Media's Influence on Public's Mental Health Perceptions

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Purpose of the Study

- Examine which form of media has more influence on forming the public's perception on mental health/illness
  - Specifically a negative mental illness viewpoint (NMIV)
- Study's findings can be used to begin to shift the way mental health/illness is talked about/portrayed in media forms

Literature Review

- Stuart (2006) research found that media in general has had a large impact on the negative mental illness perceptions

- Fawcett (2015) found that much of the public's knowledge of mental illness comes from mass media

- Currently no study has looked at whether a specific media form has more influence than others

Hypotheses

- H1a: the more media consumption extent (MCE) a person has, the more likely they are to hold a NMIV

- H1b: News (MCE-N), Entertainment (MCE-E), and Social (MCE-S) media will have varying intensity effects on the extent of NMIV
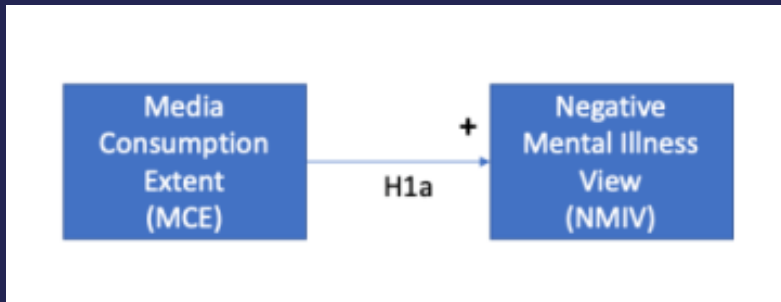
Figure 1: Prioritizing Media Consumption Sources using AHP
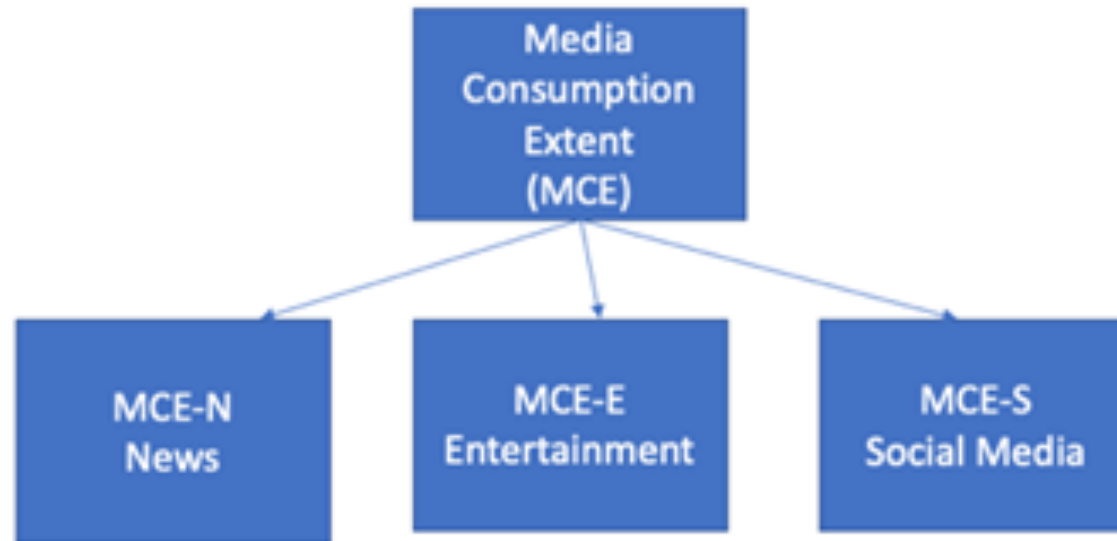
Figure 2 (H1b)

H1a – MCE increases NMIV	H1b – Different media types have different intensity effect on NMIV	
Regression simple: NMIV = b0 +b1*MCE	Regression multiple: NMIV =b0 + b1*(MCE-N) + b2*(MCE-E) + b3*(MCE-S)	
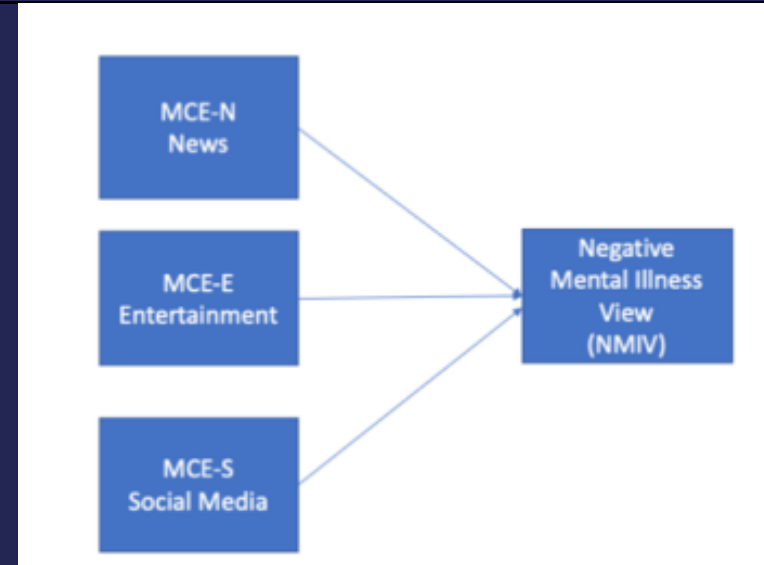
Research Design – Survey

- Media Usage Comparison
  - Utilizes AHP to compare media usage between News, Entertainment and Social Media

- Mental Illness/Disorder Perception
  - This section looks at the viewpoints the participants hold using 6 of the most common misconceptions about mental illness

- Extent of Media Usage Average
  - Looks at, on average, how often a person uses the different media forms

Analysis & Results

- Currently a pilot study is being conducted and the results will be presented in the ISAHP 2020 session corresponding to this research

Implications

- The findings of this study hope to help further push for change in how mental health/illness and mental illnesses/disorders are portrayed and spoke about in media forms

- With a more positive change in the media's representations of mental illnesses/disorders a person who suffers from an illness/disorder is more likely to seek out treatment/help

Limitations & Future Research

- The survey is volunteer based

- Little ability to control for false/random answers from the participants

- Further research can focus on the subtypes of each media type to determine which has the biggest influence

- Also, it would be interesting to compare AHP prioritization versus direct ranking provided by the participants

Conclusion

- This survey provides a methodological contribution by using AHP-based survey questions to explore the relative importance of different media types

- This allows for more accurate responses from the participants

Key References

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Questions?

- Thank you very much for your attention!