

The Effects of “Happy” Media on Women’s Coping Tendencies

ABSTRACT

Over the past years, there has been increasing emphasis on the roles of media in influencing people’s moods and emotions; however, there is limited research on social media’s role in providing access to “happy” media and how exposure to such content can help women cope with everyday stress. This research involved exploring the types of “happy” media women consumed to cope with their stress, an examination of the exposure to “happy” media on women’s emotion and stress management, and, finally, an investigation on the effects of “happy” media on women’s coping tendencies. Under the Mood Management Theory, six women were purposively sampled from lower-income (B40) background for semi-structured interviews. After analysing the data thematically, two themes emerged: “happy” media as a stress and emotional management tool, and as an effective coping tool. Our results suggest that women developed better emotional and stress management after consuming “happy” media content via social media platforms. Additional results also suggest that exposure to “happy” media inspired women to acquire new skills or improve their current skills, leading to positive emotional and coping outcomes. Overall, this research highlights “happy” media effects in fulfilling women’s cognitive, emotional, and desired coping outcomes through hedonistic and eudaimonic content.