NANTUME EDRINA 216018401 16/U/9892/EVE

THE EFFECTS OF USING IN-EAR HEADPHONES IN REGARDS TO UGANDAN ADOLESCENTS

Abstract

This report presents an inquiry into the consequences of using in-ear headphones with respect to Ugandan adolescents . Through a multifaceted examination into in-ear headphones, this report synthesizes the research findings in regards to the preceding areas of focus. The primary findings of the project indicate that there are two main negative social consequences i.e the potential for hearing loss and social isolation or loneliness.

Introduction

Headphones are a small pair of loudspeakers meant for individual use. They are designed to be used close to one's ears and to connect to a source of audio. They are also known as stereo-phones, headsets, or earphones, which is a special type that is designed for in-ear use ("Headphones"). In-ear headphones are the most modern type of headphones. In-ear headphones are highly personal technological objects, which we constantly pair and un-pair with our digital devices on a daily basis. They have become a standard accessory that accompanies the purchase of many personal digital technologies, such as digital music players, mobile phones and tablet computers. As of late, they have even become a fashion statement, personalizing and accessorizing yet another part of one's identity. Most importantly, in-ear headphones are consequential as a technology whose penetration into modern day life is impressive and robust.

Noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) is a common and preventable disability, and it can be caused by recreational noise and leisure activity such as listening to music player devices. NIHL is one of the most important problems of social and public health. For reducing NIHL, policies mostly focus on reducing environmental noise to prevent hearing loss among adults, whereas many studies have shown that NIHL is increasing among children and adolescents. *[1]*

In society today, people use earphones not only for listening to music, but also for eliminating the surrounding noise in the street, bus, taxi, or other transportation systems, all of which hurt ears and cause hearing loss. Hearing impairments or loss may not be recognized for many years; so, treatment and intervention maybe difficult when it is detected. The existence of chargeable and durable batteries is a main reason for listening to music using portable music player devices. Most of the young adults listen unduly from portable music player devices and this issue can cause ear and hearing problems. The main problem is that usually adolescents listen to music with loud sound. *[2,3]*

DISCUSSIONS

As stated above, listening to loud music for long periods of time especially with earphones may predispose the person not only to hearing loss but also to ear infection and dizziness. Therefore, studies about listening to music in societies especially among adolescents are important in planning for prevention and education about using patterns. Unfortunately, there is no information about the patterns of using earphone and music players in Ugandan adolescents. The aim of this study was to assess the pattern of use of earphone and music player devices as a main risk factor of hearing loss in adolescents of Uganda

***Social Consequences**:*

The primary social consequences that arise from the use of in-ear headphones as mentioned above are: hearing loss and social isolation. The potential for hearing loss is heightened with the use of in-ear headphones because, by design, they sit much closer to or inside the ear canal, exposing individuals to potentially harmful levels of sound. Researchers studied the effects of audiometry levels in individuals who were plugged in to personal music players. Their results suggest that long-term use of personal listening devices can, in fact, impair hearing function. What is certain is the risk that in-ear headphones pose to one's hearing, especially because their use is so pervasive in today's society. Moreover, the potential for hearing loss is categorized as a negative social consequence because of how it affects individuals and their ability to effectively communicate.

The second social consequence is that of social isolation or loneliness, which is perhaps the more insidious of the two a again classified as negative. Several attachment theorists believe headphones use tends to alienate those around the user who are often put off from making conversation. In addition, other researchers have theorized that a portable audio device may serve as a transitional object as one moves between close relationships. In-ear headphones become an unintentional isolating device, a consequence of their very design of transporting users into the music they love.

Conclusion

Adolescents have risky patterns of listening to music and they are not aware of the fact that these may lead to hearing impairments. Due to this, planning educational programs in this domain for adolescents especially in high schools is necessary, and many of these individuals should be motivated to change their patterns of listening to music.

References

1. Niskar AS, Kieszak SM, Holmes AE, Esteban E, Rubin C, Brody DJ. Estimated prevalence of noise-induced hearing threshold shifts among children 6 to 19 years of age: The Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1988-1994, United States. Pediatrics. 2001;108:40–3.

2. Vogel I, Brug J, van der Ploeg CP, Raat H. Strategies for the prevention of MP3-induced hearing loss among adolescents: Expert opinions from a Delphi study. Pediatrics [Research Support, Non-U.S. Gov't] 2009;123:1257–62.

3. Chung JH, Des Roches CM, Meunier J, Eavey RD. Evaluation of noise-induced hearing loss in young people using a web-based survey technique. Pediatrics [Evaluation Studies] 2005;115:861–7.