

Mobile Phone Addiction among College Students

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Abstract

This study explored Mobile Phone Addiction among College Students. In this study, 60 subjects (30 boys and 30 girls) who fulfilled the exclusion and inclusion criteria were selected purposively for the study. After developing a good report with the subjects, Mobile Phone Addiction Scale was administered on them. Findings revealed that there is a high level of mobile phone addiction among teenagers (Girls & Boys) and there is no gender difference in term of mobile phone addiction.

Keywords: Mobile Phone, Addiction.

Introduction

Addiction is the fact or condition of being addicted to a particular substance or activity. Mobile is an essential part of our daily life. Human being cannot imagine life without mobile. If we remember the era before mobiles, human life was very different. Although, there was some discomfort without mobile, people used to communicate each other by having meetings and sending letters. Mobile made communication and availability is very easy, but is it virtual. Besides communication, mobile brought digital era of "on the tip information", games, personal calendar and what not. Cell phone equipment's are becoming easy and useful to handle. However mobile phone addiction a dependence syndrome seen among certain mobile phone users. Some mobile phone users exhibit problematic behaviors related to substance use disorders.

These behaviors can include preoccupation with mobile communication, excessive money or time spent on mobile phones, use of mobile phones in socially or physically inappropriate situations such as driving an automobile. Increased use can also lead to increased time on mobile communication, adverse effects on relationships, and anxiety if separated from a mobile phone or sufficient signal. Due to usefulness, available apps, games, information, entertainment, mobile usage has become habitual. This usage is in such large extent among college youths, has become addiction. Today people have mobile phones with them all the time and use to them to organize and manage every moment of their live, from work to free time. The function of mobile is to control distance in communication and relationship.

By using mobile phone we can communicate very easily. In addition to being a means of communication and having rapidly spreading use around the world, mobile phones, in particular the new generation of smart mobile phones, are technological tools due to offering many functions, such as providing short message service (SMS) to users, taking photos, playing games, using the Internet, connecting to social networks, providing navigation services, having a video player functionality, watching TV and shopping. Cell phone activities examined in the study included calling, texting, emailing, surfing the Internet, banking, taking photos, playing games, reading books, using a calendar, using a clock and a number of applications, among them the Bible, iPod, coupons, Google Maps, eBay, Amazon, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube, iTunes, Pandora and "other" (news, weather, sports, lifestyle-related applications and Snapchat.) we have become so obsessed with technology. Research shows that 73 percent of Americans would feel panicked if they lost their mobile phone, while 14 percent took it a step further and said they would feel "desperate" without their device. The prospect of taking a subway ride without a phone was "paralyzing" for HuffPost Live host Caitlyn Becker, who recently wrote about her anxiety after leaving her phone at the office.

Technological revolution has provided the world with luxurious inventions. Communication channels have been so fabulously upgraded that corresponding to a persons with thousands of miles apart is just a game of seconds now. Invention of fixed telephone in 19th century was no more a wonder in 21st century when human brain invented portable "mobile phone". Mobile phone

technology has experienced a tremendous growth. In 1946, Swedish mobile used the first official mobile phone. In 1983, Motorola presented 1st truly portable cell phone (www.tech-faq.com). According to a researcher, it took 20 years to strap up one billion mobile phone users, 40 months to harness 2 billion and just 2 years to reach the mark of 3.5 billion (www.mobilephonereviews.org). This industry has been among the fastest growing categories of consumption goods. Remarkable growth can be seen in its users especially among young people. They are the most vivid users of this technology. Each and every invention has brought comforts as well as some threatening effects with it. Same is the case with mobile phone technology. This is a medium that allows youngsters to communicate and interact with others without parental and teachers' monitoring. Psychiatrists proclaim that in the 21st century mobile phone addiction has become one of the major non-drug addictions. Addict victims suffer social isolation and economic losses. They suggest a person to be addict if he feels an overwhelming need of cell phone usage for more than half an hour daily (www.smh.com.au). According to Yang, many mobile phone users suffer from a new type of mental disease called 'mobile phone dependence' syndrome and it is common especially amongst the youth. When such users observe a drop in phone calls or text messages then symptoms of addiction appear. These symptoms are often observed in eccentric, non-confident and unsociable people.

On the list of top 10 countries with largest number of mobile phone subscribers Pakistan ranked 10th. Mobile phone users have increased from 300,000 in 2001 - 90 million in 2008 in Pakistan (www.techlahore.com). According to an announcement by Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), Pakistan has a total of 98 million mobile phone users in May 2010. Growth rate has increased from 0.55% in April 2010 - 0.72% in May, 2010 (Attaa, 2010) Hence, it is very important to identify the usage patterns of mobile users in Pakistan with a special focus on young users to delineate the addictive behaviors and its consequences and to explore their time management in relation to mobile phone usage and other essential activities so current study would be a value addition to this sphere of research.

Review of Literature

Power and Horstmann (2004) proposed that mobile phone usage provides young people with an opportunity to create new relationships with others and to sustain them. Many researchers, Chapman and Schofield (1998); Taylor and Harper (2001); Carroll *et al.* (2002) emphasized on its use to increase the sense of security in case of emergency. Tjong *et al.* (2003) proclaimed that this technology provides means for social fulfillment of young people such as access, convenience and mobility. Frissen

(2000) and Matthews (2004) suggested that mobility also put busy working parents at ease because through this technology they can better be in touch with their children. Markett (2006) suggested that learning in classroom can be promoted through increased interactivity among the students during the lecture and using the short messaging service (SMS) can promote this interactivity. Chen *et al.* (2007) proposed that having mobile phone is necessary for college students to keep in touch with their family. Also they use mobile phones to fulfill their family roles by sharing their experiences with and getting an emotional and psychic support from their family. Ling and Yttri (2002) proclaimed that mobile phone technology has revolutionized the patterns of correspondence and coordination among peer groups, colleagues and family member. Cova (1994) proposed that youngsters seek peer group acceptance by using their mobile phones.

But researchers, Bianchi and Phillips (2005), Paragras (2003), Monk *et al.* (2004), Palen *et al.* (2001), also recognized the problematic dimension of excessive usage of mobile phone in young people. James and Drennan (2005) conducted a study on Australian students and identified a higher usage rate of 1.5 hours - 5 hours a day. They also highlighted the financial costs, emotional stress, damaged relationships and falling literacy as adverse consequences of excessive usage. Matthews (2004) concluded that Australian adolescents do not make more than 5 calls a day on average and 85% of them used SMS less than 5 times a day.

Situation becomes more pathetic when serious social, educational and health hazards come up as a consequence of excessive cell phone usage. Ling (2005) identified a linkage between its usage and criminal activities like alcohol, fighting, theft and narcotics use. Srivastava (2005) claimed that students even use their mobile phones while attending their lectures. McEvoy *et al.* (2005) proposed that young people are often prone to serious safety hazards as they use their mobile phone simultaneously while driving. Bianchi and Phillips (2005) and Palen *et al.* (2008) stated that youngsters also use their cell phones at prohibited places like petrol stations, planes and hospitals. Griffiths and Renwick (2003) stated that higher usage of mobile phone leads towards being indebt and other financial worries of adolescents. Aoki and Warner (2003) proposed that, young people use SMS to be in touch with their belongings and to feel a sense of their presence all the time. Similarly, Ito (2006) claimed that, young people seem to be desperate to be in touch with their friends. Niaz (2008) proposed that addictive mobile use has now become a public health problem and awareness about the dangers associated with excessive usage and addictive behaviors must be extended among common people.

There must be consideration on securing the children and young cell phone users from the abuses and addiction of this technology. Thompson and Ray (2007) emphasized security of children using mobile phone. They

pinpointed the potential risks of uncontrolled expenditures, exposure and access to prohibited, damaging or adult material and bullying via mobile phone. Age matters when we talk about the extent of mobile phone usage. Kurniawan (2008) claimed a passive usage of mobile phone among older people because they got a fear of getting familiar with new technology.

Studies also show gender related differences among young users of mobile phone. Devís et al. (2009) studied the pattern of usage of new technology among school students. They concluded that boys spend more time on using mobile phone than girls do. Also, adolescents consume more time on using mobile phones on weekend than on casual week days. It reflects that various factors contribute towards the extent of mobile phone usage. Turner (2008) proposed that phone-related behaviors are differentially associated with user’s personality and individual attributes (age, gender etc.). Rice and Katz (2003) revealed that mobile phone usage is associated with income, work status, and marital status of the potential users. But few studies proved a non-significant relationship among gender of the mobile phone users and its usage. Prezza (2004) claimed that mobile phone usage among adolescents was almost independent of type of class (computer science or not), gender and socio-economic status. Many studies prove excessive usage of mobile phone just as an abuse or a necessity of the time.

Methodology

Aim

This describes the methodology that was used to conduct the study. The chief purpose of the study was to investigate the mobile addiction among adolescents.

Objective

To measure the mobile phone addiction among teenagers (Girls & Boys).

Hypothesis

- 1) There will be a high level of mobile phone addiction among teenagers (Girls & Boys).
- 2) There will be no gender difference in term of mobile phone addiction.

Participants

The data for the present study was drawn through purposive sampling method. Data was collected from a sample of 30 boys and 30 girls

Girls	30
Boys	30
Total	60

Procedure

Each participant was reminded that their participation was completely voluntary, and that their responses would remain anonymous and reported only in aggregate form. Participants completed a mobile addiction scale

Result

Table no. 1 Mean and SD of boys and girls

Grouping	N	Mean	SD
Boys	30	88.33	17.61
Girls	30	95.23	11.50

In terms of mobile addiction, the level of addiction in girls show [Mean=95.23] and boys [Mean=88.33].

Table no.2 Mean and SD and t test of boys and girls

Grouping	N	Mean	SD	df	t
Boys	30	88.33	17.61	58	1.796
Girls	30	95.23	11.50	49.938	

The above table shows that the result is not significant and there is no gender difference between male and female. In terms of mobile addiction, the level of addiction in girls show [Mean=95.23] and boys [Mean=88.33].

Limitations

- The sample size was less.
- Data was collected from one institute only.

Future Direction

- The sample size can be increased
- The sample can be taken from different places.
- Effects of mobile addiction among adolescents can also be seen.

Discussion

The study was conducted on 60 subjects, which are 30 boys and 30 girls. Findings reveal that the result is not significant in the comparison between girls and boys regarding mobile addiction. The hypotheses were proved as there is high level of mobile addiction among boys and girls and there is no significant difference between boys and girls in mobile addiction.

Women, tend to use the phone more as medium for personal and emotional exchange (Lohan 1997; Lorente 2002: 16 women have a central role in maintaining any kind of social network) especially among family members and kin. (Wellman 1992; Ling 2001a; Ling 1998). Therefore, the networks of women are often larger and

more complex than those of men (Cochran et. al 1993: 90; Moore 1990). Women are also more prone to keep connected to their family - what should result in a higher preference for family members (and other highly familiar individuals) as phone partners. Table shows the boys mean is 88.23, SD 17.61 and for girls mean 95.23, SD 11.50.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that, due to the advance technology mobile addiction has a large effect on the other areas of their life like inter-personal relationship as most of the people prefer to stay alone, and don't mingle with peers or family members. It can also affect the person academically. Some data support the notion that female phone usage is more strongly conditioned by exogenous social factors. Thus, girls are more likely than boys to have received their phone as a present, and their usage intensity is more tightly determined by family background variables (parental education). Girls (especially of lower age) are much more active in exchanging text messages, why boys (particularly of older age) are emitting and receiving more audio calls.

But positively, it depends on how one maintains his/her life so it doesn't hamper the person's life and lead to addiction.

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