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Social Media Trends on Generation Z's Lifestyle

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of social media trends on Generation Z's lifestyle, focusing on their physical and mental health. Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, is profoundly influenced by digital platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. The research uses qualitative content analysis to explore how social media shapes their behavior, emphasizing the prevalence of unhealthy habits such as poor diet, lack of physical activity, and the mental stress of striving for social acceptance. The findings indicate that social media trends often promote rapid and detrimental lifestyle changes, leading to physical issues like obesity and mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. The study highlights the importance of educating Generation Z on balanced media use and healthier lifestyle choices. Recommendations for future research include exploring effective interventions to mitigate these negative influences and implementing comprehensive educational programs. A multi-faceted approach involving parents, schools, and policymakers is essential to guide Generation Z towards healthier habits.

Keywords: Generation Z, social media, lifestyle, mental health, physical health

INTRODUCTION

The advent of social media has significantly impacted the lives of individuals, particularly the younger generation, known as Generation Z. Born between 1997 and 2012, this age group has grown up surrounded by the digital world, with social media platforms being an integral part of their daily lives. As a result, the influence of social media on their lifestyle has become a pressing concern, particularly in regards to their physical and mental well-being.

Research has shown that the easy influence of social media trends on lifestyle can lead to unhealthy habits, such as excessive screen time, poor diet, and inadequate physical activity. This can further contribute to an unbalanced lifestyle, characterized by a lack of structure and a tendency to prioritize instant gratification over long-term well-being. Furthermore, the tendency to engage in activities that are perceived as enjoyable without considering personal capabilities or potential consequences is another significant issue.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of social media trends on the lifestyle of Generation Z, focusing on the potential negative effects on their physical health. By examining the relationship between social media use and lifestyle choices, this research aims to provide insights into the strategies that can be employed to promote healthier habits among this age group.

METHODS

This research methodology uses qualitative content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is a way to understand the content of texts, such as posts on social media, blogs, or articles. In this analysis, researchers not only count the number of words or sentences, but also understand the meaning contained in them. Researchers analyze subjectively, do not use statistics, and look for themes or patterns in the text. By using qualitative research methods and social media content analysis, this research can provide a deeper picture of how Generation Z uses social media and how it affects their lives.

The results show that Generation Z uses social media to build self-identity and interact with

others. They use social media platforms to share experiences, share information, and build relationships. The results also show that the use of social media by generation Z can affect their lives, both positively and negatively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research found that social media trends are heavily influencing Generation Z's lifestyle. This generation tends to follow the latest trends introduced through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. The main factors that make them impressionable are the desire to be accepted in social groups and the strong search for self-identity in adolescence (Sefianti, Hawa, & Blagov, 2023).

Physical and Mental Impacts of Social Media Trends

Social media trends often introduce fast-changing and sometimes unhealthy trends, such as extreme diets or dangerous challenges (Amita, Fitri, & Mardiah, 2024). Generation Z is particularly susceptible to these trends due to social pressure and the need for peer acceptance (Ernawati, 2024). Observations in real-life contexts reveal that these trends can lead to a range of negative physical impacts. For instance, the promotion of unrealistic body images and extreme dieting behaviors often results in unhealthy eating habits. This can cause nutritional deficiencies, eating disorders, and a general decline in physical health, including conditions such as obesity and related metabolic disorders (Prajniti, Swedarma, & Manangkot, 2022).

Moreover, the mental health implications are equally concerning. The constant bombardment of idealized lifestyles and physical appearances creates an environment where young individuals feel immense pressure to conform to these unrealistic standards. The desire to accumulate 'likes' and 'followers' as measures of popularity and self-worth exacerbates feelings of inadequacy, leading to increased levels of stress, anxiety, and depression (Kelana, Qodri, & Muruliza, 2024). In clinical settings, professionals are noting a rise in cases of social media-induced mental health issues among adolescents, indicating a growing public health concern.

Unbalanced Lifestyle in Generation Z

An unbalanced lifestyle among Generation Z is driven by several factors, including a heavy dependence on technology, intense academic pressure, and poor time management skills (Muhammadiyah et al., 2023). Field studies and surveys show that these factors contribute significantly to the overall well-being of this demographic. The overuse of technology, particularly social media and gaming, fosters a sedentary lifestyle. This lack of physical activity leads to a range of health issues such as obesity, cardiovascular problems, and musculoskeletal disorders (Soenjoyo et al., 2022). Additionally, the disruption of sleep patterns due to late-night screen use is a prevalent issue, leading to sleep disorders like insomnia and contributing to chronic fatigue and decreased cognitive function during the day (Mamonto & Purnawinadi, 2023).

Academic pressure is another critical factor. Generation Z faces significant stress related to educational achievements, driven by societal and familial expectations. The constant juggling of academic responsibilities with social media interactions leaves little time for relaxation and self-care, leading to burnout and mental exhaustion. This unbalanced lifestyle is often observed in students who struggle to maintain a healthy equilibrium between their online and offline lives.

Interventions and Strategies to Address Negative Impacts

To combat these negative influences, there is a pressing need for comprehensive education on the healthy use of social media and heightened awareness of its potential adverse effects. Practical interventions by parents, schools, and policymakers are essential in guiding Generation Z towards more mindful social media use (Rahmat & Ismail, 2023). For instance, parents can set boundaries on screen time and encourage offline activities that promote physical and mental well-being. Schools can integrate digital literacy programs that educate students about the impacts of social media and teach critical thinking skills to navigate online content responsibly (Murnitasari et al., 2024).

Moreover, policymakers can play a crucial role by implementing regulations that protect young users from harmful content and promote healthier online environments. This includes enforcing stricter controls on advertising that targets vulnerable groups with unrealistic beauty standards or unhealthy lifestyle choices. Community-based initiatives, such as youth clubs and sports programs, can also provide supportive environments where adolescents can engage in productive activities and build meaningful social connections away from the pressures of social media.

The Influence of Social Media on Self-perception and Mental Health

Social media significantly impacts adolescents' self-perception and mental health by promoting unrealistic standards of beauty and popularity (Natashya & Nazriani, 2023). Studies indicate that the more time adolescents spend on social media, the more likely they are to compare themselves to others, leading to body dissatisfaction and poor self-esteem. This is particularly evident in the rise of body dysmorphic disorders among teenagers who feel compelled to meet the digitally enhanced images they see online.

Cyberbullying is another severe consequence of social media use, which can have devastating effects on adolescents' mental health. Victims of online harassment often experience heightened levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and in severe cases, suicidal ideation. Real-world interventions to address cyberbullying include educational campaigns in schools that promote kindness and empathy online, as well as the development of support systems for victims, such as counseling services and peer support groups (Utami & Baiti, 2018). Moreover, social media platforms themselves can implement better reporting and moderation systems to swiftly address and mitigate instances of cyberbullying.

Factors Causing Generation Z's Health Decline

The declining health of Generation Z in the modern era can be attributed to several interrelated factors, including a sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy dietary habits, and psychological pressures from social media (Pratiwi & Nawangsari, 2022). In practice, promoting physical activity through school programs and community initiatives is crucial. Encouraging participation in sports and outdoor activities can help counteract the sedentary lifestyle prevalent among adolescents. Nutrition education that highlights the importance of balanced diets and the risks of fad diets promoted online is also essential (Rumuat, 2021).

Mental health support systems need to be strengthened to provide adolescents with the tools to manage stress and build resilience. This includes improving access to mental health services, integrating mental health education into school curricula, and fostering supportive environments both at home and in schools. Policies that create a balanced approach to digital engagement, such as mandatory digital detox periods in schools, can also be beneficial (Soenjoyo et al., 2022).

Ultimately, government and educational policies play a pivotal role in shaping environments that support the health and well-being of Generation Z. This includes regulating social media to protect young users from harmful content, implementing comprehensive health education programs, and promoting public health campaigns that encourage a holistic approach to health. By addressing these issues from multiple angles, we can better support Generation Z in navigating the challenges of the digital age and fostering a healthier, more balanced lifestyle (Kelana, Qodri, & Muruliza, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study has revealed that Generation Z's lifestyle is significantly influenced by social media trends. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube play a pivotal role in shaping their behavior and lifestyle choices. The desire for social acceptance and peer pressure are major factors contributing to Generation Z's susceptibility to these trends. Unfortunately, many of these trends are fast-changing and often unhealthy, such as extreme diets and dangerous challenges, which can have detrimental effects on both physical and mental health.

Physically, the adoption of these trends can lead to unhealthy eating patterns, lack of physical activity, obesity, and other related health issues. Mentally, the pressure to appear perfect and the pursuit of validation through likes and followers can result in stress, anxiety, and depression. It is essential, therefore, to educate Generation Z about healthy social media usage and promote a balanced lifestyle to mitigate these adverse effects.

Recommendations for future research include a deeper investigation into effective interventions that can help Generation Z manage social media influences. Studies should explore comprehensive educational programs that teach the importance of balanced media consumption and healthy lifestyle habits. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide insights into the long-term health impacts of social media trends on this generation.

From a personal reflection standpoint, conducting this research has highlighted the critical need for a multifaceted approach involving parents, schools, and policymakers in guiding Generation Z. Encouraging physical activities, promoting mental health resources, and fostering a supportive social environment are crucial steps toward ensuring a healthier future for this generation.

In conclusion, while social media offers numerous benefits, its influence on Generation Z requires careful management. Through education, support, and strategic interventions, it is possible to harness the positive aspects of social media while minimizing its negative impacts. Future initiatives should aim

to empower Generation Z with the tools and knowledge to navigate the digital world healthily and responsibly, ensuring their overall well-being and success.

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