

# Nomophobia And Its Effect On Adolescent Students

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## ABSTRACT

The communication technology has become one of the important technologies in the last thirty years of the late twentieth century. The communication technology industry is still growing significantly. The use of mobile phone has greatly changed the way the people communicate today especially teenagers. Mobile phone dependence has been found to be an emerging public health problem. There is need to recognize and identify early the growing trends and negative consequences of inappropriate mobile phone use in young users so as to generate awareness, and plan educational and treatment interventions if need to be, so as to prevent a major public health concern.

**Key Words:** Nomophobia, Effect On Student, Adolescent.

## I. INTRODUCTION.

**“Cell phones are so convenient that they are an inconvenience”**

Adolescence is a period of greatly enhanced awareness. These years are also the time when mental and physiological development takes place. The adolescents are large in number and are the citizens and workers of tomorrow. The swiftly changing in global conditions are posting a great strain on the young generation, modifying their behavior and relationship and exacerbating their health problems.

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A study revealed, cell phones use among the high school adolescents and the factors associated with intensive cell phone use (depression symptoms, social isolation, drug and alcohol use, school failure, and cell phone dependence).

A cross sectional study of 1328 adolescent aged between 13-20 years in nine secondary school of the community of Madrid between January to April 2007. The mean age of sample participants was 15.7 years. Almost all 96.5% had their own phones, 80.5% had one, and 15.9% had two or more. Some 54.8% take it to school and 46.1% keep it on during class; 41.7% use it intensively. The estimated cell phone dependence was 20% (26.1% in female, 13% in males)

A study was conducted among young to determine the connection between consumption patterns and mobile phone use. The study results showed that relationship to mobile phone use consistent with their general consumption styles. It also revealed that addictive use of mobile phone was related to trendy and impulsive consumption style and was found to be prevalent among females. Technology, enthusiasm and trend consciousness was linked to impulsive and hard values which is prevalent among males.

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## **NOMOPHOBIA AND ADOLESCENT STUDENTS**

The term “Nomophobia” has its origin in England and is result of conjunction “non-mobile” combined with phobia that is, fear, anxiety, and discomfort of not having a mobile phone at certain moment or having a mobile device when required. In other words, nomophobia is a fear of feeling disconnected from digital world.

The term was coined during a 2008 study by UK post office, to evaluate anxieties suffered by mobile phone users. The study found that nearly 53% of users in Britain tend to be anxious when they “lose their mobile phone, run out of battery or credit, or have no network coverage”. The study, sampled 2163 people, found that about 58% of men and 47% of females suffer from phobia and an additional 9% feel stressed when their mobile phones are off. The study compared stress levels induced by average case of nomophobia to be on-par with those of “wedding day jitters” and trips to the dentist.

A survey conducted by SecurEnvoy showed that young adults and adolescents are more likely to suffer from nomophobia. The same survey reported that 77% of the teens reported anxiety and worries when they were without their mobile phones, followed by the 25-34 age group and people over 55 years old. Some psychological predictors to look for in a person who might be suffering of this phobia are “self-negative views, young age, low self esteem and self-efficacy, high extroversion, impulsiveness and sense of urgency and sensation seeking”.

An exploratory study done to assess the knowledge and effect of nomophobia among students of selected Degree College in Mysore. The aim of study was to assess the mobile phone dependence, knowledge, effect of nomophobia, and to determine the relationship between knowledge and effect of nomophobia. The sample consisted of 200 Degree college students were age group of 18-23 years selected by non-probability purposive sampling technique. Tool consists of proforma for selected personal variables, self-administered structured knowledge questionnaire, rating scale. It is considered that majority (89.5%) of degree college students have poor knowledge and half (51%) of them had moderate effect of nomophobia. This emphasizes the urgent need to sensitize and alert them regarding the ill effects of mobile phone use.

In Australia, 946 adolescents and emerging adults between ages 15 and 24 participated in mobile phone research study (387 males, 457 females, and 102 chose not to report gender). The study focused on the relationship between participants` frequency of mobile phone use and psychological involvement with their mobile phone. Researchers assessed several psychological factors that might influence participants` mobile phone use with the following questionnaire: mobile phone involvement questionnaire (MPIQ), frequency of mobile phone use, self- identity, and validation from others. The results demonstrated moderate difference between the participants` mobile phone use and their psychological relationship with mobile phones. No pathological conditions were found, but there was an excessive use of mobile phone indicating signs of attachment. Participants who demonstrated signs of excessive mobile phone use were more likely to increase their use when receiving validation from others. Others factors considered,the population studied was focused on adolescents and emerging adults are more likely to develop mobile phone dependency because they may be going through a self-identity, and social-esteem, and social identity. However, sufferers of panic disorders and anxiety disorders are prone to mobile phone dependency.

## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

- Anxiety
- Respiratory alteration
- Trembling
- Perspiration
- Agitation
- Disorientation
- Tachycardia

### **EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS**

- Depression
- Panic
- Fear
- Dependence
- Rejection
- Low self esteem
- Loneliness

## EFFECTS OF NOMOPHOBIA ON ADOLESCENTS

According to professor Gail Kinman of the University of Bedfordshire, in United Kingdom, the consequences of nomophobia are akin to any other addiction; “nomophobia can divide individuals to become preoccupied with their phone and turn to it if they are depressed, anxious, and lonely. This is especially true for individuals pre-existing anxiety, who may equate their phones with a comfort blanket”.

Nomophobia not only affect the mind, but also relationships, where a person is physically present but psychologically absent. “Phone dependency may also put job at risk if people are unable to resist checking online or answering calls or texts when in meetings or with customers”, Dr Kinman adds.

The detrimental effect of nomophobia on cognitive ability is further evidenced in academics. A study of more than 500 dental students highlighted the adverse influence smartphone addiction can have on academic performance. Nearly 40% of the participants agreed that their low grades could be attributed to the time they spend on their phones. While hands-on proximity to mobile phone may drive nomophobia, others hypothesize that even the presence of such devices affects cognitive abilities.

### II. PREVENTION AND TREATMENT:

Mobile phones are convenient no doubt, but technology had meant us to be masters and not that we become the slaves of these gadgets. The need of the hour is to practice calmness, meditate, just let be. Draw the line to distinguish between being at work and being away from work.

Currently, scholarly accepted and empirically proven treatments are very limited due to its relatively new concept. However, promising treatments include cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy, EMDR, and combined with pharmacological interventions. Treatments using tranylcypromine and clonazepam were successful in reducing the effects of nomophobia.

Cognitive behavioral therapy seems to be effective by reinforcing autonomous behavior independent from technological influences, however, this form of treatment lacks randomized trials. Another possible treatment is “Reality Approach”, or Reality behavior away from cell phones. In extreme or severe cases, neuropsychopharmacology may be advantageous, ranging from benzodiazepines to anti-depressants in usual doses. Patients were also successfully treated using tranylcypromine combined with clonazepam. However, it is important to note that these medications were designed to treat social anxiety disorder and not nomophobia directly, but more plausible to investigate, identify, and treat any mental disorder if any exists.

Even though nomophobia is a fairly new concept, there are validated psychometric scales available to help in diagnostic, an example of these scales is the “Questionnaire of Dependence of Mobile Phone/Test of Mobile Phone Dependence (QDMP/TMPD)”.

### III. FINDINGS:

Based on the result found from this work, it is considered that nomophobia is a field of study that is currently in its early stages of research. Young people exposed to intensive and irrational use of technology are only aware of the advantages it offers and are unaware of the risk that may suffer as a consequence. Evidence has shown that nomophobia is closely associated with mental health, internet addiction, and behavior modification. In-addition, it necessary to promote effective and healthy use of mobile technology in learning space, in order to avoid the emergence of nomophobia and its consequences.

### IV. CONCLUSION:

There is high prevalence of nomophobia among the adolescent students and emerging adults. Nomophobia is not found to be associated with any demographic variable like, age, cast, year of academics, etc. the most common reason for smartphone use is advanced lifestyle, and mindset of being up to date and being useful member of society.

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