CYBERPSYCHOLOGY REVISITED: CRITICAL ISSUES THAT IMPACT MENTAL HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Rena Boss-Victoria¹, Tina L. Jordan¹, Agnes Richardson², Hal Aubrey², Maurice Johnson⁴, Elijah Cameron⁵, Henry Swanson⁵

¹Bowie State University (UNITED STATES)
²Delaware State University (UNITED STATES)
³Lincoln University of Pennsylvania (UNITED STATES)
⁴Morgan State University (UNITED STATES)
⁵The Georgia Institute of Technology (UNITED STATES)

Abstract
Cyberpsychology is an emerging area of research and practice. According to Howard and Jaynes (2015), “Cyberpsychology” is a recently emergent field that examines the impact of technology upon human cognition and behavior”. Much of the existing research literature that has been published over the past twenty years is grounded in the psychological study of human addictive behavior (Norman, 2017). Obviously, the former observation is one of the core functional areas in the research and practice of mental health. Mental Health care in communities of color remain one of the critical healthcare disparities. Further, mental healthcare disparities are intractably associated with educational attainment disparities in communities of color. The observed interconnectivity of mental healthcare disparities and educational attainment disparities must be approached in a more collective effort. Therefore, no serious discussion can take place to address educational attainment disparities without acknowledging the central role of mental healthcare disparities in the larger space of educational attainment disparities. Consequently, this paper represents an exploration of the critical impact of Cyberpsychology on the interconnectivity of persistence mental health and educational attainment disparities in communities of color.

Keywords: Cyberpsychology, education attainment, mental health, communities of color.

1 INTRODUCTION
Mental health conditions that have been adversely impacted prolonged engagement with technological inventions and advancement (social media communications, cell phones, play stations, etc.) are proliferating exponentially¹. Mental healthcare disparities were already at a very critical stage. Technological engagement with social media (i.e. FACEBOOK, Twitter, Snap Chat, Electronic and Role Playing Games, etc.) alone has added a whole new level of critical mental healthcare problems². The patterns of social communications have been explosively altered. The alteration of social communications have and is still occurring across all demographic groups³. The alteration of social communication mechanisms has had a major impact on the individual cognitive and social behavior⁴. Unfortunately, those technological induced developments have had serious negative impacts on literacy in communities of color. Consequently, the negative impacts on literacy development have found their way in formal classroom settings. The results observed at every level of system of formal education have had negative impacts.

Ultimately, mental health and educational attainment disparities create and sustain ever widening gulf of economic disparities in communities of color. Such a result, merely, deepens levels of poverty in communities of color. Therefore, service efforts of mental health, educational and other helping professionals who work tirelessly with families and individuals in communities of color are forced to paddle harder even though they are traveling upstream.

Structurally speaking, high levels of mental health disparities, plus low levels of educational attainment equals increasingly high levels of economic disparities in communities of color.
2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Cyberpsychology and mental health disparities in communities of color

The impact that those technological tools and communicative engagements have had on human cognition and behavior problems in communities of color has been even more profound than the serious adverse impacts found in other communities. Behavioral Scientists and practitioners (Psychiatrists, Nurses, Psychologists, Social Workers, Counselors, etc.) are engaged in a serious struggle to effectively address in an interprofessional manner, the rapid growth of psycho-social disorders resulting from the effect of technological engagement on human cognition and behavior.

In addition, mental health disparities are coupled with physical health disparities in communities of color. Wherever significant pockets of mental and physical health disparities, there are corresponding educational attainment disparities too. Overall, frontline health care professionals (i.e. doctors, nurses, psychologists,) along with other helping professionals (i.e. social workers, counselors, community recreation specialists) are challenged to do more with less in communities of color. Discrepancies in human and material resources have always been an issue in communities of color.

Cyberpsychological induced mental health disparities have simply exacerbated existing critical mental health problems. In addition, the spillover effect seriously impacts existing physical health problems. A secondary, but a rapidly increasing co-primary spillover effect is exacerbated low levels of educational attainment. The consistent result of the aforementioned variable is increasingly low levels of economic attainment. In communities of color.

3 CYBERPSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT DISPARITIES IN COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Mental healthcare disparities are intractably associated with educational attainment disparities in communities of color. The observed interconnectivity of mental healthcare disparities and educational attainment disparities must be approached in a more collective effort. Therefore, no serious discussion can take place to address educational attainment disparities without acknowledging the central role of mental healthcare disparities in the larger space of educational attainment disparities.

Researchers noted that there is not a lot of research on the technologies effectiveness at improving student learning in K-12 education. Especially when it is increasingly widespread use of social media networks sites being used by today’s K-12 21st Century learners. Therefore, it is a much-needed implication to really scrutinize the usage of all technologies platforms when it comes to effective and efficient teacher and learning and teacher education meeting the all learning objectives with today’s K-12 student learners.

In a case study researchers found the various challenges for technologies used in a large K-12 district in the United States. The researchers noted the major distractions by the irrelevant apps and websites the student engages in other than their priority of why technology is being utilized in the first place. Knowing this ongoing concern for a student to properly engage, the challenges include lack of teacher-selected apps. In which, will cause for technologies restrictions on these devices, prepping time and additional teaching practices for teachers.

When teachers use websites in K-12 education in the classroom the intended purposes is to engage and motivate a social interest. The interest doesn’t have a conflicting issue on today’s student due to social development injustices. These students were engaged with non-verified and conflict apps and or websites that devalues the student communication development and thinking skills. These are various impacts that create barriers for education. It’s hard for the K-12 student to differentiate between the context of what is real or what’s fictitious. The access of all information is necessarily properly received causing a domino effect to the learning objectives teacher want the students to meet.

According to human addictive behavior the allotted time spent on the technological platform is extreme. The technological engagement has been evolving for three years. Researchers ((Kraut et al, 1998), posed the question about the internet when it became a necessity. Internet paradox: A social technology that reduces social involvement and psychological well-being? The mental disparities were apparent that exist relating to educational attainment in minority communities.

More recent studies identify the number of social networking sites (SNS) usage and minorities higher education students’ academic achievements. The researcher elaborates on the various factors that
hinder student academic achievements such as SNS activities, academic performance, the type and frequency of SNS usage, student engagement, and other socio-psychological characteristics. The excessive usage of SNS leads to poor academic performance for minorities in academic attainment.

Some of the core fundamental subjects English, comprehension, and fundamental reading abilities are unobtainable. In addition, the inappropriate usage of SNS was realized by minority students and college academic attainment. Furthermore, SNS has the potential to serve as a connectedness to minority student success. Leadership at the institution is going to have to develop, implement, and design SNS usage into classroom curriculum to engage their social life and educational usage together.

3.1 Social issues that confront mental health, educational attainment and other helping professionals

The community health science professional practitioners have a new set of challenges to contend with in their efforts to provide healthcare in general and mental healthcare services in particular in communities of color. Those efforts to reduce serious existing healthcare disparities appear to be losing ground with too little evidence of sustainable progress. Simultaneously, these same community health science professional practitioners who are already handicapped on many fronts in attempting to reduce existing healthcare disparities must somehow focus attention on new mental healthcare challenges. New mental healthcare challenges that are largely rooted in cyberpsychological issues. Consequently, educational professionals from pre-K through the higher educational levels are struggling too. They are in engaged in a very critical battle to effectively educate today’s student. Individuals whose cognitive and social behavioral functions have been adversely impacted by technological engagement are populating the classrooms at all levels (Livingstone, 2008). As a result, educational professionals are engaged in a losing uphill battle in their attempts to close gaps that exist in educational attainment disparities.

4 CONCLUSION

Today and the current outlook as well as the foreseeable future relative to efforts to reduce mental health and educational attainment disparities in communities of color are bleak. Communities of color in the United States remain under siege with plethora disparities that encompass virtually every element that is critical to any progressive functional community. Unfortunately, such conditions are deeply rooting in the history of communities of color.

Over the course of history, after the establishment of communities of color in the United States, too much of that history can be characterized as benign neglect as it relates to active and efforts that were designed to cripple community development. The impact of governmental laws and policies at every level of government (municipal, state, and federal) have had the effect this benign effect, retarding rather than promoting community development.

Communities of color in the United States have existed in a “catch up mode” of existence since the beginning. Unfortunately, little has changed. Over time, new threats have emerged that have had the effect of wiping out limited gains that had been made a priority. Ultimately, expanding economic disparities in communities of color are the result. Therefore, there must be a far more collective effort amongst frontline professionals including doctors, nurses, psychologist, social workers, educators, etc. working in concert in order to more effectively address this serious mental health disparities further exacerbated by cyberpsychological induced issues in particular and other associated issues in general.

REFERENCES


