

Mukbangs: Loneliness and Food Consumption

Student's Name

Institution Affiliation

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Introduction

In the traditional sense, dining has always been considered a communal activity, however, the number of people eating alone has dramatically increased with the rise of single-households. Eating together, also known as *commensality*, is viewed by many people as a positive social activity, which is why some sections of society have no problem with the concept of Mukbang (Buscemi, et al, 2017). Mukbang works on the theory that it helps to virtually connect solo diners with others via online broadcasts. This study seeks to answer the following question: does Mukbangs increase food intake or not?

Methodology

While Mukbang has been around for a while, not many studies have been done on it. The best approach to investigating this phenomenon is a mix of reviewing available literature and carrying out quantitative research (Niedderer, 2013). Reviewing the literature is important, as it will give the research some much-needed background information on Mukbang and its impact. In addition, there is very little research information on the subject of Mukbang out there, which means it will be important to have a solid background on the concept before beginning the study (Wright, & Pritchard, 2009). Next, surveys will be carried out using a non-probability sampling method. In these surveys, participants will be asked to fill in a questionnaire containing about 20 questions. In general, the questions are aimed at finding out the participants' views on Mukbang, and whether they believe it increases a person's level of food intake.

Participants

The issue of representation and generalisability will be an important consideration in this study. Thus, a sample of 200 people including males and females between the ages of 18 and 60 will be interviewed. The participants will be drawn from different regions of the city as a way of ensuring that the study is an accurate representation of the populace. The sampling will be done haphazardly, since interviewing the whole population is not possible. A questionnaire will be sent to each participant to be filled out and returned by email. Issues such as limited resources, the number of participants to be interviewed, and practicability formed the basis of choosing the haphazard sampling technique.

Materials

For this study, a survey form is the questionnaire tool to favor. One of the reasons for choosing this method is its high-reliability score. The form is to be divided into five parts, with each part dealing with specific items.

The first section of the survey form asks general questions about Mukbangs and the second asks participants if they agree with the practice and why. The third section asks them to point out the potential advantages of the Mukbang practice, while the last part asks them questions about the reasons they might not support the practice of Mukbang. From the results obtained from the questionnaires, the researcher is able to evaluate the number of participants who believe that Mukbangs increases the amount of food intake (and therefore poses a health risk) versus those who hold the contrary opinion.

As for the design of the research itself, this study proposes using the exploratory method because it allows the researcher to formulate possible theories and hypotheses. In addition, this method leads to the creation of new assumptions which can be tested throughout the study. This approach is suitable for this study because it seeks to answer the

important research questions: what, why, and how? This way, the researcher is able to put the concept of Mukbang into perspective in a way that is not only reliable but also measurable.

Reference

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