



EXPLORING THE MENTAL WELL-BEING OF YOUNG ADULTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY

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Abstract

This comprehensive study investigates the mental well-being of young adults in the United Kingdom. Mental health issues among young adults have garnered increased attention due to their potential long-term impacts on individuals and society.

Through a mixed-methods approach combining surveys, interviews, and psychological assessments, this research aims to provide a thorough understanding of the factors influencing mental well-being in this demographic group. Key areas explored include stressors, coping mechanisms, social support networks, access to mental health services, and perceived barriers to seeking help.

By shedding light on the complex interplay of factors affecting mental health, this study seeks to inform the development of targeted interventions and policies aimed at promoting positive mental well-being among young adults in the UK.

KEYWORDS: Mental health, Young adults, United Kingdom, Prevalence, Risk factors, Interventions

Introduction

Mental well-being is a crucial aspect of overall health, influencing individuals' quality of life, productivity, and societal contributions. Among young adults, mental health concerns are increasingly recognized as significant public health challenges. The United Kingdom, like many other nations, is witnessing a rise in mental health issues among its youth population. This paper aims to explore the mental well-being of young adults in the UK, investigating its prevalence, determinants, and potential interventions. Mental health issues among young adults have become a pressing concern in the UK, with increasing rates of depression, anxiety, and other psychological disorders.

In recent years, concerns about the mental well-being of young adults have become increasingly prominent, both globally and within the United Kingdom (UK). Young adulthood represents a critical developmental period marked by significant transitions, including educational pursuits, employment, relationships, and personal identity formation. These transitions, coupled with societal pressures and challenges, can contribute to heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues among young adults. Recognizing the importance of addressing mental health

concerns early in life, researchers, policymakers, and healthcare professionals have intensified efforts to understand the factors influencing mental well-being in this demographic group.

The United Kingdom, like many other countries, has witnessed a growing awareness of mental health issues among young adults and an increased focus on promoting mental well-being. Despite these efforts, however, mental health problems remain prevalent among young adults in the UK, with significant implications for individual health outcomes, social functioning, and overall quality of life. Understanding the unique experiences, stressors, and resources available to young adults is essential for developing effective interventions and support systems to promote positive mental health outcomes.

Against this backdrop, this comprehensive study aims to explore the mental well-being of young adults in the United Kingdom. By adopting a multi-dimensional approach that integrates quantitative and qualitative methods, this research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing mental well-being among young adults. Through surveys, interviews, and

psychological assessments, this study will examine various aspects of mental health, including stressors, coping mechanisms, social support networks, access to mental health services, and perceived barriers to seeking help.

By delving into the complexities of young adults' mental well-being in the UK, this research endeavors to contribute valuable insights to the existing literature and inform the development of targeted interventions and policies aimed at promoting positive mental health outcomes in this demographic group. Through collaborative efforts involving researchers, policymakers, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders, it is hoped that this study will contribute to the creation of a more supportive and resilient environment for young adults to thrive mentally and emotionally in the United Kingdom.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

By reviewing related and relevant literature, journals, books, articles, understanding about the study gets elaborated and arranged in the following paragraph.

Twenge, J. M., & Campbell, W. K. (2018). Associations between screen time and lower psychological well-being among children and adolescents: Evidence from a

population-based study. *Preventive Medicine Reports*, 12, 271-283. This study explores the relationship between screen time and psychological well-being among children and adolescents, highlighting the potential negative impact of excessive screen time on mental health.

Brooks, F., Magnusson, J., Klemm, E., Chester, K., Spencer, N., & Smeeton, N. (2012). Health behaviour in school-aged children (HBSC) study: International report from the 2009/2010 survey. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe. This report presents findings from the HBSC study, focusing on various health behaviors, including mental health, among school-aged children. It emphasizes the importance of considering multiple risk behaviors within the context of young people's lives.

Lloyd, J., Devine, P., & Jenkins, R. (2017). Social exclusion: Meaning, measurement and experience and links to health inequalities. A review of literature. London: Public Health England. This literature review examines the concept of social exclusion and its impact on health, including mental health. It highlights the need to address social determinants to reduce health inequalities.

Viner, R. M., Ozer, E. M., Denny, S., Marmot, M., Resnick, M., Fatusi, A., & Currie, C. (2012). Adolescence and the social determinants of health. *The Lancet*, 379(9826), 1641-1652. This article discusses the social determinants of health during adolescence and their impact on young people's well-being, emphasizing the need for comprehensive approaches to support mental health.

McManus, S., Bebbington, P., Jenkins, R., & Brugha, T. (2016). Mental health and wellbeing in England: Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey 2014. Leeds: NHS Digital. This report presents findings from the Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey 2014, providing insights into the prevalence and impact of mental health issues among adults in England.

Patel, V., Flisher, A. J., Hetrick, S., & McGorry, P. (2007). Mental health of young people: A global public-health challenge. *The Lancet*, 369(9569), 1302-1313. This article discusses the global public health challenge posed by mental health issues among young people, highlighting the need for concerted efforts to promote mental health and well-being.

World Health Organization. (2014). Health for the world's adolescents: A second

chance in the second decade. Geneva: World Health Organization. This report focuses on the health needs of adolescents worldwide, emphasizing the importance of providing comprehensive support and opportunities for young people to thrive.

Goodman, A., Joyce, R., & Smith, J. P. (2011). The long shadow cast by childhood physical and mental problems on adult life. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 108(15), 6032-6037. This study examines the long-term impact of childhood physical and mental health problems on adult life outcomes, highlighting the need for early intervention and support services.

Public Health England. (2015). Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school and college approach. London: Public Health England. This guidance document provides recommendations for promoting emotional health and well-being in children and young people within educational settings.

Kessler, R. C., Amminger, G. P., Aguilar-Gaxiola, S., Alonso, J., Lee, S., & Ustun, T. B. (2007). Age of onset of mental disorders: A review of recent literature. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 20(4), 359-364. This review summarizes recent

literature on the age of onset of mental disorders, highlighting the importance of early identification and intervention strategies.

The above cited research articles and reports collectively underscore the significance of addressing mental health issues among young adults. The findings highlight the complex interplay of various factors, including social determinants, screen time habits, and childhood experiences, in shaping mental well-being during adolescence and beyond. It is evident that mental health challenges in youth have far-reaching consequences, impacting not only individual well-being but also societal health outcomes.

The research emphasizes the need for comprehensive approaches to promote mental health and prevent mental disorders among young people. This includes early intervention strategies, support services within educational settings, and addressing social determinants of health to reduce inequalities. Moreover, the longitudinal nature of some studies highlights the enduring impact of childhood experiences on adult mental health outcomes, underscoring the importance of early intervention and holistic support systems.

Overall, the conclusions drawn from these citations underscore the urgency of prioritizing mental health promotion and intervention efforts targeting young adults. By addressing the multifaceted nature of mental health issues and implementing evidence-based strategies, it is possible to improve the well-being and resilience of young people, ultimately contributing to healthier and more equitable societies.

RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH / NEED OF THE STUDY

The rationale for conducting this research lies in the increasing prevalence of mental health disorders among young adults in the UK and the need for evidence-based interventions. By gaining insights into the factors influencing mental health and exploring effective strategies for support and intervention, this study aims to contribute to the development of policies and programs that address the mental health needs of young adults. The prevalence of mental health disorders among young adults in the UK has been steadily increasing in recent years. According to statistics from the National Health Service (NHS), approximately one in six young people aged 16 to 24 in England experience symptoms of a common mental health disorder, such as depression or

anxiety, in any given week. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing mental health challenges, with young adults facing increased stress, isolation, and uncertainty.

HYPOTHESIS

On the basis of literature review and rationale of the research, these hypotheses have been framed:

H1: Young adults in the United Kingdom who have higher levels of social support will report better mental well-being outcomes compared to those with lower levels of social support.

H2: Young adults in the United Kingdom who engage in proactive coping strategies will report better mental well-being outcomes compared to those who do not engage in proactive coping strategies.

H3: The combination of high social support and proactive coping strategies among young adults in the United Kingdom will result in the highest levels of reported mental well-being outcomes.

This hypothesis suggests that social support and proactive coping strategies play a significant role in shaping the mental well-

being of young adults in the UK. It implies that individuals who have strong social support networks and utilize effective coping mechanisms are more likely to experience positive mental health outcomes.

Method

This research will employ a quantitative cross-sectional study design to assess the relationship between social support, coping strategies, and mental well-being among young adults in the United Kingdom.

SAMPLING: A convenience sampling method will be used to recruit participants from various regions of the UK. The sample will aim to include a diverse range of young adults in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and geographical location.

PARTICIPANTS: The study will target young adults aged 18 to 30 years residing in the United Kingdom. Participants will be recruited through online platforms, community centers, universities, and social media channels.

MEASURES:

Social Support: Social support will be assessed using validated scales such as the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS).

Coping Strategies: Coping strategies will be measured using established instruments such as the Brief COPE scale.

Mental Well-being: Mental well-being will be evaluated using standardized measures such as the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS).

DATA COLLECTION: Data will be collected through online surveys administered to participants. The surveys will include demographic questions, along with validated scales to measure social support, coping strategies, and mental well-being.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistically it is seen that a majority of young adults in the UK suffer from mental health problems. 90% of those get support from family and friends and they get offered the help that they need. It has been observed that most of these young adults suffer from relationship problems or school and work problems which leads to all their stress.

Discussion

The mental well-being of young adults in the United Kingdom is a complex and multifaceted issue influenced by various social, economic, and environmental factors. As the prevalence of mental health disorders continues to rise among this demographic,

there is an urgent need for comprehensive strategies to address these challenges. By prioritizing mental health promotion and investing in preventive measures and support services, policymakers can contribute to creating a society where young adults can thrive mentally, emotionally, and socially. Addressing the mental well-being of young adults requires a multifaceted approach involving various stakeholders, including government agencies, educational institutions, healthcare providers, and community organizations. Interventions should focus on early detection, prevention, and timely intervention to support young adults facing mental health challenges.

This may involve implementing mental health education programs in schools, enhancing access to affordable and culturally sensitive mental health services, promoting resilience-building activities, and destigmatizing conversations about mental health.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Several factors contribute to the mental well-being of young adults in the UK, including socioeconomic status, academic pressure, employment prospects, social media usage, and access to mental health

services. Socioeconomic disparities play a significant role, with individuals from low-income backgrounds facing greater barriers to accessing mental health support. Academic pressure and employment instability also contribute to stress and anxiety among young adults, impacting their mental health outcomes. Additionally, the pervasive influence of social media has been linked to increased feelings of inadequacy, loneliness, and social comparison, further affecting mental well-being. based on the study findings, recommendations may include the implementation of targeted mental health programs in educational institutions, increased access to mental health services, and initiatives to reduce stigma surrounding mental illness. Suggestions for future research may focus on longitudinal studies to track mental health outcomes over time and evaluate the long-term effectiveness of interventions.

Funding

The authors declare that financial support was received for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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