Bedales Psychology Newsletter

Welcome

Hello and welcome to the fourth edition of the Psychology Newsletter! This is a newsletter made for anyone interested in anyone interested in the human mind and behaviour, not just psychology students.

In this issue we will be about the effect of phones on mental health and cyberopsychology.

We hope you enjoy it!

Effect of Phones on Mental Heath

Lauren MacMillan

In the modern day era we are constantly being told that smartphones are ruining our mental health and that they are the cause for the sudden increase in mental health issues. But is this actually true?

A majority of the information about phones and mental health is about the bad influences of social media and phone addiction. It is all about how we can no longer cope without our phones on us at all times, that our generation is addicted to our phones as people were to newspapers in the 1960s. We are all aware of the effect of the blue light from our phones and the cause of insomnia, but with advancing technology we are able to lower this to a warmer yellow in order to help prevent this. There have been many reported cases where smartphones can also cause a lot of stress and depression, with references to social media in particular. This is because of the internal need to show the good parts of our lives to our followers, in turn this means that we only see the best bits of other's lives and wonder why we are not living up to these standards. On social media, having a bad day is not really a sharing event; we bottle this up and refrain from posting for the day until the unrealistic perfect life moments return.

However, as technology progresses apps are being created that can help with mental health issues. Apps such as 'WellMind' and 'Sibly - Mental Health Coach' are available for the express purpose of helping track your moods and giving techniques to help return to a 'normal' state of mind. Apps like these are crucial as they give real life stories, information, symptom trackers and therapy techniques if you are not ready or old enough to get help. (Most organisations only help those 18 years and older so there is little human face-to-face help that younger people can get access to.) These apps can tell you to use thing such as music or social media to seek help when in a 'bad' situation as these help ground yourself back into the everyday world. Other apps such as Skype can be used to communicate to therapists when you are

busy and do not have time to travel, but still need help but there is currently not an app for direct communication that allows the monitor of mood and symptoms for a patient and a therapist.

Do we really have the right to say that something that may cause issues cannot be used to fix other issues when used in a different way? There is little research into the matter of phones being used to help mental health only the damaging ones. Are researchers biased and only investigating one aspect of the impact of phones on mental health?

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<u>Cyberpsychology</u>

Robben Aliker

This is the new emerging field of psychology that focuses on the study and analysis of various psychological phenomena linked to the increasing presence and usage of technology in our lives, covering topics from online relationships and digital identity to the applications and implications of artificial intelligence and virtual reality.

A study carried out by Vossen et al., was carried out to investigate the effect of receiving confirming vs. disconfirming feedback to individuals' disclosure on their self-esteem, the role of feedback in this relationship and how the effects differ between online and face-to-face communication. They found that feedback had a significant indirect effect on self-esteem. In online communication, participants reciprocated negative feedback when they received it, more than face-to-face.

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