

Psychoeducational Comic Series 'Unable to Part with Them' for Mental Health in Reducing Phubbing Behavior in Generation Z Teenagers

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ABSTRACT

Social media has emerged as the primary source of information among young users; however, its negative impact on mental health has led to addiction. The most tech-savvy generation today is Generation Z. Addiction to phones/gadgets among Generation Z teenagers is increasing in line with the growing use of social media, which in turn affects their behavior. One of the behavioral impacts is phubbing. Phubbing is the behavior of focusing on one's phone/gadget while ignoring the person they are speaking with. The purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of phubbing behavior among Generation Z teenagers in the Tlogomas neighborhood before and after reading the psychoeducational comic series. This quantitative study uses a quasi-experimental design, with purposive sampling technique and a population of 125 respondents. A sample of 95 respondents met the inclusion and exclusion criteria, consisting of an intervention group and a control group. The measuring tool used is the General Scale of Phubbing (GPS) questionnaire. The analysis of the effect was carried out using the McNemar Test with SPSS 22. The analysis results showed a p-value of 0.000 in the intervention group (comic) and a p-value of 0.004 in the control group (leaflet), indicating a significant influence in both the intervention and control groups. Future researchers are expected to create better and more engaging innovations to reduce phubbing behavior among Generation Z teenagers, the future golden generation.

Keyword: Comic; Generation z; Phubbing; Psychoeducational; Teenagers.

ABSTRAK

Media sosial muncul sebagai sumber informasi utama di kalangan pengguna muda, namun dampaknya terhadap kondisi mental mengakibatkan kecanduan. Generasi yang paling sadar akan teknologi saat ini adalah generasi Z. Kecanduan pada remaja generasi Z terhadap ponsel/ gadget semakin meningkat seiring dengan meningkatnya penggunaan media sosial dan akibatnya mempengaruhi perilaku mereka, salah satu dampak perilakunya adalah phubbing. Phubbing merupakan sikap fokus pada ponsel/ gadget yang mengabaikan lawan bicaranya. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis pengaruh perilaku phubbing pada remaja generasi Z di wilayah kelurahan tlogomas sebelum dan sesudah membaca komik seri psikoedukasi. Penelitian kuantitatif ini menggunakan desain Quasi eksperimen, dengan teknik sampling purposive dengan populasi 125 responden. Terdapat Sampel 95 responden yang sesuai kriteria inklusi dan eksklusi, yang terdiri dari kelompok intervensi dan kelompok kontrol. Alat ukur yang digunakan adalah kuesioner General scale of phubbing (GPS). Analisis untuk pengaruh menggunakan Uji McNemar menggunakan SPSS 22. Hasil analisis didapatkan pada kelompok intervensi (Komik) nilai p 0.000 dan nilai p 0.004 pada kelompok kontrol (Leaflet) yang artinya adalah terdapat pengaruh yang signifikan baik di kelompok intervensi ataupun di kelompok kontrol. Diharapkan pada peneliti lebih lanjut untuk membuat inovasi yang lebih bagus dan menarik dalam menurunkan perilaku phubbing pada remaja generasi Z dengan generasi emas kedepan.

Kata Kunci: Komik psikoedukasi, Phubbing, Remaja Generasi Z

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Introduction:

The 2020 population census shows a growth in the productive age population in Indonesia. The population of baby boomers, or those aged 56-74, is around 11.56% or 31.37 million people. The population aged 75 and above makes up 1.87% or 5 million people. Millennials account for 70.2 million or 25.87%, while Generation Z, aged 12-27, is the most dominant, totaling 75 million people (Hastini et al., 2020). Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, is also known as the internet generation in the era of revolution 5.0 or the technology-savvy generation (Youarti & Hidayah, 2018). This generation is characterized by its dependence on gadgets and shorter attention spans. Generation Z is highly proficient in using new technologies and can multitask, such as using their phones to communicate, search for information, and listen to music simultaneously (Ugur & Koc, 2015).

One of the fastest-growing technologies is mobile phones or smartphones. The widespread use of smartphones is supported by their affordable prices and Generation Z's quick adaptability (Ratnasary & Oktaviani, 2020). The Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) shows that internet usage in Indonesia reached 215.63 million people in 2022-2023. This number increased by 2.675 million compared to the previous period, which had 210.03 million users (Purnamawati et al., 2023). This technological development has seemingly encouraged the rise of the phubbing phenomenon, or the behavior of disregarding others during social interactions by focusing more on their phones than the people they are speaking with. Individuals who engage in phubbing are called phubbers, which refers to someone who constantly checks their smartphone, such as social media or messaging (Rosdiana & Hastutiningtyas, 2017). Phubbing behavior leads individuals to become dependent on their smartphones and less attentive to their surroundings.

Generation Z, in particular, spends almost all of their time on their smartphones, so it is no surprise that many members of Generation Z with smartphones rarely engage in direct communication (Mason et al., 2022). Another

negative impact is that individuals experience changes in their social interaction behavior and anxiety when they are unable to access their smartphones for a long time, a condition known as nomophobia (Hanika, 2015). Excessive smartphone use can also make conversation partners feel hurt because they are not being respected when the other person frequently checks their smartphone and often ignores them (Rohi et al., 2022). If phubbing behavior continues unchecked, it will threaten social interactions within Generation Z (Enez Darcin et al., 2016).

Efforts made in preventing phubbing behavior in generation Z are through a mental health approach. The first approach is to provide information and training to generation Z in an effort to change the understanding of individual psychology (Krasnova et al., 2016). The second approach is to cultivate reading among adolescents, namely with comics or funny and interesting picture series to increase adolescent interest in reading (Hastini et al., 2020). This comic is themed "Unable to Part with Him" as a description of what happens to generation Z adolescents today, where they always go everywhere without being separated from their smartphones as if the world is only in their grasp without seeing other people around them, this makes generation Z have the idea that it is better to be separated from family or friends than to be separated from their smartphones (Fadhilah et al., 2021). So the purpose of this study is to analyze the differences in mental health of generation Z adolescents before and after reading the psychoeducational comic series "Unable to Part with Him" in preventing phubbing behavior in generation Z adolescents.

The study by Sun, J., & Samp, J. A. revealed that individuals who experience phubbing behavior tend to have high levels of depression and social anxiety, where a higher degree of phubbing behavior leads to lower social interaction with others (Sun & Samp, 2022). This is in line with the research by Fadhilah, L., Hayati, E. N., & Bashori, K., which stated that smartphone dependency causes excessive worry. The lack of understanding among teenagers about the ideal use of smartphones makes them lose

focus on ongoing activities, which in turn affects their personality, making them apathetic and less caring (Fadhilah et al., 2021). Another study stated that the factors causing phubbing behavior are addiction to social media and online games. Therefore, preventive and curative efforts are needed to minimize phubbing behavior in teenagers by providing education through a personal approach and even introducing punishment (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018).

Additionally, the study 'Phubbed and Alone' by Meredith David and James A. Roberts from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, USA, mentioned that people currently check their phones 150 times a day. This behavior is not only done when they are alone but also when interacting with others (Roberts & David, 2017). Therefore, based on several existing studies, there is a need for innovation in efforts to prevent phubbing behavior in order to improve the psychosocial health of Generation Z teenagers. The psychoeducational comic series 'Unable to Part With Them' for the Prevention of Phubbing Behavior in Generation Z Teenagers has become the title of this study.

Methods:

This study used a quasi-experimental design with a control group and intervention group with pre and post. The population in this study were adolescents who lived in the Tlogomas Subdistrict, Malang City, totaling 125 people and a sample of 90 people was taken, of which 40 people were for the control group sample and 40 people for the intervention group. Sampling was done using purposive sampling technique. The inclusion criteria in this study were teenagers aged 15-27 years, attending school in the Tlogomas neighborhood, who read 3 comic series ini 21 days and participated in the intervention activities until the end. The exclusion criteria were teenagers who were ill during the study. The research was conducted from June to December 2024. The questionnaire used to measure phubbing behavior in both the control and intervention groups was the Indonesian version of the General Scale of Phubbing (GSP), which previously demonstrated excellent item

reliability with an item reliability $\alpha = 1.00$ and sufficient person reliability with a respondent reliability index $\alpha = 1.007$. The unidimensional validity through Principal Component Analysis was 59% ($>20\%$), providing evidence that the Indonesian version of the GPS scale is a valid tool for measuring phubbing behavior in teenagers. The scale consists of 15 items with 4 indicators: Nomophobia, Interpersonal Conflict, Self-Isolation, and Problem Acknowledgement (Isrofin, 2020).

In the first phase, respondents filled out the General Scale of Phubbing (GSP) questionnaire. In the second phase, the intervention group was given the Psychoeducational Comic Series, while the control group was given a leaflet about phubbing. In the third phase, both the intervention and control groups were monitored for 21 days. In the fourth phase, respondents filled out the General Scale of Phubbing (GSP) questionnaire again. Data analysis in this study was carried out using the McNemar test. This study received ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of Research and Health of Universitas Muhammadiyah Lamongan with No. 299/EC/KEPK-S2/06/2024.

Results:

Table 1 Data distribution based on Age, Gender, Educational Background Intervention Group (Psychoeducational comic Phubbing)

Characteristics	f	%
Intervention Group		
Age		
15-24 years old	35	77.8%
25-27 years old	10	22.2%
Amount	45	100%
Gender		
Male	14	31.1%
Female	31	68.9%
Amount	45	100%
Level Education		
High School	9	20.2%
Bachelor degree	36	80.0%
Amount	45	100%

Based on Table 1, the most dominant age group in the intervention group is 15-24 years,

accounting for 77.8%. The majority gender in this study is female, with 31 respondents (31.1%), and the majority of the intervention group has a bachelor's degree, with 36 respondents (80.0%).\

Table 2 Data distribution based on Age, Gender, Educational Background and Control Group (Leaflet Phubbing)

Characteristics	f	%
Control Group		
Age		
15-24 Years	43	95.6%
25-27 Years	2	4.4%
Amount	45	100%
Gender		
Male	13	28.9%
Female	32	71.1%
Amount	45	100%
Level Education		
High School	13	28.9%
Bachelor	32	71.1%
degree		
Amount	45	100%

Based on Table 2, the most dominant age group in the control group is 15-24 years, accounting for 77.8%. The majority gender in this study is female, with 32 respondents (71.1%), and the majority of the control group has a bachelor's degree, with 32 respondents (71.1%).

Table 3 Data Distribution and Frequency Phubbing behavior before and after the provision of the psychoeducational comic series and the leaflet

	High	Low	Total
Phubbing Behavior Intervention Group (n=45)			
Pre-test	29 (64.4%)	16 (35.6%)	45 (100%)
Post-test	10 (22.2%)	35 (77.8%)	45 (100%)
Phubbing Behavior Control Group (n=45)			
Pre-test	30 (66.7%)	15 (33.3%)	45 (100%)
Post-test	15 (33.3%)	30 (66.7%)	45 (100%)

Table 3 shows that there are changes in behavior in both the intervention group and the control group.

Table 4 Phubbing Behavior among generation z teenagers before and after - Interventional Group (receive psychoeducational comic of phubbing)

		Phubbing behavior after Psychoeducational comic intervention		Total	P
		High	Low		
Phubbing behavior after psychoeducational comic intervention	High	10 (34.5%)	19 (65.5%)	29 (64.4%)	0.000
	Low	0 (0.0%)	16 (45.7%)	16 (25.6%)	
Total		10 (22.2%)	35 (77.8%)	45 (100%)	

Table 4 in the Intervention Group shows the cross-tabulation results. Respondents with high phubbing behavior before the provision of the psychoeducational comic series and still high after receiving the comic numbered 10 (34.5%). Respondents with high phubbing behavior before the provision of the psychoeducational comic series and low phubbing behavior after receiving the comic numbered 19 (65.5%). The McNemar test results show a significance value of 0.000; since the p-value is < 0.05 , it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in phubbing behavior before and after the provision of the psychoeducational comic series.

Table 5 Phubbing Behavior among Generation Z teenagers Before and After - Control group (Leaflet Phubbing)

		Phubbing behavior after leaflet intervention		Total	P
		High	Low		
Phubbing behavior before leaflet intervention	High	10 (22.2%)	20 (44.4%)	30 (66.7%)	0.004
	Low	5 (11.1%)	10 (22.2%)	15 (33.3%)	
Total		15 (33.3%)	30 (66.7%)	45 (100%)	

Table 5 in the Control Group shows the cross-tabulation results, where respondents with high phubbing behavior before receiving the phubbing leaflet and still high after receiving the leaflet numbered 14 (31.1%). Respondents with low phubbing behavior before receiving the

phubbing leaflet and high phubbing behavior after receiving the leaflet numbered 5 (11.1%). The McNemar test showed a p-value of 0.064; since the p-value is not < 0.05 , it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in phubbing behavior before and after the provision of the phubbing leaflet.

Discussion :

Phubbing behavior among generation Z teenagers before and after psychoeducational phubbing comic (Intervention Group)

Before the provision of the psychoeducational comic series, the majority of Generation Z teenagers exhibited high levels of phubbing behavior. This data indicates that teenagers tend to focus on themselves, leading them to be more attentive to their smartphones than to their conversation partners during interactions (Kurnia et al., 2020). One influencing factor is age, as most respondents in the intervention group were aged 15-24 years. At this age, curiosity for obtaining information is very high, such as through social media use, browsing, or the latest games, necessitating self-control in smartphone use among these teenagers. Karadağ et al., (2015) noted that teenagers with high phubbing behavior find it very difficult to detach from their smartphones, which disrupts their daily activities. Furthermore, they tend to be more preoccupied with themselves than with their conversation partners. This aligns with the research by Munatirah et al., (2018), which demonstrated a significant positive correlation between smartphone usage intensity and phubbing behavior, meaning that the frequency of smartphone use affects an individual's phubbing behavior.

After the provision of the psychoeducational comic series, there was a noticeable decrease in phubbing behavior. The lower levels of phubbing among teenagers may be attributed to the comic's ability to engage them, which in turn reduces phubbing behavior. Comics consist of a series of illustrations combined with dialogue presented continuously from one panel to another. Comics serve as an effective innovation in health education media for teenagers, as viewing comics can enhance

knowledge. Additionally, comics are utilized as a learning medium for today's Generation Z, which is one of the factors that makes teenagers interested in reading these comics, thus contributing to the reduction of phubbing behavior among them (Septianti et al., 2022). This is in line with research by Siskawati & Ramadan (2022) which revealed that comic media can increase a person's interest in reading (Siskawati & Ramadan, 2022).

Phubbing behavior among generation Z teenagers before and after leaflet intervention (Control Group)

Before the provision of the leaflet, Generation Z teenagers exhibited high levels of phubbing behavior. The tendency for high phubbing behavior may be influenced by a strong trust in their smartphones or being digital natives. Generation Z teenagers feel more confident when facing privacy issues in participating digitally, which creates a need for social interaction (Halperin & Dror, 2016). Self-control is essential for Generation Z, as it helps regulate behavior according to social values and expectations. This self-control is crucial for teenagers, enabling them to resist the temptations posed by their smartphones.

Another factor influencing phubbing behavior is the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), which is a predictor of phubbing behavior (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018). This aligns with the research by Przybylski et al., (2013), which indicates that FoMO is a condition in which a person experiences anxiety after seeing or checking their social media, coupled with a strong desire to interact with their smartphone, leading to an increase in phubbing behavior.

After the provision of the leaflet, there was a change influenced by education. The majority of respondents in the control group had a bachelor's degree. Education significantly impacts teenagers' mindsets regarding their actions, leading them to understand the importance of interacting with others. This is consistent with the research by (Hura et al., 2021), which suggests that as the educational level of Generation Z teenagers increases, so does

their level of knowledge, thereby reducing phubbing behavior.

The Influence of Psychoeducational Comic Series on Phubbing Behavior among Generation Z Teenagers

The results of the McNemar test in the intervention group indicate that phubbing behavior before and after the provision of the psychoeducational comic series differs significantly. However, this study shows an effect. This difference implies that the provision of the psychoeducational comic series has an impact on phubbing behavior, which may be attributed to the engaging format of the information provided to teenagers, making it easier for them to understand the conveyed information. Effective media, in this context, is one that incorporates multiple elements to communicate messages to Generation Z teenagers (Nurrita, 2018).

Comics have become a favored medium among Generation Z, as reading comics is seen as more enjoyable compared to reading books. This is due to the use of everyday language, making it accessible and easy for readers, particularly Generation Z. Additionally, comics are presented with images and humorous characters, providing entertainment through humor (Cicero et al., 2020). This aligns with research by Septialti et al. (2022), which shows that comics can enhance health knowledge among Generation Z teenagers regarding phubbing, even for sensitive topics. Comics not only assist teenagers but also aid educators in effectively delivering messages to Generation Z.

In the control group, the use of leaflets showed a p-value of 0.004; since the p-value is < 0.05, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in phubbing behavior before and after the provision of the phubbing leaflet. The improvement observed after reading the leaflets and comics may be due to the media, as the provision of information influences an individual's knowledge in acquiring information. This is consistent with the research by (Hadina et al., 2022), which indicates an increase in knowledge before and after education is provided using leaflets.

Conclusions:

From both treatments, it was found that there was a decrease in phubbing behavior in both the intervention group and the control group. There is a significant effect of providing education, whether using the psychoeducational comic series on phubbing or the leaflet about phubbing behavior among Generation Z teenagers. The increase after reading leaflets and comics can be caused by the existence of media, where the provision of information will influence a person's knowledge in obtaining information.

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