Mental Health Crisis in the Digital Era: The Role of Mass Media in Increasing Awareness and Access to Services

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Article Information:	ABSTRACT
	The development of technology and mass media has had an impact on people's mental well-being. One of them is the increasing prevalence of mental health disorders, such as depression and anxiety, which are directly related to social media use, work pressure, and the social isolation that results from digital life. The aim of this research is to examine the role of mass media in increasing awareness and access to mental health services. The research method used is descriptive analysis with a qualitative approach, involving surveys and interviews with respondents representing various age groups and social backgrounds. Data were collected to evaluate the extent to which mass media provide accurate and educational information about mental health and facilitate access to appropriate support services. The research results show that mass media has an important role in increasing public awareness about mental health issues. Articles, television programs and online campaigns have succeeded in turning negative stigma into a broader understanding of mental health. In addition, the media also plays a role in promoting available mental health services, such as counseling and therapy, thereby increasing accessibility for individuals who need them. The conclusion of this research confirms that mass media has great potential to be an effective tool in overcoming the mental health crisis in the digital era. By providing appropriate and educational information and facilitating access to mental health services, mass media can act as an agent of positive change in an effort to improve people's mental well-being. Therefore, cooperation between the government, health institutions and mass media is very important to create a supportive environment for individuals who experience mental health problems in this digital era. **Keywords:** *Digital Era, Mass Media, Mental Health*

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is a vital aspect of the well-being of individuals and society as a whole. However, in this digital era we are facing an increasingly urgent mental health crisis (Zhao et al., 2020). This phenomenon has become a major concern due to the rapid development of digital technology, which affects the way we interact, work and access information (Felfe et al., 2023). Mental health problems in this digital era are becoming increasingly complex and disturbing due to various factors such as excessive use of social media, high life pressure, and social isolation that can occur in a predominantly online life (Anwar et al., 2020). Therefore, the role of mass media in increasing awareness and access to mental health services is very important (Di Carlo et al., 2021). The mental health crisis in the digital era is a serious problem that should not be ignored (Van Aelst et al., 2021). The high levels of stress, anxiety and depression associated with digital lifestyles indicate an urgent need to understand their impact and find effective solutions (Marciano et al., 2022). This is a problem because poor mental health can negatively impact productivity, interpersonal relationships, and overall quality of life (McGorry et al., 2022). Therefore, research on the role of mass media in increasing awareness and access to mental health services is very important to understand how to overcome this mental health crisis (Rahman et al., 2021).

This research aims to solve various problems related to mental health in the digital era (Kecojevic et al., 2020), including increasing public awareness about the importance of mental health (Badesha et al., 2023), reducing the stigma associated with mental health disorders, and facilitating access to appropriate mental health services (Torous et al., 2021). It's important to discuss this because a mental health crisis can have serious long-term impacts if not treated appropriately. Increasing awareness and access to mental health services through mass media can improve the mental well-being of individuals and society as a whole (Felfe et al., 2023). This research was also carried out with the aim of making a real contribution in filling the existing knowledge gap regarding the role of mass media in the context of mental health in the digital era (Oliffe et al., 2020). By analyzing the role of mass media in depth, this research is expected to provide new insights into how mass media can be used as an effective tool in increasing awareness and access to mental health services. Through a comprehensive and detailed approach, this research will provide a better understanding of how to overcome mental health challenges in this digital era (Brouwers, 2020).

In addressing existing knowledge gaps, this research will use a qualitative approach involving in-depth analysis of mass media content, surveys, and interviews with experts and the general public (Wasserman et al., 2020). In this way, this research will be able to explore diverse and in-depth perspectives on the role of mass media in increasing awareness and access to mental health services (Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use, and Wellbeing in STEMM Undergraduate and Graduate Education et al., 2021). In addition, this research will also use an interdisciplinary

approach, integrating concepts and theories from the fields of psychology, communication and other social sciences to expand understanding of this phenomenon (Beaunoyer et al., 2020). The current state of the art shows that research on mental health in the digital era has developed rapidly in recent years, however, there is still a lack of understanding of how mass media can play a role in addressing it (Jorm et al., 2019). The innovation proposed in this research is to approach the role of mass media with a more holistic and in-depth approach, as well as integrating new perspectives that may not have been revealed before (Kickbusch et al., 2021). Through this research, it is hoped that there will be increased understanding of the role of mass media in mental health, as well as the development of new strategies to increase awareness and access to mental health services (Boulos et al., 2011).

The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive and detailed approach to the role of mass media in increasing awareness and access to mental health services in the digital era (Al-Dmour et al., 2020). Compared to previous research, this research will provide deeper and more detailed insight into how mass media can play a role in influencing people's perceptions and behavior regarding mental health (Hassankhani et al., 2021). This will be a valuable contribution in filling existing knowledge gaps and paving the way for further research in this field (Chen et al., 2023). Furthermore, it is hoped that this research can provide a better understanding of how to utilize the potential of mass media more effectively in overcoming the mental health crisis in the digital era (Zhou et al., 2020). By identifying effective strategies and interventions, this research can help guide better policies and practices in improving people's mental well-being (Van Gelder et al., 2020). The hope is that this research will also provide a foundation for further research in the future, opening the door to further exploration of the role of mass media in the mental health and well-being of society as a whole.

There are several previous research opinions. The first research according to Hogan & Goldman, (2021), with the research title New Opportunities to Improve Mental Health Crisis Systems. The results of his research stated that immediate challenges and opportunities that can launch nationwide reform in systems of care for individuals in psychiatric crisis. The second research according to Feinstein et al., (2020), with the research title A health care workers mental health crisis line in the age of COVID-19. The results of his research stated that used is specifically useful for others who may want to develop a COVID-19 hotline services for health care workers and generally useful for the development of other mental health services. The third research according to Agnoli et al., (2021), with the research title Association of Dose Tapering With Overdose or Mental Health Crisis Among Patients Prescribed Long-term Opioids. The results of his research stated that adjusted incidence rate of 7.4 mental health crisis events per 100 person-years compared with 4.3 events per 100 person-years between non-tapering periods (adjusted incidence rate difference, 3.1 per 100 person-years [95% CI, 2.1- 4.1]; airR, 1.74 [95% CI, 1.50-2.01]). Increasing the maximum monthly dose reduction rate by 10% was associated with an aIRR of 1.05

for overdose (95% CI, 1.03-1.08) and 1.14 for mental health crisis (95% CI, 1.11-1, 17).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method used in research on mental health crises in the digital era is designed to investigate the role of mass media in increasing awareness and access to mental health services (Farsi, 2021). A qualitative approach was chosen to enable an in-depth understanding of people's perceptions, experiences and perceptions related to mental health issues and the influence of mass media (Jensen et al., 2016). This method allows researchers to explore complex views and nuances from a variety of different perspectives. This research uses diverse data collection techniques, including surveys and interviews, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of mass media in the context of mental health (Sacre et al., 2022). Online surveys are used to collect data from widely distributed respondents, while in-depth interviews are conducted with a small number of randomly selected respondents to gain deeper insights.

The selection of respondents for the survey was carried out randomly taking into account demographic factors such as age, gender, educational background and experience using social media. It aims to ensure a balanced representation of various groups in the population. The survey included structured questions about respondents' perceptions of mental health, mass media consumption, and access to mental health services. In-depth interviews are conducted with respondents who have experience relevant to the research topic, such as individuals who have experienced mental health problems or who work in the field of mental health or mass media (Roy et al., 2020). The process of selecting respondents was carried out carefully to ensure representation of a variety of different points of view. Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide designed to explore respondents' experiences, views and understanding of the role of mass media in mental health.

Data analysis was carried out using a qualitative approach, which involved coding and grouping the main findings based on themes that emerged from the data (Sserwanja et al., 2021). This process involves steps such as searching for patterns, identifying trends, and interpreting the meaning behind the data. The analysis was conducted in a gradual and iterative manner, with researchers continually checking the data to ensure accuracy and adequate representation of multiple perspectives. The validity and reliability of the study were ensured through a series of quality control steps, including data triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checking. Data triangulation involves using different data sources, such as surveys and interviews, to verify findings and ensure consistency. Peer debriefing involves regular discussions between researchers to evaluate the resulting interpretations and conclusions. Member checking is carried out by returning to respondents to verify their understanding of the research findings.

Limitations of this research include possible respondent bias in providing

responses, limited time and resources in conducting surveys and interviews, as well as obstacles in obtaining a representative sample from the wider population. However, the quality control measures that have been implemented are expected to minimize the impact of these limitations and increase the validity and reliability of research findings. Thus, through a comprehensive qualitative approach and diverse data collection methods, this research is expected to provide an in-depth understanding of the role of mass media in increasing awareness and access to mental health services in the digital era. It is hoped that the findings of this research will provide a valuable contribution to the development of policy, practice and research in the fields of mental health and mass media.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The past few decades have witnessed a growing surge in mental health problems, and many experts believe that digitalization factors such as social media use, work pressure, and social isolation have played a role in increasing them. First, it is important to understand that the digital era has brought changes in people's behavioral patterns and lifestyles. Social media use, for example, has become an integral part of everyday life for many people, especially the younger generation. Although social media provides a platform to interact and connect with others, it has also introduced a number of new problems when it comes to mental health. Research has shown a link between excessive social media use and increased rates of depression, anxiety, and sleep disorders. Apart from that, increasing work pressure in the digital era can also be a contributing factor to the mental health crisis (Chew et al., 2020). Employees often feel pressure to stay on top of availability, maintain productivity, and adapt to rapid technological changes. This can lead to chronic stress, fatigue, and burnout, which then contributes to mental health problems such as depression and anxiety.

Social isolation is also an increasingly troubling problem in this digital era. Although technology has made it possible to connect with people all over the world, many people experience loneliness and feelings of isolation due to a lack of meaningful social interactions in the real world. Especially during a global pandemic like the current one, social isolation has become a more serious problem, with many people experiencing deeper feelings of loneliness and its negative impact on mental health. In facing the mental health crisis in this digital era, a holistic and sustainable approach is needed. First, it is important to increase public awareness about the importance of mental health and ways to care for it (Liu et al., 2020). Educational programs and awareness campaigns can help change the negative stigma still attached to mental health disorders and encourage people to seek help when they need it.

It is also important to strengthen mental health services and provide easier access for those who need them. This includes increasing the accessibility of mental health services through digital platforms, such as telehealth or mental health apps, which allow individuals to get help without having to leave their homes. These steps can help overcome barriers that often prevent individuals from seeking help, such as distance or social anxiety. There is also a need to integrate mental health approaches in work and educational environments. This includes providing psychological support in the workplace, teaching employees coping

skills, and reducing unnecessary stress in the work environment. In educational settings, it is important to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to manage stress, build healthy relationships, and recognize signs of mental health disorders. In addition to these efforts, it is also important to continue conducting research and collecting data on mental health in the digital era (Singh et al., 2020). This will help better understand the risk factors associated with mental health problems, as well as develop more effective and targeted intervention strategies. Strengthening understanding of the mental health crisis in the digital era and taking steps to address this challenge can build healthier and empowered communities in the future.

The role of mass media in increasing awareness and access to mental health services is an important aspect in efforts to overcome the mental health crisis in the digital era (Okan et al., 2023). Mass media, which includes various platforms such as newspapers, television, radio and social media, has great potential to influence people's perceptions, knowledge and behavior regarding mental health. Firstly, mass media has the ability to disseminate information widely and quickly to the public. Through articles, news broadcasts, television programs, and online campaigns, mass media can provide information about the symptoms of mental health disorders, how to identify mental health problems, and the resources available for help and support. Thus, mass media can be an important source of knowledge for individuals who may not have access to mental health information through other sources.

Apart from that, mass media also has the power to change stigma and negative perceptions about mental health. By presenting stories and content that highlight the experiences of people living with mental health disorders in a positive and empathetic way, mass media can help reduce the social stigma that often accompanies mental health problems. In-depth articles, interviews with community leaders, and television programs highlighting inspirational stories can help break down negative stereotypes and increase empathy for individuals experiencing mental health problems. Furthermore, mass media can play a role in facilitating access to mental health services by providing information about available services and how to access them. Through advertising of mental health services, interviews with mental health professionals, and promotion of online support programs, mass media can help individuals in need find services that meet their needs (Ebadi & Rahimi, 2019). This can help overcome barriers such as not knowing what services are available or uncertainty about how to access help.

However, it is important to recognize that the role of mass media in increasing awareness of and access to mental health services may also have some limitations. For example, mass media content may not always be accurate or educational, and some information about mental health may be presented sensationally or irresponsibly. In addition, mass media can also reinforce negative stereotypes or spread incorrect information about mental health, which can exacerbate social stigma and hinder help-seeking efforts. Therefore, it is important to take a balanced approach in using mass media as a tool to increase awareness of and access to mental health services. This involves collaboration between mass media, mental health organizations, and governments to ensure that content delivered by mass media is accurate, educational, and does not reinforce stigma (Arantes,

2023). Training journalists on mental health coverage, guidelines for mentally sensitive writing, and mass media awareness campaigns can help ensure that the information conveyed by the mass media is beneficial to society.

In addition, it is also important to strengthen mental health services and provide easy access for those who need them outside the mass media. This includes developing a broader and more affordable mental health services infrastructure, increasing the accessibility of mental health services through digital platforms, and increasing public awareness of the resources and help available. With a holistic and integrated approach, the role of mass media in increasing awareness and access to mental health services can be an integral part of broader efforts to overcome the mental health crisis in the digital era. Using the power and potential of mass media wisely can create a supportive environment for individuals experiencing mental health problems and help improve their quality of life.

Based on these findings, there are several practical implications that can be taken to increase the role of mass media in increasing awareness and access to mental health services. First, cooperation is needed between the media industry, health organizations and the government to ensure that content about mental health delivered by mass media is accurate, educational and does not reinforce stigma. Initiatives such as training journalists on mental health coverage and campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of mentally sensitive language can help create a more supportive media environment. Second, mass media can be more active in promoting available mental health services and how to access them (Fusco et al., 2021). This can be done through collaboration with mental health organizations or service providers to create informative and accessible content for the community. In addition, promotion of mental health services can be integrated into existing media content, such as fictional stories or television programs, to increase their visibility. Finally, it is important to continue conducting further research to understand the impact of mass media content about mental health on people's behavior and well-being . With a deeper understanding of how mass media can be an effective tool in overcoming mental health crises, we can develop more effective strategies in improving people's mental well-being in the ever-growing digital era.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that the mental health crisis occurring in the digital era shows a significant increase, mostly caused by factors such as social pressure, unhealthy comparisons, and exposure to potentially harmful content on social media. In this case, mass media has great potential to become an effective tool in overcoming the mental health crisis in the digital era. Through its platforms, mass media has the ability to educate the public about the importance of mental health, reduce the stigma attached to mental disorders, and provide information about available services. By providing appropriate and educational information and facilitating access to mental health services, mass media can act as an agent of positive change in an effort to improve people's mental well-being. Mass media also has the potential to exacerbate mental health problems by displaying harmful content or

reinforcing negative stereotypes. Therefore, it is important for mass media to be responsible in presenting information about mental health accurately and prioritizing content that supports the mental well-being of society as a whole. Thus, collaboration between mass media, mental health practitioners and government institutions can form a strong synergy in overcoming the mental health crisis in the digital era.

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