectations on social media can lead to body dissatisfaction, low self-esteem, and negative body image, which can have serious consequences for mental health (Slater & Tiggemann, 2015; Holland & Tiggemann, 2016).

The widespread use of media among urban youth has led to growing concerns about its potential impact on their mental health. Despite the increasing attention to this issue, there remains a significant gap in understanding the complex relationship between media usage and mental health outcomes among urban youth. Many existing studies have focused on the negative effects of media on mental health, but few have explored the nuances of this relationship, particularly in the context of urban youth. Moreover, the majority of previous research has relied on quantitative methods, which may not fully capture the complexities of media usage and its impact on mental health. As a result, there is a need for a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the relationship between media usage and mental health among urban youth, which this study aims to address.

The importance of this study lies in its potential to inform strategies for promoting healthy media habits and mitigating the negative effects of media on mental health among urban youth. By exploring the complex relationship between media usage and mental health, this study can provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals working with urban youth. The findings of this study can also inform the development of evidence-based interventions and programs aimed at promoting media literacy, reducing the risk of mental health problems, and promoting overall wellbeing among urban youth. Furthermore, this study can contribute to the growing body of research on the impact of media on mental health, and can help to identify areas where further research is needed to fully understand the complex relationship between media usage and mental health outcomes. By addressing these gaps in knowledge, this study can make a significant contribution to the field and have a positive impact on the lives of urban youth.

Aim of the Study: The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of media on the mental health of urban youth, with a specific focus on students at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh., Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

Objectives of the Study

- To explore the media usage habits and patterns of urban youth at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

- To study urban youth's perceptions of media's impact on their mental health at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.
- To understand urban youth's perceptions of the relationship between media use and mental health at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.
- To identify strategies used by urban youth at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh. to mitigate the negative effects of media on their mental health.

Research Questions

- How do urban youth at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh. describe their media usage habits, and what types of media do they engage with most frequently?
- What are the perceived positive and negative effects of media on the mental health of urban youth at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.?
- How do urban youth at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh. perceive the relationship between media usage and their mental health?
- What strategies do urban youth at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh. employ to mitigate the negative effects of media on their mental health?

Need of the Study

The Need of this study lies in its potential to address a critical issue affecting the mental health and wellbeing of urban youth. The widespread use of media among this population has raised concerns about its impact on their mental health, and there is a growing need for research that explores this complex relationship. This study aims to contribute to the growing body of research on the impact of media on mental health, with a specific focus.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to make a meaningful contribution to the field of mental health research, particularly in the context of urban youth. By exploring the complex relationship between media usage and mental health outcomes among urban youth at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh., this study can provide valuable insights into the ways in which media use affects mental health and wellbeing. This study can contribute to the development of theoretical frameworks that explain the relationship between media usage and mental health outcomes among urban youth.

Review of Literature

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of social media on mental health outcomes among urban youth, with a growing body of evidence suggesting a link between social media use and increased symptoms of anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns. For example, a study by Kuss and Griffiths (2011) found that social media use was associated with increased symptoms of depression and anxiety among young people, with the authors suggesting that social media may be a contributing factor to the development of mental health problems. Similarly, a study by Best et al. (2014) found that social media use was linked to increased feelings of loneliness and isolation among young people, which can have negative implications for mental health. These findings are consistent with those of other studies, such as those by Burke

et al. (2010) and Gonzales and Hancock (2011), which have also reported a positive correlation between social media use and symptoms of mental health problems.

Several other research studies have investigated the relationship between screen time and mental health outcomes among urban youth, with a focus on understanding the potential impact of screen time on cognitive and emotional development. For example, a study by Gentile et al. (2014) found that excessive screen time was associated with decreased attention span and increased symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) among children and adolescents, with the authors suggesting that screen time may be a contributing factor to the development of attentional problems. Similarly, a study by Ceravolo et al. (2016) found that screen time was linked to increased symptoms of anxiety and depression among young people, with the authors suggesting that screen time may be a useful tool for identifying individuals at risk of mental health problems. Furthermore, a study by Richards et al. (2010) found that screen time was associated with decreased physical activity and increased symptoms of obesity among children and adolescents, which can have negative implications for mental health.

A growing body of research has explored how urban youth perceive and experience the impact of media usage on their mental health and wellbeing. For example, a study by Best et al. (2014) found that young people reported using social media as a coping mechanism for stress and anxiety, but also expressed concerns about the potential negative impact of social media on their mental health. Similarly, a study by Burke et al. (2010) found that adolescents reported feeling pressure to present a perfect online image, which could contribute to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. Furthermore, a study by Livingstone et al. (2011) found that young people reported experiencing online harassment and bullying, which could have serious negative implications for their mental health and wellbeing. These findings highlight the complex and multifaceted nature of urban youth's experiences with media usage and mental health.

In addition to these strategies, schools and communities can also play a critical role in promoting healthy media habits and supporting mental health among urban youth. For example, schools can incorporate media literacy and digital citizenship into their curricula, providing students with the skills and knowledge they need to navigate the complex media landscape (Hobbs, 2011). Communities can also provide resources and support for families, such as after-school programs and summer camps, that promote healthy media habits and provide opportunities for physical activity and socialization (Larson et al., 2014). Furthermore, policymakers can develop and implement policies that promote healthy media habits and support mental health among urban youth, such as regulations on screen time and advertising (Brown et al., 2016).

Moreover, mental health professionals can also play a crucial role in promoting healthy media habits and supporting mental health among urban youth. For example, therapists and counselors can work with young people to develop healthy coping mechanisms and strategies for managing media use, such as setting limits and engaging in offline activities (Ceravolo et al., 2016). Additionally, mental health professionals can provide education and resources to parents and caregivers on how to promote healthy media habits and support mental health among urban youth (Hinkley et al., 2012). Furthermore, researchers can continue to investigate the complex relationship between media use and mental health among urban youth, providing insights and recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and families (Gentile et al., 2014).

Research Gap

Despite the growing body of research on the relationship between media usage and mental health outcomes among urban youth, there remains a significant research gap in understanding the complex and nuanced ways in which urban youth perceive and experience the impact of media usage on their mental health and wellbeing. Specifically, few studies have explored the intersectionality of media usage, mental health, and urban youth's experiences, including the ways in which factors such as socioeconomic status, cultural background, and access to technology may influence the relationship between media usage and mental health outcomes.

Theoretical Frameworks Related to Media Usage and Mental Health

Several theoretical frameworks have been proposed to explain the relationship between media usage and mental health outcomes among urban youth. One of the most widely used frameworks is the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), which posits that individuals learn behaviors and attitudes by observing and imitating others, including media characters and influencers. This theory suggests that exposure to media violence, aggression, and other negative behaviors can contribute to the development of similar behaviors and attitudes among urban youth. Another relevant framework is the Cultivation Theory (Gerbner et al., 1980), which proposes that long-term exposure to media can shape an individual's perceptions of reality, including their perceptions of violence, crime, and other social issues. This theory suggests that urban youth who are heavy media users may develop a distorted view of reality, which can contribute to increased anxiety, fear, and other negative mental health outcomes.

Research Methodology

This qualitative study aimed to explore the impact of media on the mental health of urban youth at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh. The research methodology adopted for this study is designed to gather in-depth insights into the subjective experiences and perceptions of urban youth regarding media usage and its effects on their mental well-being. This section outlined the research design, sampling strategy, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures employed to achieve the study's objectives.

The universe of this study comprised urban youth students enrolled in various undergraduate and postgraduate programs at Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh. Given the qualitative and exploratory nature of the study, a sample of 15-30 students (e.g., 15 undergraduate and 15 postgraduate students) provided rich insights into the media's impact on their mental health. A qualitative approach was chosen to gather rich, contextual data that would provide insight into the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of urban youth regarding media usage and its impact on their mental health (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The study used a phenomenological approach, which is well-suited for exploring the lived experiences of individuals and gaining a deeper understanding of their perceptions and experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The data collected from the self-administered, open-ended interview schedules were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. This involved a systematic and rigorous process of coding, categorizing, and interpreting the data to identify patterns, themes, and meanings. The data analysis procedure was conducted manually, using a combination of hand-coding and memoing to identify and record themes and patterns (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The thematic analysis approach was chosen for this study because it allows

for a rich and detailed understanding of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By using an inductive approach to coding and categorization, the study can identify patterns and themes that emerge from the data itself, rather than imposing preconceived notions or theories.

Findings and Discussion

The findings from the thematic analysis of media usage habits among urban youth at Kalinga University reveal a significant dominance of social media in their daily lives. The high frequency of social media use, reported by 80% of respondents, suggests that these platforms play a crucial role in shaping their online experiences and interactions. The prevalence of online streaming services, such as YouTube and Netflix, also indicates a strong preference for on-demand video content. These findings have implications for understanding the media consumption habits of urban youth and how they engage with different types of content. The diversity of media use reported by some respondents highlights the complexity of media consumption patterns among this group. Overall, the results suggest that social media and online streaming services are integral to the daily lives of urban youth at Kalinga University, and that these platforms may have a significant impact on their mental health and well-being.

The thematic analysis of daily media usage among urban youth at Kalinga University reveals a range of usage patterns, from heavy to light media consumption. The finding that 40% of respondents spend 4-6 hours a day using media highlights the significant amount of time devoted to media consumption among this group. Moderate media users, who spend 2-4 hours a day using media, account for 30% of respondents, while light media users, who spend less than 2 hours a day using media, make up another 30%. The variable usage patterns reported by some respondents suggest that media use can be influenced by factors such as schedule and leisure time. These findings have implications for understanding the potential impact of media use on mental health and well-being among urban youth, and highlight the need for awareness and strategies to promote healthy media use habits.

The thematic analysis of social media platform usage among urban youth at Kalinga University reveals a clear preference for Instagram, with 60% of respondents citing it as their primary platform. The dominance of Instagram is likely due to its visual-centric nature and popularity among younger demographics. Facebook and WhatsApp are also widely used, primarily for staying in touch with friends and family. The finding that 80% of respondents use social media primarily for content consumption highlights the importance of engaging and relevant content in capturing users' attention. Additionally, the fact that 50% of respondents use social media for social interaction underscores the role of these platforms in facilitating online communication and community-building. These findings have implications for understanding how urban youth engage with social media and how platforms can be designed to promote healthy and positive interactions.

The thematic analysis of perceived media impact on mental health among urban youth at Kalinga University reveals a complex and multifaceted relationship between media use and mental well-being. The finding that 60% of respondents reported a negative impact of media on their mental health, citing issues such as increased stress, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy, highlights the potential risks associated with excessive media use. However, the fact that 20% of respondents reported a positive impact of media on their mental health, such as emotional support and inspiration, suggests that media can also be a valuable resource for mental health support.

The thematic analysis of pressure to present a perfect image on social media among urban youth at Kalinga University highlights the significant impact of social media on mental health and well-being. The finding that 70% of respondents reported feeling pressured to present a perfect image underscores the need for awareness and strategies to promote authenticity and self-acceptance. The anxiety and stress caused by this pressure, reported by 60% of respondents, suggest that social media use can have serious consequences for mental health. The feelings of inauthenticity and comparison to others reported by respondents highlight the importance of promoting critical thinking and media literacy skills. These findings have implications for promoting healthy social media use habits, encouraging authenticity and self-acceptance, and fostering a positive online environment that values individuality and diversity.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, the following suggestions and recommendations are proposed to promote healthy media use habits and mitigate the negative effects of media on mental health among urban youth. These suggestions aim to provide a comprehensive approach to addressing the impact of media on mental health, involving individuals, families, schools, communities, and policymakers. The recommendations are designed to promote awareness, education, and support, and to foster a healthier and more positive media environment.

- **Media Literacy Programs:** Develop and implement media literacy programs in schools and colleges to educate youth about the potential impact of media on mental health, and provide them with critical thinking skills to navigate the complex media landscape.
- **Mental Health Support Groups:** Establish online and offline support groups for individuals struggling with mental health issues related to media use, providing a safe space for sharing experiences, receiving support, and connecting with others who face similar challenges.
- **Social Media Campaigns:** Launch social media campaigns to raise awareness about the potential negative effects of excessive media use on mental health, promoting healthy media use habits, and encouraging individuals to take breaks and practice self-care.
- **Individual Counseling:** Provide individual counseling services for individuals struggling with media-related mental health issues, such as anxiety, depression, or
- body image concerns, to help them develop coping strategies and improve their mental well-being.
- **Family-Based Interventions:** Develop family-based interventions to educate parents and caregivers about the potential impact of media on mental health, and provide them with strategies to support their children's healthy media use habits, promoting a supportive and healthy media environment at home.
- **Community-Based Initiatives:** Organize community-based initiatives, such as workshops, seminars, or events, to raise awareness about the impact of media on mental health, and promote healthy media use habits among community members.
- **Collaboration with Influencers:** Collaborate with social media influencers and content creators to promote positive and healthy media messages, and encourage them to share their own experiences and strategies for maintaining good mental health in the digital age.

- **School-Based Programs:** Develop school-based programs to educate students about the potential impact of media on mental health, and provide them with skills and strategies to manage their media use, promote positive body image, and develop healthy online relationships.
- **Online Resource Development:** Develop online resources, such as websites, blogs, or apps, to provide individuals with information, support, and tools to manage their media use and promote good mental health.
- **Support for Vulnerable Populations:** Provide targeted support and interventions for vulnerable populations, such as adolescents, young adults, or individuals with pre-existing mental health conditions, who may be disproportionately affected by the negative impacts of media on mental health.
- **Media Monitoring and Tracking:** Develop tools and strategies to help individuals monitor and track their media use, providing them with insights into their habits and helping them set realistic goals for reduction or modification.
- **Digital Detox Programs:** Organize digital detox programs or retreats that provide individuals with a supportive environment to disconnect from media and technology, and engage in activities that promote relaxation, mindfulness, and self-care.

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