

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND MOBILE PHONE ADDICTION AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract

Mobile phones have gained immense popularity in the contemporary times. Everywhere be it offices, colleges, schools, homes, parks, malls, trains, buses etc. we see people hooked onto mobile phones. Especially young people or adolescents are spending most of their times on mobile phones these days. In fact, it would not be wrong if we say that people, mostly adolescents, are addicted to mobile phone. These addicts may manifest symptoms like low self-esteem, escapism and find it extremely difficult to maintain healthy social relationships but can establish very good relationships within the artificial or cyber world. A slight abandonment of mobile phones may result in anxiety, stress, sensitiveness, shivers, insomnia and other metabolic disorders in them. In this research paper, we attempt to study what is the connection between psychological features and mobile phone overuse in young people.

Keywords: Mobiles, Young People, Overuse, Psychological Features

Introduction

In the modern society, cell phones hold an important place in the current times and are regarded as an important aspect of everyday life. For some people, the situation is that they can't even imagine a life without a mobile. While, we don't find lot many studies on disproportionate usage of mobiles, indications show that unjustifiable usage of smart phone is regarded as a technological obsession. The people who overuse mobiles show symptoms like low self-esteem, escapism and find it extremely difficult to maintain healthy social relationships but can establish very good relationships within the artificial or cyber world. A slight abandonment of mobile phones may result into anxiety, stress, sensitiveness, shivers, insomnia and other metabolic disorders in them.

Cell phone has become the prime private communication tool globally as studied by Leung & Wei (1999), Ling (2000), Wei (2006). Mobile phone as an important communicating tool while commuting and moving and also an indispensable shared fixture in as per Peters & Allouch (2005). The custom of mobiles has converted into a collective spectacle, happening in a common perspective and impacted via the sensitivities about offerings, and common customs opines Roos (1993).

Nevertheless, it is found that over use of cell phones is a habitual and addictive malady that may be observed as a leading non-drug compulsion according to Madrid (2003). Aoki and Downes (2003), studied mobile phone and addiction, but there are very few studies which examined association amid phone habit and change in behaviour. Reason of addiction is colossal & convenient features of cell phone like portable music player, extremely high speed Wi-Fi. People find it very convenient to carry and work on a mobile phone than PC. The present day smart phones contain very innovative and very user friendly apps and games. Now a days, a very new type like SNS or app addiction is added to smartphone addiction. Smartphone needs more mediation by theme, instant connection and public interaction.

In this research paper, we attempt to study what is the connection between psychological features and mobile phone overuse in young people.

Objectives

The main objectives of the research are as given under:-

1. To understand mobile phone addiction in adolescents and its impact.
2. To study what is the connection between psychological features and mobile phone overuse in young people.

Methodology

Research Type: Exploratory Research

Type of Data/Data Source used: Secondary Data/Data source.

The study takes into account secondary data. The necessary information has been derived from various research papers, books, articles from Newspapers, Magazines, and from numerous web-sites which deal directly or indirectly with the topics related to mobile phone addiction in adolescents. Relevant information was subsequently analysed to address the objectives of present study.

Main Text and Finding

Paper is focusing on the impact of mobile phone addiction in terms of distinct psychological and physical aspects in adolescents.

Sleep Disorders

Adolescents using their mobile phones extremely are more likely to manifest disrupted sleep, disquiet, stress and exhaustion. Loughran, et al. (2005) establish that over use of mobile results into rapid eye movement, sleep dormancy and insomnia. Soderqvist, et al. (2008) explored Swedish adolescents and exhibited that people who are over using smart phone testified health problems like tiredness, anxiety, difficulties in concentration and sleep disorders. Over use and addiction of mobile phones causes users to lose their sleep, get angry over trivial issues Francisca LT (2007). Sara Thomee et al. (2011) carried out research relating mobile phone addiction and perceived stress, dejection, sleep disorders on medical and IT students. Gross (2004) clarified several mental and physical ailments like sleep deficiency, lethargy, weak immunity among some other problems. If cell phone addiction gets serious it will worsen the sleep quality Sahin, Ozdemir et al. (2013). Sleep disorders, anxiety, anxiety and dejection are some of additional negative concerns resulting from smart phone overuse Thomee, Harenstam & Hagberg (2011). Aoki and Downes (2003) steered a study on students in US and proposed that most of students take late night calls which leads to insomnia and sleep disorders.

Anxiety and Restlessness

Acharya, et al. (2013) studied physical impact of mobile phone overuse in pupils of professional disciplines in universities and Institutions. Scholars of both sexes manifested that headache was the general indications and subsequently bad temper/rage. Some psychological indicators incorporated attentiveness difficulties, low examination results, sleeplessness, and unease amid others. Most mobile addicts become irritable and anxious when they are unable to use their mobile phones as per Francisca L T (2007). Gaby Badre (2008) in the study on teenagers in Sweden reveal that over use of

mobile phones cause restlessness. Humphreys (2005) detected that smart phone over use may cause social anxiety, feelings of insecurity and abandonment also anger towards other people.

Lot of stress and anxiety is observed due to overuse of mobile phones and technology. This overuse and addiction has changed the way we personally communicate with each other, and has created a lot of distance in our interactions and relationship building process. Smart phones and overuse of technology has compelled a block between intimate and direct interactions between people. This results in obstructing personal well-being and causes needless anxieties, stress and pressures.

The indications take into account busyness with the phone, extreme usage of loss of control, usage in socially unfitting situations, adversative impact on connections, indications of escape (e.g. ire, strain, dejection while the phone is not nearby, ringtone unease, persistent thoughts that battery may be out any time, yearning signs), symptoms of acceptance (craving for an innovative mobile handset, extra applications, softwares and added time of usage), handy/behaviour related damages (deceitful, opinions, humble attainments, withdrawal, engaging in phony conversations to avoid others). This is similar to substance dependence syndrome and is hence imminent to consider mobile phone dependence (MPD) as an analytical unit.

Stress

Jenaro et al. (2007) in his paper examined cell phone excessive usage among Spanish college students, and established females reflect high usage of phones and having high anxiety and sleep disturbance. James and Drennan (2005) in their study asserted that some of the widespread negative results of cell phone addiction included financial issues, spoiled relationships, and emotional stress. In the present period, teenagers are so concerned with their data viz. text messages, photos, address book etc and if the phone is lost or broken then as there is a possibility of data being gone, this creates huge stress in their minds.

Physical and Biological Problems

Exceeding use of smart phone results into physiological problems like body aches, fatigue, headaches, eye strains, earache, and musculoskeletal indications. The addiction to smart phones makes people to suffer from aches, pain and some or the other disability Francisca LT (2007).

Teenage years is a time of acute change in psychological, physical & biological growth in addition to susceptibility to environmental differences. Adventurousness is a normal disposition at this age and other studies consider it as phases of usual, biological and physical growth Irwin CE (1989). Nevertheless, hazardous risk taking occurs when usual young evaluation becomes skewed & gets impenetrable into a design by way of chiefly adverse results and defined as 'risky behavior' as per Ponton L (1997). Gustafson et al (2003) in their study explored adolescent's familiarity, outlook and vigour in association with continuous usage of IT & recognised there are physical and psychological health issues involved with over use of technology.

Escapism

James and Drennan (2005) studied Australian university students' cell phone use and revealed characteristics related to addictive use. These were: impulsiveness, stress, failure of control mechanism and withdrawal indications. Park (2005) categorised mobile phone using respondents into light user and heavy users. Some factors were used to determine mobile phone addiction which

were tolerance, cutting down withdrawal, unintended use, displacement of other activities, time spent, and continued use. Addiction to mobile phone causes mood swings, withdrawal, and frequent conflicts with people, behavioural and cognitive salience, and relapse (Griffiths, 1996). Withdrawal means negative feelings of stress, guilt, anxiety, tension or worry related to abandonment with smartphone.

A certain analysis of 'dependency syndrome' is sternly done and only if 3 or more of these stay together at time in yesteryears: sturdy desire or indication of itch to have the substance; problems in monitoring its usage during starting, expiry and form of usage; level of escape; patience levels; continuous and increasing abandonment of substitute inclinations and comforts, amplified extent of usage or enhanced time used for retrieval; insistent use in spite of clear indication of obvious harmful results.

Summary of Studies Reviewed (Refer Table I)

Table I : Summary of Studies Reviewed

Author(s)	Physical/ Psychological Characteristics	Impact of Mobile Phone Addiction
Loughran, et al. (2005)	Sleep Disorders	Establish that over use of mobile results into rapid eye movement, sleep dormancy and insomnia.
Soderqvist, et al. (2008)	Sleep Disorders	Explored Swedish adolescents and exhibited that people who are over using smart phone testified health problems like tiredness, anxiety, difficulties in concentration and sleep disorders
(Francisca LT, 2007)	Sleep Disorders	Over use and addiction of mobile phones causes users to lose their sleep, get angry over trivial issues
Sara Thomee et al. (2011)	Sleep Disorders	Carried out research relating mobile phone addiction and perceived stress, dejection, sleep disorders on medical and IT students.
Gross (2004)	Sleep Disorders	Clarified different mental & bodily issues like insomnia, lethargy, and weak immunity among some other problems.
Sahin, Ozdemir et al. (2013)	Sleep Disorders	If cell phone addiction gets serious it will worsen the sleep quality
Thomee, Harenstam & Hagberg, (2011)	Sleep Disorders	Sleep disorders, anxiety, constant worry and hopelessness are some additional consequences which result from smart phone overuse
Aoki and Downes (2003)	Sleep Disorders	Steered a study on students in US and proposed that most of students take late night calls which leads to insomnia and sleep disorders.
Acharya, et al. (2013)	Anxiety and Restlessness	Students of both genders manifested that headache was the general indications and subsequently bad temper/rage. Some psychological indications that entail attentiveness difficulties, low examination results, sleeplessness, unease amid others.
Francisca L T, (2007)	Anxiety and Restlessness	Most mobile addicts become irritable and anxious when they are in any situation and dispossessed of mobile regardless of cause.
Gaby Badre (2008)	Anxiety and Restlessness	Study on teenagers in Sweden reveal that over use of mobile phones cause restlessness.
Humphreys (2005)	Anxiety and Restlessness	Detected that smart phone over use may cause social anxiety, feelings of insecurity and abandonment also anger towards other people.
Jenaro et al. (2007)	Stress	Examined cell phone excessive usage among Spanish college students, and established that people of opposite gender are related to more usage of smart phones and having high anxiety and sleep disturbance.
James and Drennan (2005)	Stress	Asserted that some of the widespread negative results of cell phone addiction included financial issues, spoiled relationships, and emotional stress. In the present period, teenagers are so concerned with their data viz. text messages, photos, address book etc and if the phone is lost or broken then as there is a possibility of data being gone, this creates huge stress in their minds.

Author(s)	Physical/ Psychological Characteristics	Impact of Mobile Phone Addiction
Francisca LT (2007).	Physical and Biological Problems	Exceeding use of smart phone results into physiological problems like body aches, fatigue, headaches, eye strains, earache, and musculoskeletal indications. The addiction to smart phones makes people to suffer from aches, pain and some or the other disability
Irwin CE (1989)	Physical and Biological Problems	Youth is acute mobility and entails psychological, physical & biological growth using susceptibility to environmental differences. Adventurousness is conjoint inclination during young age & additional studies consider the young age involving phases of usual, biological and physical growth.
Ponton L (1997)	Physical and Biological Problems	Nevertheless, hazardous risk taking occurs while usual pubescent evaluation becomes skewed & come to be impenetrable in design alongside mostly adverse results and defined as 'risky behaviour'
Gustafson et al (2003)	Physical and Biological Problems	Explored adolescent's familiarity, outlook and wellbeing on context of continuous usage of IT & established there are physical and psychological health issues involved with over use of technology.
James and Drennan (2005)	Escapism	Studied Australian university students' cell phone use and revealed characteristics related to addictive use. These were: impulsiveness, stress, failure of control mechanism and withdrawal indications.
Park (2005)	Escapism	Categorised mobile phone using respondents into light user and heavy users. Some factors were used to determine mobile phone addiction which were tolerance, cutting down withdrawal, unintended use, displacement of other activities, time spent, and continued use.
Griffiths (1996)	Escapism	Addiction to mobile phone causes mood swings, withdrawal, and frequent conflicts with people, behavioural and cognitive salience, and relapse

Conclusions

There should be a balance between the time spent with mobile phones and time spent without them. If this balance is not made, then due to addition with mobile phones and technology, we will lose all affection, intimacy and closeness which come from personalised interactions. We see now a days, everyone is more comfortable hooked onto their mobile phones than interacting with nearby people. This also hampers full development of our new generation as they will find it difficult to have personalised interactions and vocal confrontations with other people. There are various negative physical and psychological effects due to cell phone addiction. Young people are more busy in taking selfies, giving pouts and poses, status updates and very less interested in affectionate interactions with people besides them. They always need validation from other people regarding whatever they upload on their smart phones and if this validation, likes and acknowledgement is not coming then they feel very much stressed and anxious and insecure. They also become highly stressed and anxious if they are without smart phones or are unable to use them.

Smart Phone craving is being discussed as evolving civic healthiness issue. It has become an imminent or urgent necessity to recognise it quickly so that proper awareness and treatment/ educational intervention can be devised. Preventive dealings to thwart needless extreme introduction to mobile usage is desirable. In addition, however we need to identify potentially prone & vulnerable sets like kids and youngsters, those are directed for different relevant programs.

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