

# Is All Well?: Relationship of Media Consumption of Filipino Out of School Youth with their Subjective Wellbeing

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**Abstract** - Studies on youth media consumption and its effects on their being have always been the interest of many studies all over the globe. It is because of youth's importance in the society and the roles they will play in the future, most specifically the educated ones. However, in the Philippines, there is only little information about the out of school youth. This study aims to determine the media consumption of the out of school youth since they are one of the most deprived individuals on having sufficient knowledge about media and its effects on individuals. Among other types of media, television has the highest percentage of consumption among the Filipino out of school youth more than the Internet and radio. Using statistical methods, we relate the relationship of consuming a specific media to their subjective wellbeing. Findings revealed that not all media affects the out of school youth's feelings of being contented, joyful, and relaxed, only specific media types affects such feelings. Overall, the study shows that the out of school youth and their consumption of media are indeed related with each other.

**Keywords:** Media consumption, out-of-school youth, television, internet, radio, subjective wellbeing, Polytechnic University of the Philippines

## INTRODUCTION

Media plays a major role on meeting the needs ascending from social roles and individual point of views [1] in today's world. People see media in almost every aspect of life, providing means to be informed, educated, entertained, aware on advertising, and connects the diverse and detached part of the society [2].

The media focused in this study are radio, television and internet. Television and radio are forms of broadcast media and the internet is the modern media.

Traditional media is being practiced by societies worldwide. It is most associated with folk media, which reflects the common culture of a community [19]. In this study, the unit of analysis for the traditional media are television and radio. However, as rapid transition of technology in civilization takes place, higher demand for faster dissemination of information is currently attainable through the use of modern media. Hence, in addition to television and radio, Internet is also included in the study [36].

In relation to this, media consumption such as using computers, as well as watching television, was correlated to poorer wellbeing in children which is based on the a study from the JAMA Network Journals [3] entitled, Electronic Media Associated with Poorer Wellbeing in Children. Researchers also noted that electronic media usage can be an inactive behavior and an inactive behavior is correlated with adverse health results, and is harmful to young aged children. This led this study to focus on the relationship of the media such as radio, television and internet with the out of school youth's subjective wellbeing.

There are media studies that relate media and individuals who focus on youth because this is the stage of life where an individual is nurtured and developed. The youth today is the nation of our tomorrow. What we are working on today is what all of us will get in the future [5]. But aside from students, the Out of school youth (OSY) who prematurely miss many of the fundamentals of basic

education is also a part of the youth who is said to be the nation's future. It is also important to know how the media affect and shape their lives and what these individuals' media preference and consumptions are. These individuals lose a valuable opportunity to learn about many things including media literacy [6]. In fact, a study was administered to youth ages 12 to 18 [4]. The purpose is to measure the mental health of youth through identifying their subjective wellbeing. The findings showed that the lower the depressive symptoms, the higher their mental health. The general results suggested focusing on mental health as the presence of sufficient levels of subjective wellbeing is significant on adolescent research.

Adults have always been anxious about the impact of innovative devices and technologies on human progress. During the ancient times, there were dangers associated with writing. Specifically, Socrates cautioned the early scholars about this. In spite of this, Plato had preserved his principles through writing them down in the dialogue Phaedrus (370 BCE). So it is crucial to identify how they consume the diverse media forms plus how the OSY prefer one over another along with the dangers associated with it. It is simply because they are vulnerable to misinformation from unreliable sources. Also, they may never learn about the issues at all. But in spite of all these less awareness, they are still inclined in using different forms of media that became inevitable in today's society. In fact, there is a study conducted in Netherlands [7] that stated every year there are 25,000 and 30,000 OSY and they use media for the development of social skills and social capital. Thus, development among OSY is available. Although they are not in school, they are still influenced by different forms of media which affects the wellness of their lives also. The OSY's use of media affects their need to form and maintain interpersonal relationships. It has been described as a fundamental need [8] and is unsafe to healthy development [9] of an individual. Mainly the long-term effects in terms of subjective wellbeing and cognitive routine have been questioned for adolescents [10]. Examples are seeing their lack of life experience, developing insights of themselves and, therefore, their greater weakness. It simply says that understanding the effects of media use for the younger generation is of vital importance for the society [10].

The youth use up an average of greater than 7 hours/day using different forms of media. The

majority utilizes the cell phone, the Internet, personal computer, a video-game console, and television [11]. Radio is not majority used and is seldom utilized. The future of the TV viewing experiences will be more active and interactive [12]. Youth is both a thrilling time and also a time for too much exposure to the world – coming on the time for self-identity and thrill-seeking sexual activity [13]. It is also the stage of life when individuals begin to start building their identities outside their family and where they work together all by themselves with every person in the community. In America, Internet use (IU) rates stay to upsurge, with the former decade seeing a 152% growth in time spent online among Americans [14]. Specifically, adolescents and young adults use the Internet roughly 17 h per week [38] [39]. In a survey performed by the Pew Research Center, out of the 2462 American middle- and high-school teachers, 87% sensed that the pervasive Internet use can lead to an 'easily distracted generation with short attention spans' and 88% of them sensed that nowadays, students possess a diverse cognitive skills due to the digital technologies they have grown up with [15]. Furthermore, the students were also assumed to more likely to recall where to access exact information than to recall the exact information itself.

Align with the aim of the study to identify the relationship of media consumption and subjective wellbeing, the term subjective wellbeing is also utilized. In relation to the media use of youth, subjective wellbeing refers to the scientific term for how an individual assess his or her life. There are three elements of subjective wellbeing. First element is inclusive judgment like life contentment or fulfillment. The second one is assessment of the life's domains like commitment or work. The last one is their current emotional outlook on what is going on with their lives, either positive or negative feelings [16].

The purpose of the study is to provide new information that focus on OSY, their media consumption and its relationship to their subjective wellbeing. The unit of analysis will be on the usage of radio, television, and internet. Since there has been a gradual decrease in the usage of radio, this study also aims to determine the current use of this among the Filipino OSY. Moreover, there are very limited studies regarding the welfare of the OSY, this study is significant to pursue to present new foundation of empirical knowledge. This study seeks to determine

the relationship of media consumption of Filipino OSY to their subjective wellbeing.

The study utilized two theories to address the variables used in the study: Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) and Desire Theory (DT). The first theory (UGT) is the result of early scholars' curiosity about the reasons for using specific medium among media consumers [17]. It attempts to explain the gratifications that the individuals seek in an exact form of media and their point of view of comparison for that specific form of media and its substance [18]. There are three categories under the gratifications: content, social, and process. The element that media offers the audience (entertainment & information) is called content gratifications. Meanwhile, process gratification pertains to the advantage of using it (accessibility & usefulness). And lastly, social gratifications, wherein media consumers use a specific medium for interpersonal communication and purpose of gratifying social need [19] [20]. This theory acknowledges personal option and use. It also includes if these individuals can use the similar form of media for different purposes [21]. Moreover, it tells that persons have sufficient self-awareness of their media use, concern, and fulfillment to let researchers have the precise depiction of that specific use [22].

Secondly, Desire Theory (also called as Desire-Satisfaction Theory; other coined it as Preference Satisfaction Theory), wellbeing resides in getting what one wants. Scholars aver that this theory makes measuring subjective wellbeing more conceivable than other theories like hedonism, given that desires are thought to be exposed through individual's choice [23]. It plainly explains that wellbeing is a result of individual's met desires. Additionally, a hedonistic proposition is also encompassed in this theory wherein it claims that people usually like to have a lot of pleasure and less of pain. Furthermore, it says that an individual is satisfied because of engagement on things that interest interests him the most.

The study utilized the use of an audience-centered model in result of converging two theories. Audiences have the ability to oppose control because they have their different grounds for selecting to respond to the messages of media [24]. The variables are the Quezon City Out of School Youth's media consumption and their self-reported subjective wellbeing after the media use.

## **MATERIAL AND METHOD**

The study used a quantitative research approach. This approach is concerned with the repetition of data and focuses on counting [25]. The observation of data made through this approach can be translated or reduced to numbers. Therefore, it is appropriate to be used in the study since the objective of the study is to understand the observed data using numbers.

Moreover, descriptive design is used as the structure of this study in data interpretation. The first procedure is the gathering of data needed to answer the established research questions and objectives [26]. Then, the data gathered is analyzed to make sense of it. Descriptive studies intend to disclose what is going on or what exists, the focus is on the question of the characteristics or elements of the occurrence [25]. Hence, the quantitative approach was used as the design for this study since the primary aim is to analyze the relationship between the media consumption and the OSY subjective wellbeing.

Furthermore, survey was used to gather data. Demographic information was collected to describe the characteristics of the respondents. Personal information like sex orientation, age, and address were asked from them. This is to ensure that they are qualified for the unit of analysis in terms of age and place. Parallel questions were used for all types of media (radio, TV, and internet). Filtering questions were used like "Do you listen to radio?" If the answer is Yes, they will continue answering the survey questionnaire until the end; and if no, they will skip the set of questions for a specific media type. Through this, the media preference of the Filipino OSY was determined. For the media consumption, the respondents were asked about the frequency of their media usage, and their specific preferences according to the type of media consumed. For instance, one of the questions for the frequency of media usage is, "How often do you listen to radio?", "How often do you watch the television?", and "How often do you access the internet?" This question is answered by selecting the item that best describes their use: Everyday, once a week, once a month, whenever they want to, and they were also given a chance to specify their answer if not found in the choices listed. In order to identify the relationship of media consumption and subjective wellbeing in terms of being relaxed, contented, and joyful, two sets of tables were given. The first table is all about their reasons for using a specific type of media. They were given a chance to

choose more than one type of the media per reason. For instance, in order to be contented, what media do they usually use: radio, TV, or internet. The questions were ordered by three categories in identifying the reasons for media consumption namely: social gratifications (satisfactions/category), content gratifications (satisfactions/category), and process gratifications (satisfactions/category) [19]. The next table was given for them to measure their subjective wellbeing after every media usage. For instance, “I feel joyful after watching the television”. Beside every statement were numbers that correspond to their answers (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree). They were instructed to encircle the number that best describes their answer.

The subjective wellbeing of the respondents was measured according to the specific guidelines drawn from Day Reconstruction Method (DRM); it was used as a guide in formulating the questions. The respondents were asked about events on the previous usage to recall feelings such as the experience of happiness, joy and contentment to particular media-related activities.

In this study, the respondents were the Filipino OSY living from Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City, Philippines. The total population of OSY therein according to the Anti-Poverty Survey conducted by National Statistics Office on 2011 is 10,987 who are 15 to 24 years old. Only 386 among 10,987 Out of School Youth participated in the study. Through the Slovin's Formula, the researchers took the number of samples.

As the sample size of the study, three hundred and eighty six was set as determined by the Slovin's formula. Certain criteria were considered in this sample, thus making the purposive sampling as a technique used in the study. These criteria are (1) ages 15-24 years old; (2) residing in Brgy. Commonwealth, Quezon City; and (3) currently unenrolled and unemployed.

Furthermore, the respondents have the right to withdraw from the study anytime. The respondent's right of confidentiality was also considered. The researchers guaranteed that the survey will only be used for academic purposes only.

Finally, descriptive statistics were used to describe demographic characteristics of the respondents, the media consumption, and their subjective wellbeing. To test the relationship between media consumption and subjective wellbeing,

correlation statistics were used such as p-value to determine whether the relationship between variables were significant or not significant.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study shows the media consumption of the OSY on radio, television, and the Internet in relation to their subjective wellbeing.

After the data had been gathered, we processed the media consumption data and combined it with the subjective wellbeing data. We used frequency and percentage statistical techniques to examine the media consumption data using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) because it allows us to get the most frequent answer of 386 out of school youths that answered the survey. On the other hand, we used weighted mean for the analysis of the subjective wellbeing data because it helped us know the average answer of the respondents since we used a Likert scale on that part of the survey questionnaire.

**Table 1. Media Consumers Among OSY**

Do you use this type of media?	Radio	Television	Internet
Yes	77.5%	94.6%	83.4%
No	22.5%	5.4%	16.6%
No Answer	0%	0%	0%

The data showed a big majority (77.5%) of radio listeners among OSY. It is confirmed by the data gathered by Marketing Charts (2015) that showed high percentage of radio listenership among Generation Z, and Millennials [27]. The study compared radio listenership to music streaming, Facebook, YouTube, and others. It demonstrates 23% of the respondents from Generation Z who answered their survey prefer radio than any other options provided, while from among the Millennials, it remains high at 29%.

For television viewership, almost all (94.6%) of the Filipino OSY watch television programs. This extremely high percentage of television viewing among these youths is confirmed on a study by Leopold [28] that television viewing is the most popular media among youths [28]. Different survey results also proved that television is the best and most commonly used source of young people to get information [29]. Additionally, Noda [27] reported that Filipino youth's television viewing still remains as the dominant media platform predominantly on its

major cities despite the popularization of mobile phones and internet usage in the country [30].

Lastly, most (83.4%) of the Filipino OSY indicated that they have internet access. Based on the combined data from Nielsen, Tigercub Digital, US Census Bureau, and World Bank, out of the 97 million population in the Philippines, 70% are netizens who are under 29 years old. Globally, majority of the forefront in mobile internet usage are the youth ages 16-24 [23].

**Table 2.** Frequency of Media Consumption

How often do you use this type of media?	Radio	Television	Internet
Everyday	41.5%	83.1%	48.6%
Once a week	21.4%	3.0%	18.2%
Once a month	3.0%	.5%	4.6%
Whenever I want to	34.1%	12.8%	28.6%

The greatest number of OSY use radio (41.5%) and internet (48.6%). Interestingly, most of the media consumers use television everyday (83.1%). A study by Tudor-Locke (2015), 48% of Filipino youth spend more than 2 hours per day watching television and relatively 7% watch for more than 4 hours [24].

**Table 3.** Reasons for Media Consumption

Reasons for Media Consumption	Radio*	Television**	Internet***
To escape personal problems	34.3	36.2	55.8
Need for emotional release	19.2	18.8	73.9
To be connected with friends	8.3	11	86
To have new friends	7.7	8.1	87.6
To be informed	17.4	65.1	41.9
To be entertained	14.8	64.7	45.5
To be educated	13.1	48.2	48.8
To be updated with the current happenings	14.7	64.7	38.4
To have control over listening and viewing media contents	12.4	44.9	56.2
It is more useful	13	44.6	56.7
It is more accessible	14.3	46.1	50
It is cheaper	28.7	23.9	27.9

\*(including radio on cellphone); \*(including TV on cellphone); \*(including radio, and TV on the internet)

The first four statements show the social satisfactions in using the media. Based on the results above, “to have new friends” is the most selected reason of the media use under social category. Most of the internet users (87.6%) seek to have new friends. On the other hand, “to escape personal problems” is the primary reason of radio listeners (34.3%) and television viewers (36.2%) for their media usage. This data implies that the OSY’s primary social reasons for using traditional media (radio and television) is for them “to escape from their personal problems” and “need for emotional release”, which can be reflected through a study wherein Roy [21] avers that the need for ‘global exchange’ or ‘social relations’ and even ‘relaxation’ are identified with the social gratifications [33]. On the other hand, Internet is primarily used “to have new friends”. Furthermore, there are 94% of internet users in the Philippines access Facebook, while there are only 54% American internet users do [34]. Additionally, Filipino social media users are number one in the Asia Pacific region spending 4 hours/day in all social channels. These media consumers are drawn to online applications that offer international calls: 82% use Facebook chat, 27% use Viber, and another 27% use Skype. This is enough to reflect the high frequency of social gratification, especially “to have new friends” among internet users [34].

Next four statements show the content satisfactions in using the media. Based on the results above, “to be informed” is the most selected reason of the media use under content category: 17.4% for radio listeners, and 65.1% for TV viewers. On the other hand, “to be educated” is the primary reason of internet users with 48.8%. This data implies that the OSY’s primary content category for using traditional media (radio, and television) is for them “to be informed”. On the other hand, they access the internet “to be educated”. Content satisfaction is essential for the audience, whether they use the traditional media or the new media [35]. The table above also shows that television has the highest content satisfaction with 60.68% overall average. It implies that a big majority of the OSY television viewers seek information, entertainment, education, and surveillance in their media selection.

The last four statements show the process satisfactions in using the media. Based on the results above, “it is more useful” is the most selected reason of the media use under process category. Majority of

the internet users (56.7%) seek to use it because of its helpfulness. Eight out of ten Filipinos who consume media everyday do multi-screening [36]. Internet users do not just update their social media but also watch video, read online articles, and listen to online radio. They not only use laptops but tablets and smartphones at the same time. Meanwhile, the most frequent reasons of television viewers is “to have control over reading, listening, and viewing media contents” (44.9%). Lastly, “it is cheaper” is the primary reason of radio listeners (28.7%) for their media usage. A study using an Indian context categorized six gratification motives through the use of factor analysis [29]. One of these is the ‘User-friendliness’ or accessibility and the ‘self-development’ of the internet are grouped under the process satisfactions. Additionally, when it comes to the choice of control, despite of the convenience that internet offers, there’s still an increase in radio listening from 53% yesterday listeners to 62% in the previous year [29]. Moreover, when it comes to TV viewership, an increase of 93% to 95% has reported over the previous year. Approximately, 7 out of 10 digital consumers in the Philippines watch TV content and movies online [29].

**Table 4. Statistical results (p-values) on frequency of media use.**

Frequency of Media Consumption	Relaxed	Joyful	Contented
Radio	0.539	0.001*	0.213
Television	0.027*	0.240	0.031*
Internet	0.265	0.064	0.066

\*Significant at the 0.05 level

The decision is to reject the null hypothesis if the computed p-value is less than or equal to the 0.05 level of significance, otherwise, if the p-value is greater than the level of significance, retain the null hypothesis. After testing the frequency of media consumption, results show that there is no significant relationship between the respondents’ level of subjective wellbeing in terms of being relaxed on the frequency of consumption in radio and Internet. Since the obtained P-values for radio and Internet consumption are greater than the level of significance,  $p > 0.539$  and  $p > 0.265$ , the study retained the null hypothesis (There is no relationship between the OSY’s media consumption and their subjective well-

being). But results show that there is significant relationship between the respondents’ level of subjective wellbeing in terms of being relaxed on the frequency of consumption in television. Since the obtained P-value for television consumption is less than the level of significance,  $p > 0.027$ , the study rejected the null hypothesis. This simply means that watching television affects the respondents’ wellbeing in terms of being relaxed. Watching TV leads to the release of endorphins which activate positive feelings in the body. Spending time in front of TV screens distracts youth from common pressures of life, setting their brains in a state of rest [38].

For the joyful feeling, after testing the frequency of media consumption, results show that there is no significant relationship between the respondents’ level of subjective wellbeing in terms of being joyful on the frequency of consumption in radio and Internet. Since the obtained P-values for television and Internet consumption are greater than the level of significance,  $p > 0.240$  and  $p > 0.064$ , the study retained the null hypothesis. But results show that there is significant relationship between the respondents’ level of subjective wellbeing in terms of being joyful on the frequency of consumption in radio. Since the obtained P-value for radio consumption is less than the level of significance,  $p > 0.001$ , we reject the null hypothesis. This result showed that the respondents feel joyful whenever they listen to radio. It is due to the usual Philippine radio stations’ format on broadcasting, which is mass-oriented. It is interrelated with dirty humor and double-meaning statements. On the other hand, broadcasting networks still exert efforts to maintain the positivity and friendly atmosphere on their programs [37].

For the contented feeling, after testing the frequency of media consumption, results show that there is no significant relationship between the respondents’ level of subjective wellbeing in terms of being contented on the frequency of consumption in radio and Internet. Since the obtained P-values for radio and Internet consumption are greater than the level of significance,  $p > 0.213$  and  $p > 0.066$ , the study retained the null hypothesis. But results show that there is significant relationship between the respondents’ level of subjective wellbeing in terms of being contented on the frequency of consumption in television. Since the obtained P-value for television consumption is less than the level of significance,  $p > 0.031$ , the study rejected the null hypothesis. This

means that watching television affects the respondents' subjective wellbeing in terms of having a contented feeling. Discontentment is associated with dissatisfaction. People with higher neuroticism or negative feelings toward their lives "had more preoccupied and fearful attachment styles and spent more hours watching television" [39].

The study believes that the results of this study make great contributions. One of these is the discovery that despite of the rapid growth of modernization, OSYs still prefer to watch TV, a traditional media, than using other kinds of media.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results confirmed the U&G theory that media consumption is influenced by individual gratifications. It is found out that Filipino OSY still rely on accessible traditional media. Among the content gratifications, information is the most sought after in this form of media. Between radio and TV, the latter is more utilized as source of information. Meanwhile, Internet is preferred to be used as a tool to meet the social gratification of Filipino OSY. Further findings suggest that the self-reported subjective wellbeing of Filipino OSY has something to do with their media consumption. Listening to radio, watching television and accessing the Internet have a relationship to their feelings such as being relaxed, being joyful, and being contented.

Overall, knowing that media consumption can directly affect the Filipino OSY's subjective wellbeing, the study recommends disciplined usage of media. In order for this happen, they must be aware of the advantages and disadvantages through the guidance of their parents or guardians. The government should also conduct seminars and social campaigns in localities, giving attention to the vulnerable Filipino OSY, to educate them on proper media utilization. This is one of the practical means for the Filipino OSY to achieve awareness regarding the issue at hand.

The study only focused on the Filipino OSY in Quezon City, Philippines and was piloted on an urban setting. Future research should investigate on rural areas as well for the purpose of comparative analysis between the two settings. It can also be conducted on a larger group of OSY to further represent the general population. Lastly, it is highly recommended that further in-depth studies be conducted for similar researches, providing a more detailed questionnaire

that examines the media consumption and subjective wellbeing of the OSY.

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