

**INFLUENCE OF PODCASTS ON THE MENTAL WELLBEING AMONG STUDENTS
IN GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY UGWUOMU-NIKE ENUGU**

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of podcasts on mental wellbeing of students of Godfrey Okoye University Enugu. The study aimed at determining the frequency of podcast consumption, the type of podcast content and the influence of podcast consumption on the mental wellbeing of the students. Uses and Gratification Theory was used for the study. Survey research design was adopted for the study and a sample size of 353 using Taro Yamani formula. The finding showed High Listenship (58%) with entertainment podcast ranking highest (29%). These was also positive influence of podcast on overall wellbeing of students. The study recommends that the creators of podcasts should produce more educational, informative and positive content that could help the university students overcome some of the psycho-logical challenges such as anxiety, stress and depression.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In recent years, digital media has become an integral part of youths' daily lives, shaping how information is consumed, communicated, and interpreted. Thus, among various digital media formats, podcasts have emerged as a rapidly growing platform for sharing ideas, experiences, and knowledge. The unique combination of storytelling, personal reflection, expert discussion, and accessibility across mobile devices, the spread of podcasts contents have attracted significant attention among young people globally (Rime, Pike and Collins, 2022).

Podcasts is a new format of medium, providing a universal platform dealing with many different topics including news, entertainment, sports, and health (Robins et al. 2024). A podcast may be described as an audio file that is alike to a radio show. The word 'podcast' came into existence in 2004 and is a combination of two words "iPod" and "broadcasting" used by British journalist Ben Hammersley (Singer 2019). Podcasting has evolved into a large business, and the current number of worldwide podcast listeners in 2024 is 546.7 million people with an annual increase of 7.85% (Backlinko 2025). This tendency will continue further, and the forecasted number of worldwide listeners in 2027 is 651.7 million people (Backlinko 2025). It seems like young individuals are especially keen podcast listeners. In the survey regarding the general audio penetration in Australia made in 2023, 70% of people who were between 18 and 24 years old said they were listening to podcasts monthly (Edison Research 2024).

However, only 17% of those Australian citizens who were older than 65 years old reported that they were listening to podcasts monthly (Edison Research 2024). According to statistical information, in 2023, the average weekly listening to podcasts amounted to 9.0 hours for the

adult audience (Edison-Research 2023). The growing number of podcasts and the variety of content demonstrate the possibilities of podcasts for improving the health of young people (Tobin and Guadagno 2022).

Podcasts, which are also included among downloadable/streamable audio content offered through the internet (Rime, Pike & Collins, 2022), have recently gained much popularity. Since in 2022 there are about 424 million podcast listeners, podcasts offer a free platform for mental health information dissemination (Gotting, 2023). Podcasts serve as personalized "edutainment" because they function as a medium where all kinds of experiences and topics that are not covered by the mainstream media are discussed. Podcasts are regarded as more engaging and diverse in comparison with the traditional radio because they offer "productive" use of the listener's time spent on the commute or household chores. Unlike the traditional radio, the communication in the podcast format is non-linear, which fosters a feeling of community and intimacy between the hosts and the listeners. Another feature of podcasts, such as pausing and rewinding, can help overcome language and literacy barriers (Fernando, 2016).

Mental health entails emotional, psychological, and social well-being that affects how people think, feel, and act as they go about their activities. It is an important aspect of health and plays a critical role at every stage of a person's life. People with positive mental health can cope up with life issues and problems, acknowledge their strengths, make a contribution to the society, function efficiently in educational and work settings, and be productive. However, there are various mental health disorders ranging from anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and eating disorders to other conditions. Mental health disorders can happen to people of different ages, gender, and ethnicity. However, they face stigma and discrimination despite being common. Stigma and discrimination are the reasons why people may not seek

professional help because it hampers their treatment process. Positive mental health involves leading a healthy lifestyle through making connections with others, doing exercise, gaining knowledge and skills, being mindful, and making contributions to the community. According to WHO (2019), mental health is a basic right of every human being, and it is crucial for well-being and development.

Mental health is defined by WHO as a state of well-being where an individual acknowledges his/her capability to handle the stresses of life in a productive manner, contribute to society in general, and can lead a fruitful life.” (World Health Organization, 2021). Mental health is a major issue in the Enugu metropolis, where millions of people are suffering from mental diseases such as anxiety and depression. According to the press reports of May 13, 2022, nearly 14 million people are affected by mental disorders (Daily Trust, 2022). Furthermore, according to the statistics of 2018, nearly 1.2 million youths ranging between the ages of 14 to 28 years are jobless in Nigeria (National Population Report, 2018).

In the context of Enugu Metropolis, a vibrant urban setting in southeastern Nigeria with a high concentration of tertiary institutions and active youth populations, the consumption of podcasts has increased substantially. Advances in smartphone penetration, affordable mobile data, and a growing interest in digital content have collectively contributed to an expanding audience for podcasts among young adults. Despite this growing trend, there are limited empirical studies examining how podcast listening affects youths’ mental well-being, particularly in African urban environments (Gotting, A. 2023).

In a relational term Podcasts offer a diverse range of content from mental health awareness and motivational talks to educational discussions and lifestyle topics that can influence the cognitive and emotional development of listeners. For youths, who are often navigating critical

stages of identity formation, emotional regulation, and social integration, these audio contents can serve as both informational resources and informal support systems (Okoye, O. C., et al. 2025).

Podcasts have become part of mobile phones over the last few years. Podcasts have also found their way into mental well-being settings, such as advising about how to improve one's well-being, meditation, psychoeducation, and research findings translation (Carrotte, et al., 2023).

More so, these have made podcasts a very vital tool when harnessed to address a lot of mental problems envisaged in the life of Enugu metropolis youths (Abdulmalik, 2016). This is owing to the fact that this mental problems may not be easily voiced out by the individual (youth) passing through one phase of mental stigma or another.

A beneficial use of the podcasting medium could be the development of a greater awareness of mental health and destigmatising conversations surrounding mental illness (Flinn, 2016). Through the sharing of credible and easily understandable information podcasts have the potential to demystify the subject, to educate the public, to inform listeners of appropriate care services and offer them tips for finding them. Integrating podcasts with social media networks would enable a great number of listeners and researchers to be exposed to information concerning mental health research and the education around mental illness, avoiding a range of barriers encountered through traditional public health communication methods.

Podcasting is already known as an effective means to distribute quickly information and a popular learning tool for both medical professionals in training and for professional development.

With anyone possessing a smartphone or computer able to access podcasts anywhere they would reach large and varied populations. As this broad reach has the potential to lead to significant influence it is imperative that the content of any such podcasts relies upon evidence from research

validated by the peer-review process and/or other authoritative and reliable source data (Caoilte, 2023).

One of the major advantages is convenience, as podcasts can be listened at any given time or place and be a helpful resource to educate and promote the knowledge about a wide range of health issues when engaging in other activities like working or driving (Robins et al. 2024). Health-related podcasts cover a wide range of subject matters from medical information and education, nutrition and fitness and many others (Robins et al. 2024). Health Podcasts have offered opportunities to present complex health information in simplified formats to the general population through online and downloadable methods (Sutton-Brady et al. 2019).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Mental well-being among youths is a priority area of concern, as this demographic faces various stressors including academic pressure, unemployment challenges, social expectations, and rapid socio-cultural changes. While traditional media and interpersonal interactions have long been studied for their psychological impacts, the influence of podcasts characterized by intimacy, reliability, and continuous engagement remains under-explored. There is need for evidence-based research to understand whether podcasts contribute positively to youths' resilience, emotional stability, coping mechanisms, and overall psychological health, or whether they inadvertently reinforce anxiety, misinformation, or negative self-perceptions (Cinelli et al., 2020).

Another indication of the great potential of podcasts in spreading innovations and evidence is the growing number of podcasts being used in professional training domains like medicine and clinical medicine. In fact, a recently conducted scoping review highlights the promising

potential of health-related podcasts in health promotion and the engaging nature of health podcasts (Robins et al. 2024).

Young people are some of the most avid users of digital media such as podcasts because of their heavy usage of mobile devices and the on-demand nature of the medium. Because of the developmental stage of young people, health communication might be able to affect lifelong health behaviours greatly. Even so, there is a dearth of research about the effects of health podcasts among the young population.

Whereas other reviews have focused on professional training and more broad-based health promotion, research shows that young people use digital media and podcasts in a way that affects their health-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour. As far as we know, there has been no review conducted about the effectiveness of health podcasts directed at youth/young people. There seems to be a lack in the knowledge base of the effectiveness of podcasts in promoting health-related behaviours among the youth.

That is why the ongoing scoping review is meant to look into the effectiveness of podcasts in the promotion of health among youths using the IMB Model (Fisher and Fisher 1992). This study aims at filling this gap by assessing the effect of podcasts on the psychological well-being of students of Godfrey Okoye University Enugu.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The major objective of this research is to explore the influence of podcasts on the mental well-being of the students of Godfrey Okoye University Enugu. The study will specifically attempt to:

1. To determine the frequency of podcast consumption among students of Godfrey Okoye University.
2. To identify the types of podcast content commonly listened to by students of Godfrey Okoye University.
3. To examine the influence of podcast consumption on the mental well-being of students of Godfrey Okoye University.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. What is the frequency of podcast consumption among students of Godfrey Okoye University?
2. What types of podcast content are most frequently listened to by students of Godfrey Okoye University?
3. What is the influence of podcast consumption on the mental well-being of students of Godfrey Okoye University?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study have both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this study anchored on the explanation provided by *Uses and Gratifications Theory* which was primarily propounded by Elihu Katz, together with Jay G. Blumler and Michael Gurevitch in 1973–1974. The theory explains how audiences actively choose media to satisfy specific needs such as information, entertainment, relaxation, education, and social interaction

Practically, the findings would provide students, lecturer, University Community, Media Authority, and the researcher with independent data which would be useful for making informed decision on the usefulness of podcast on wellbeing of students in Enugu State.

This research work on completion will benefit students on the how podcast engagement will improved the mental well-being of the scholarship activities in the campus. It will improve the learning conduction in easier, more engaging, and effective, leading to better academic performance.

This research work on completion will benefit lecturer to gain insight into the most effective podcast application strategies that download podcast for student's engagement for teaching in the campuses, enhancing their professional competence and instructional delivery.

This research work on completion will benefit the University Community, the outcome of the results will provide empirical data to guide the University community to have data that will be useful for National Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) and other bodies in designing computer-based (post casting) curricula that prioritize effective instructional modes.

This research work on completion will benefit media authorities in providing evidence-based recommendations on how to regulate media resources and consumption level of media contents in university campuses, ensuring that investments in hardware and software yield the desired educational outcomes.

It will assist researchers and students who will be interested in the similar topic as resource material.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research work will focus on the influence of podcasts on the mental wellbeing among students in Godfrey Okoye University Enugu.

The study will be conducted in Enugu Metropolis refers to the urban areas within Enugu State, Nigeria, including Enugu North, Enugu South, and Enugu East Local Government Areas. The Enugu East will captured because, the study is delimitation to Godfrey Okoye University Enugu.

The research will help to understand and ascertain the impact and views of podcasting among students in Godfrey Okoye University Enugu, as well as to fill the gap in the published literature on the influence of podcasts as it affects the mental wellbeing of youths in Enugu State metropolis.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in this work on their operational uses in this research to avoid misconceptions:

Influence: This describes it as the power or capacity to affect or change the actions, opinions, or development of someone or something else, without necessarily using direct force or command. Influence here is the capacity of podcasts in changing the narrative among youths in Enugu metropolis in terms of their mental wellbeing.

Podcast: A podcast refers to a series of digital audio recordings made available on the internet for streaming or download, which youths can listen to using smartphones, computers, or other digital devices. Operationally, Podcast will be discussed and measured on its consumption rate which will be referred to as the frequency, duration, and pattern of listening to podcasts by

Godfrey Okoye University students within a specified period (e.g., number of hours per week or number of episodes listened to).

Mental Well-being: Mental well-being refers to the overall psychological state of youths, including their emotional stability, ability to cope with stress, self-esteem, and general life satisfaction, as measured through a structured questionnaire or psychological scale.

Youths: Youths refer to young individuals within the age range defined for this study (e.g., 15–35 years) residing in Enugu Metropolis. In this study the youths will be seen from the lens of students of Godfrey Okoye University Enugu.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with the review of related literature considered important to this research and line with the research questions. The literature review is discussed under the following sub-headings: Conceptual Review; Theoretical Framework, Empirical Review and Summary of Related Literature.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 The concept of Podcasting

The term Podcast is defined by the Merriam Webster Dictionary as a program available in digital format for automatic download over the internet, which can be in a form of music or talk. In this way, the media can be accessed on a computer or portable device for convenience and can be played over and over again (Fernando, 2016). A podcast, a general term is an acoustic record accessible on the internet which is streamed or downloaded to a device; be it mobile or not, often obtainable as a sequence of episodes. It was introduced in the early 2000s, particularly during the rise of the iPod (BBC, 2023),

Podcasts go beyond mere audio recordings which have the capacity to turn mundane moments into moments of learning and growth (Chauhan & Pandey, 2023). While it may not be possible to consider podcasts as a replacement to therapy sessions, there are ways to cope through techniques that can be applied directly in our lives. Hence, the purpose of the study is to investigate the affective side of a sound-based medium such as podcasts to achieve mindfulness.

There have been many developments regarding the growth of the podcast usage, where at present, there are approximately two million podcast series and more than 48 million podcast episodes (Casares, 2022). In the USA, there are more than 40% of adults who listen to podcasts within the last month, and in Australia, more than 30% of adults listen to podcasts within the same time period, while one out of five listens to podcasts every week. It is observed that younger generation of people from age 12 to 34 is the major user of podcasts.

Podcast has been identified as an emerging medium with the capability of covering all sorts of topics ranging from news, entertainment, and sports to health (Robins et al. 2024). Podcasts are basically compressed audio files, which resemble an on-demand radio program. The term “podcasting” was coined in 2004 from the combination of two words, namely “iPod” and “broadcasting” by a journalist named Ben Hammersley (Singer 2019). The podcasting industry has experienced a remarkable growth; according to Backlinko (2025), the global population of people who listen to podcasts is expected to reach 546.7 million with a growth rate of 7.85 percent in 2024. The growth is expected to rise in future years since the global listener base will be 651.7 million by the year 2027 (Backlinko, 2025). This development is brought about by the positive impact of podcasts on addressing the mental condition of youths in Enugu Metropolis.

Nevertheless, unlike other mediums of broadcasting, podcasts are cheap in the sense that they require nothing more than a recording application and microphone. Podcasts can also be distributed easily via platforms like podbean, spotify, and Google podcasts, thus making radio stations possible for mental health practitioners globally. There are plenty of mental health podcasts that would be beneficial in providing knowledge and help. The best mental health podcasts made by therapists can be categorized as “We Can Do Hard Things”, “The happiness

Lab”, and “Oprah’s Super Soul Conversations” (Calin, 2023). Other mental health podcasts can be categorized as “Inside mental health” by psych control, “The Mental Illness Happy Hour”, and “the anxiety coach’s podcast”. Other mental health podcasts that are suggested by internal care include “The Daily Meditation podcast”, “The Calm Collective”, and “The mindful minute”.

2.1.2 The Concept of Mental Wellbeing (Health)

The issue of mental well-being has become a prevalent issue across the world. Youth mental well-being is one of the important indicators of the achievement of SDG targets (UNICEF, 2023). However, many young people facing mental illnesses do not go for treatment due to biases and social stigma around them. As such, several initiatives have been taken to sensitize and empower the youth regarding mental well-being through new media extensions. Listening to podcasts has become very popular amongst Indian youth in the post-covid times. Discussion of mental well-being has also gained momentum during this time. Mindfulness as an approach for managing stress has proved to be effective in achieving mental well-being.

Mental illness is an increasing public health problem because of the prolonged effects it has on one’s physical, social, and economic well-being (World Health Organization, 2019). To date, mental health remains a neglected field in developing nations. Mental illness can affect one individual out of every four in their lifetime by impairing their functioning and thinking abilities (Van der Ham et. al, 2011). This problem is jeopardized by what was mentioned earlier in chapter one as stigmatization, low access to care etc.

Some of the causes for mental disorders include depression, rejection, over-analyzing, self-criticism and self-blame due to low self-esteem, anxiety and worry, and conflict in family and interpersonal relationships. Among all of the above factors, there are both psychosocial and environmental factors (Bowers et al, 2012). In spite of being a psychiatric issue, the youths can be generally affected by mental health issues. Some of these might be varied challenges and problems which hinder their development process and negatively impact the quality of their lives, emotionally, socially and even occupationally. This research work will address the gap between media platforms (Podcasts) and its impact on the mental well-being of youths in Enugu metropolis.

There are many podcasts on mental health that are available and could be very helpful. There are some great podcasts on mental health that are suggested by therapists, and some of the best are “We Can Do Hard Things”, “The Happiness Lab”, and “Oprah’s Super Soul Conversations” (Calin, 2023). Popular podcasts in relation to mental health include “Inside Mental Health”, which is produced by Psych Central; “The Mental Illness Happy Hour”, and “The Anxiety Coaches Podcast”. Other podcasts recommended by “11 Mental Health Podcasts You Shouldn’t Miss”, written by Integral Care, include “The Daily Meditation Podcast”, “The Calm Collective”, and “The Mindful Minute”.

There is a growing trend of MH and wellbeing issues affecting many students enrolled in colleges, with numbers on the rise. The National Alliance on Mental Illness indicates that 73% of the US college students interviewed had a MH crisis during their studies (NAMI, 2012). This is a serious public health problem and a matter of concern for the students and higher learning institutions.

Moreover, persons suffering from Mental Disorders such as depression, pose an increased risk of suicide which happens to be the second leading cause of death 9 among US college students (Hirsch et al., 2019; Turner, 2013). In the case of people suffering from anxiety, the human body is known to react with physiological effects such as high blood pressure, heart disease, digestive issues, and chronic pain that can reduce life expectancy as well as the quality of life of individuals (Bordoni, 2017; Hildrum, 2008). Moreover, loneliness has been identified as one of the predictors of mortality in college students and many other diseases (Ozawa-de Silva, 2020).

2.1.3 The University Students and Mental Health Concern

Most students with Mental Health issues suffer from stress, depression, and loneliness, which affect their academic performance, but they do not necessarily qualify for any form of clinical intervention (Mofatteh, 2021). Students with MH issues are usually referred to campus counseling services, but there are other avenues available through which MH concerns can be addressed apart from counseling services (Moroz et al., 2020).

The availability of other alternatives for such students will help prevent the MH concerns from escalating into something more serious. While many studies have been conducted on MH issues of university students, information is still lacking about how common these issues are and what measures the students take to cope with them. It is, therefore, necessary to collect additional information in order to understand what should be done to meet their MH needs.

More specifically, there should be an increased comprehension of (a) how many days are affected by Mental Health issues, (b) what behaviors develop as a result of mental health symptoms and how these symptoms are currently being handled, (c) why these mental health

symptoms occur, and (d) how these mental health symptoms affect students socially, physically, and academically. Therefore, the aim of this research was to explore the realm of Mental Health as it relates to stress, sadness, and loneliness amongst current college students.

This data will prove helpful in gaining an insight into how innovative programs can be developed to solve the existing problems related to the state of Mental Health of college students. The study will contribute to the literature as it will look into some aspects of Mental Health problems in a particular sub-group of people who have faced Mental Health problems in the last decade. The problem of Mental Health problems in college students will be quantified even after the COVID-19 pandemic in this study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on synthesis from the Uses and Gratifications Theory (U.G.T) as the theoretical framework for this study.

2.2.1 The Uses and Gratification Theory

Uses and Gratification Theory was basically developed by Elihu Katz in collaboration with Jay G. Blumler and Michael Gurevitch in 1973-1974. The theory shows how audiences select media to meet their particular requirements including information, entertainment, relaxation, learning, and social interaction. Prior to that, Herta Herzog had undertaken researches in the 1940s which gave way for the development of the theory.

UGT stands for Uses and Gratifications Theory which is a theory from media studies that addresses the selection process of using media by people in order to satisfy their particular needs and wants. The theory differs from the former one where the audience was regarded as

passive recipients of the message of media since in this case the audience is considered an active one.

The central idea of the theory is that people use media for different purposes depending on their personal needs, interests, and expectations. Individuals decide, what media to use, when to use it, how to use it, and why they use it. A person may listen to podcasts for education, watch movies for entertainment, or use social media for interaction and relaxation.

It is especially useful in explaining why people prefer certain media platforms over others and how media influence behavior and satisfaction. It is very useful in this study due to fact that it utilizes and derives from this theory to justify its theoretical framework. Hence, the UGT is very crucial in this study owing to the fact that without it one cannot explain what media to use, when to use it, how to use it and why they use it. The theory remains one of the most important theories in mass communication and media studies.

It proposes that media consumers are active participants who select media (podcast) to satisfy specific needs, rather than passive recipients of media messages. Uses and Gratification Theory (U.G.T) has been applied to new media like the Internet and social media platform like Podbean, Spotify etc., prompting expanded models that incorporate concepts like Interactivity and hypertextuality.

This theory seeks to examine listening of podcast choices and behavior on their mental well-being of the students at Godfrey Okoye University (GOUNI). The theory focuses on ways in which people use Podcasts to satisfy individual wants. The students also listened to podcast to be informed, and entertained and learn new things.

2.3 Empirical Review

Empirical review involves summarizing empirical investigations from existing research studies that are directly related to the topic under investigations.

In order to identify barriers to the use of mental health awareness podcasting among Nigerian universities, Ukwueze and Okpulo (2025) explored a number of factors associated with its use. Research question based on the five hypotheses conducted with a survey research method design using one hundred and one (101) sample size comprising eighty-one (81) students and nineteen (19) lecturers from relevant departments of University of Nigeria, Nsukka. A structured questionnaire of 52 items based on research questions were designed and administered for data collection.

The findings showed that availability of necessary technical infrastructure needed to exploit podcasts was high but lack of awareness on how to access and exploit it by potential users was a high barrier for successful use of the podcast while an unstable power supply could make the programme for mental health awareness to collapse.

Recommendations to address issues in question and infrastructural challenges in effective adoption of podcasts are provided in their work. Amal Ibrahim (2025) investigated a podcast that is the first in The Arabic Republic of Egypt and called, podcast mental health in the educational setting at El Baha University College of Science and Arts, Elmikhwa Branch, in order to explore its effect on improving the mental health awareness level of students and promote their psychological well-being within the educational environment. Descriptive and analytical research methods were employed to study the podcast in relation to teaching and learning process. The results indicate a positive effect of podcast on students' performance regarding mental awareness

and helped in learning. A related research by Aremu B. V., Ayodeji M. A. And Adeoluwa O. V. Researched on podcast usage and students' attitudes towards learning in Ekiti State Universities.

With descriptive survey research design method, 300 undergraduates were selected from the said Universities using accidental sampling method. Questionnaire on Podcast and Attitude of Students toward Learning Questionnaire (PASLQ) was used and established valid and reliable. Findings revealed that student used little educational podcast though it has a good attitude toward education and the results obtained establish a high positive relationship between podcast usage and the attitude of students toward learning. Furthermore, Montagni and Christopher Tzourio(2020) made a systematic review called 'Digital Use Related to Mental Health among University Students'.

The study found that there is a large global demand for mental health information from university students, together with a considerable interest in using digital devices to support their mental well-being. The researchers concluded that web and mobile-based mental health solutions are needed for this group. Naoise et al (2025) aimed to explore engagement and listeners' experiences with mental health-related podcasts. Listeners were questioned about what drives them to listen to mental health podcasts and what their experience was like after listening.

An online survey was completed by 722 participants. The findings showed that listeners' most frequently reported motivation for listening to mental health podcasts was improving mental health knowledge, whilst those with less education and lower prior knowledge reported more benefit from listening.

The authors concluded that this evidence supports mental health podcasts as a useful psychoeducational resource to increase knowledge and engagement among those with lower levels of prior mental health knowledge. Benedict et al. (2021) highlighted the power of podcast

as an innovation in public health communication through a description of the public health insight podcast(PHIP) and the various roles it plays in public health student led initiatives, discourses against racial injustice, academic curriculum, and public health awareness campaign on neglected tropical diseases. The author stated public health communication as a process of generating creating disseminating interpreting health messages for public understanding and prompting the behaviors change for better health outcomes.

The podcast (Public Health Insight PodcastPHIP) hosted by masters of public health practitioners offered comprehensive insight and informative and engaging discourse on varied public health issues including but not limited to climate change, mental health, substance abuse and others at international level through multiple platforms such as apple podcasts and spotify, with wide audience from several countries and regions. As a result of its wide spread appeal the PHIP have created several new opportunities for collaboration, for the disseminate of evidence based public health information, the use of podcast material in academic settings, and raising public awareness on neglected diseases. However, there remain challenges that need to address to enhance its production and accessibility especially in developing and low resource setting due to language barriers, poor network and telecommunication infrastructure.

Benedict et al.(2021) concluded by stressing that their work was exploratory in nature and the evidence needed to be systematically examined for listener experience, long- term impact and generalizability of PHIP both in academia and across broader public health practice.

2.4 Summary of Reviewed Studies

The reviewed empirical studies indicate that podcasts have become an increasingly popular medium among young people, particularly due to their accessibility, flexibility, and diverse content offerings. Several studies conducted in Western countries have demonstrated that

podcast listening especially mental health and wellness-focused content can positively influence emotional resilience, coping strategies, and perceived social support among young adults. These studies suggest that podcasts may serve as informal tools for psychological education and emotional encouragement.

Despite the growing body of literature on podcasts and mental health, most empirical studies have focused on populations in developed countries, particularly among university students. There is limited research examining this relationship within African contexts, especially in urban areas such as Enugu Metropolis. Furthermore, few studies have specifically investigated how demographic variables influence the relationship between podcast consumption and mental well-being.

Therefore, the current study seeks to bridge this gap by providing localized empirical evidence on how podcasts influence the mental well-being of youths in Enugu Metropolis, considering content type, listening frequency, and demographic characteristics.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Methodology is explained in this chapter. This chapter gives an overview of the methods and approaches used to accomplish the research goals. In particular, this chapter is divided into the following sub-headings: Research Design, Area of Study, Source of Data, Population of Study, Sample Size Determination, Sampling Approach, Approach of Data Collection, Validity of Research Instrument, Reliability of Research Instrument, and Data Analysis Method.

3.1 Research Design

Research design is a logical approach that links data with research problems, research questions, and research conclusions. In this research, the survey research design was used as the design which is the best fit for the research objectives. Survey design is the best fit in this research since it investigates the connection between podcast listening and mental health without manipulation of any variable.

3.4 Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of all the students of Godfrey Okoye University. However, Data base below show that the students of Godfrey Okoye University is 2,972 as a target population.

Table 3.1: Population Distribution of Students of Godfrey Okoye University Enugu

Faculty/college	Estimated Student Population	Percentage
Faculty of Arts	320	10.8%
Faculty of Education	350	11.8%
Faculty of Management and Social Sciences	620	20.9%
Faculty of Natural Sciences and Environmental Studies	530	17.8%
Faculty of Law	340	11.4%
Faculty of Computer and Information Science	410	13.8%
College of Medicine	220	7.4%
College of Nursing	182	6.1%
Total	2,972	100%

Source: National Universities Commission and Godfrey Okoye University Records (2026)

3.5 Sample Size

The sample size, according to Wimmer and Dominick (2013), refers to a very small portion of the population possessing the attributes of the whole population. Since it is impossible to investigate the whole population at once, it becomes necessary to select an

appropriate sample from the population. The sample must be a good representation of the population.

The sample size for this research can be calculated using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula. This is a popular formula in social science research for calculating the sample size from a given population.

Taro Yamane Formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample Size

N = Total population size (2,972)

E = Level of significance (margin of error), 0.05

1 = Constant

The population of youths in Enugu metropolis selected for the study is 400, and the researcher uses a 5% margin of error (0.05).

$$n = \frac{2,972}{1 + 2,972 (0.05)^2}$$

Step 1: $(0.05)^2 = 0.0025$

Step 2: $1 + 2,972 \times 0.0025$

Step 3: $n = \underline{2,972}$

$$8.43$$

$$n = 352.55$$

Approximately, 353

Therefore, the sample size for the study is 353 sample size

3.6 Sampling Technique

In this research the method used was multi stage sampling, this consists of: - Cluster Sampling, Simple random Sampling, Bowley's proportionate sampling method, Convenient Sampling method.

Stage One: In this case, the researcher used cluster sampling method, where a population is segmented into clusters according to some common trait or characteristics (for example geographical location or organizational setup). The clusters are then randomly selected, and all members of the clusters are used as part of the sample. In this particular case, Godfrey Okoye University was segregated into 8 faculties, and each faculty comprises of different departments.

Stage Two: Simple random sampling ensures equal opportunities for every individual to be selected in the sample. The researcher grouped students according to faculties in the following categories: Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Environmental Studies, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Computer

and Information Science, College of Medicine and College of Nursing. The selection of departments within the faculty grouping involved placing the names of departments in a bag then picking them at random. This method ensured that the selection process was indeed random and included all areas of study.

Stage Three: At this point, the Bowley's proportionate sampling procedure was used in order to guarantee that faculties are fairly represented when distributing questionnaires, ensuring proportional representation of faculties in the distribution of questionnaires, in accordance with their respective population. The formula used to calculate this is: $n_h = (N_h/N) \times n$ Where n_h is the sample size for stratum h , N_h is the population for stratum h , N is the total population size, while n is total sample size.

Stage Four: The researcher adopted a form of sampling referred to as Convenience sampling, where participants were selected because they are easily accessible and willing to be involved in the research process. Another name for this sampling is available sample. In this study, the researcher distributed questionnaires to particular departments in the university.

3.6 Instrument for Data Collection

The main tool used for data gathering in this study was the questionnaire. The questions in the questionnaire were related to socio-demographic variables of the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. In particular, all the questions in part 'A' aimed at providing general and demographic data about the respondents, whereas the rest of the questions in part 'B' focused on answering the research questions.

3.8 Validity of the Instrument

Validity of the instrument was determined by content validity. The research questionnaire was given to the research supervisor and Mass Communication experts for them to check and evaluate it. In fact, their scrutiny, suggestions, changes, and recommendations helped to transform the research tool to ensure the adequacy of the questions in measuring the variables of the study. This is in agreement with Middleton (2019), who saw validity as the degree to which an instrument measures what one intends to measure accurately.

3.9 Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the tool was tested by the test-retest approach. Thirty questionnaires were given to thirty female youth from the six communities to complete, with five respondents from each community. Their answers formed the pre-test.

Two weeks later, the same questionnaire was given again to the same respondents to collect post-test data. The comparison of the data from the two administrations was made to check the consistency of the instrument. The more alike the responses were, the more it showed the instrument's reliability for the study.

Because of this, McLeod (2023), in agreement, noted that reliability is the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study. Because of this, if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar method, the study is considered reliable.

3.10 Method of Data Analysis

Collected data from the respondents were analyzed by descriptive statistics. Frequency distribution tables, simple percentages, mean, and standard deviation were used to answer Research Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4. The mean was based on a criterion mean of 2.50. Any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted, while any item with a mean score below 2.50 was rejected. The statistical data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), and the outcomes were displayed in tables for easy interpretation based on the text.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this chapter four, the presentation and analysis of data adopted in the conduct of this research are presented under the following sub-headings: Presentation of Data, Analysis of Data, and Discussion of Findings.

Table 4.1 Response Rate

S / N	Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Copied of the Questionnaire responded	344	97
2	Copied of the Questionnaire Not Responded	9	3
	Total Sample size	353	100

Source: Field Survey (2026)

Table 4.1 presents the response rate for the survey, showing that out of the total sample of 353 selected respondents, 344 completed and returned the questionnaires, representing 97% of the sample. Then only 9 respondents, equivalent to 3%, did not respond, indicating a high level of participation and suggesting that the findings are likely representative of the population studied.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis of the Demographical Section of the Questionnaire

Table 4.1.1 Distribution of Respondents Based on their Gender /Sex

S/ N	GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Male	150	44%
2	Female	190	55%
	TOTAL	344	100

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The postulation in the above table 4.1.1 indicates that out of the 344 respondents, 150 representing 44% are male, while 190 representing 55% are female respectively. This result shows that the respondents are dominated by female and this is owing to the fact that female residents are more accessible than the male at Godfrey Okoye University Uguwuomu-Nike, Enugu State.

Table 4.1.2 Distribution of Respondents Based on their Age

S/N	AGE	REQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	20-30	200	58%
2	31-40	94	27%
3	41-50	50	15%

	TOTAL	344	100
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Source: Field Survey, 2026

Based on the above postulation, table 4.1.2 revealed that 200 out of 344 respondents which represents 58% of the respondents studied are between 20-30 years of age, while 94 respondents representing 27% of the respondents are between 31-40 years. Also 50 respondents representing 15% are between the age brackets of 41-50. This result goes to show that most of the respondent's ages range between 31- 40 and are more mature individual in age.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF DATA: Presentation of Data Based on Research Questions

Research Question One: How frequently do youths in Godfrey Okoye University listen to podcasts?

Table 4.3: Frequency of Podcast Listening

S/N	RESPONSE	REQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Daily	200	58%
2	Weekly	94	27%
3	Occasionally	50	15%
4	Rarely	-	0%
	TOTAL	344	100

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The findings reveal that 200 respondents (58%) listen to podcasts daily, then 94 respondents (27%) listen weekly, then 50 respondents (15%) listen Occasionally, while nil (-) respondents (0%) listen Rarely. This indicates a high level of podcast engagement among students of Godfrey Okoye University.

Research Question Two: What types of podcast content are most frequently listened to by students of Godfrey Okoye University?

Table 4.4: Preferred Podcast Content

S/N	RESPONSE	REQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Entertainment	100	29%
2	Mental health/self-help	94	27%
3	Educational	50	15%
4	News/Politics	50	15%
5	Religious	50	15%
	TOTAL	344	100

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The findings reveal that 100 respondents (29%) listen to Entertainment, then 94 respondents (27%) listen to Mental health/self-help, then 50 respondents (15%) listen to Educational, then 50 respondents (15%) listen to News/Politics, while 50 respondents (15%) listen to Religious. This indicates that Entertainment podcasts ranked highest with 29%, followed

by mental health and self-help podcasts with 27%. This suggests that students of Godfrey Okoye University consume podcasts mainly for relaxation and psychological support.

Research Question Three: Does podcast consumption influence the mental well-being of students of Godfrey Okoye University?

Table 4.5: Perceived Influence of Podcasts on Mental Well-Being

S/N	RESPONSE	REQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	strongly agreed	200	58%
2	agree	94	27%
3	disagree	50	15%
4	strongly disagree	-	0%
	TOTAL	344	100

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The findings reveal that 200 respondents (58%) strongly agreed to influence Podcasts on Mental Well-Being, then 94 respondents (27%) agreed to influence Podcasts on Mental Well-Being, then 50 respondents (15%) disagreed to influence Podcasts on Mental Well-Being, while nil (-) respondents (0%) strongly agreed to influence Podcasts on Mental Well-Being. This indicates a majority of respondents agreed that podcast consumption positively influences their mental well-being. Specifically, 200 respondents (58%) strongly agreed, while 94 respondents (27%) agreed. This indicates that podcasts contribute positively to emotional and psychological health among students of Godfrey Okoye University.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that podcast consumption is highly prevalent among students of Godfrey Okoye University in Enugu State. Most respondents listen to podcasts daily or weekly, confirming the growing popularity of digital audio platforms among young people.

The study further revealed that entertainment and mental health/self-help podcasts are the most preferred categories. This aligns with findings from recent studies which observed that podcasts provide emotional support, relaxation, and coping strategies for students of Godfrey Okoye University.

The data also showed that podcast consumption positively influences mental well-being through stress reduction, emotional support, motivation, and improved self-esteem. Previous studies similarly found that podcasts can improve mental health awareness and coping strategies among students of Godfrey Okoye University.

However, the study identified some negative consequences associated with excessive podcast usage, including distraction and reduced face-to-face social interaction. This supports broader research on digital media consumption and students of Godfrey Okoye University mental health.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter five, the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations the following form the subheadings that is treated under this chapter; Summary of findings, Implications of findings, Conclusion, Recommendations and Areas of further studies.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study examined the influence of podcast consumption on the mental well-being of students of Godfrey Okoye University in Enugu State. Based on the data collected and analyzed, the following findings were made:

1. The study found that podcast consumption is highly popular among youths in Enugu metropolis. A large proportion of respondents indicated that they listen to podcasts either daily or weekly, showing that podcasts have become a regular part of students media consumption habits.
2. The findings revealed that entertainment podcasts were the most frequently listened to by respondents, followed by mental health/self-help and educational podcasts. This suggests that youths use podcasts not only for relaxation and entertainment but also for personal development and emotional support.
3. The study discovered that podcast consumption has a significant positive influence on the mental well-being of youths. Most respondents agreed that podcasts help them feel better emotionally and psychologically.

5.3 Conclusion

This study examined the influence of podcast consumption on the mental well-being of youths in Enugu metropolis. The study established that podcasts have become a popular form of media consumption among Godfrey Okoye University students due to their accessibility, flexibility, and wide range of content.

The findings revealed that many Godfrey Okoye University students frequently listen to podcasts, especially music, motivational, and funny content. The study further showed that podcast consumption contributes positively to the mental well-being of Godfrey Okoye University students by helping to reduce stress, provide emotional support, motivate listeners, improve self-esteem, and reduce feelings of loneliness.

Overall, the study concludes that podcasts play a significant role in influencing the emotional and psychological well-being of Godfrey Okoye University students. When properly utilized, podcasts can serve as effective tools for music, motivation, funny, and student's development. Therefore, Godfrey Okoye University students, educators, media practitioners, and policymakers should encourage the responsible use of podcasts as a medium for promoting positive mental health and social development.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. University students should be encouraged to listen to podcasts that promote positive mental health, personal development, education, and motivation rather than content that may negatively influence their behavior or emotional well-being.
2. Podcast creators and media practitioners should develop more informative, educational, and mental health-related podcast content that can help University students cope with stress, anxiety, depression, and other emotional challenges.

3. Educational institutions should integrate podcast-based learning and counseling programs into their academic activities to support students' learning experiences and mental well-being.

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