

## Nomophobia: A Smartphone Addiction

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### ABSTRACT

The array of technologies are anticipating in the world like a flood. Everyone wants to grow themselves and to their nation by enhancing more towards progression and this upcoming promotion of gadgets day-by-day is heading forward to some serious known problems for human life. One such problem named as NOMOPHOBIA, which is known to be fear for mobile phones when not being able to come in contact with them. All humans encounter this daily but very few are aware of this in real, that it can really get them in a serious trouble in their life. And to make them aware and more knowledgeable regarding this severe issue a research article is designed. This examines (i) the level of Nomophobia in both the genders, males and females, (ii) the difference between the rate of males and females, and who scored high on the level of Nomophobia. These all objectives are measured by taking a NMP-Q (Nomophobia-questionnaire) conducted on the sample of 100 students with age group of 16-25 years. The results show that both genders are a part of moderate level of Nomophobia but females considerably suffers more than males in this level. To prevent our youth from this widespread epidemic addiction certain suggestions are provided, so that things could become little better for people to live peacefully.

**Keywords:** *NOMOPHOBIA, Social PHOBIA, PHOBIA, Panic Disorder, AGORAPHOBIA.*

The rising centuries leads the rising technologies and these technologies' gives a rise in various different addiction, phobias or disorders. Well, talking about technologies a major and may be origin of technologies was started from the use of mobile phones in the world. The use of this instrument increased day by day in really a huge amount that today it has become of a great concern for the humans.

The origin of the mobile phones was established to make calls and make far cited conversations, deals easily but this need is now transformed into a serious addiction foe human beings. The reason behind this addiction is that when a need is taken for granted by launching more and more apps, games, etc which will attract the audience and force them to buy and get lingered to its use. Thus, by providing this level of comfort zone and a high level of technology which is available easily by almost every human on this planet, is making the more and more lazy in their daily lives and making them more addicted to their cellphones, which thereby, also making them away from their actual real social life with their family, friends or a personal one.

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Therefore, it can be easily claimed that the people who can't go without their cell phones or cannot leave them for a long time are known to be as **NOMOPHOBIC**.

The word nomophobic is taken from **NOMOPHOBIA** which means “fear of being away from your mobile phones for a long time” i.e, “**NO-MO-PHOBIA**” means “no mobile phone phobia” and the word **phobia** is termed as an incessant fear of an object, consistently astray to the danger. The danger here is concerned with the excess usage of mobile phones. The term **nomophobia** was derived in 2008 by YUUGOV, a UK research organization and it was seen that 58% of the people were suffering from a disease called **NOMOPHOBIA**, where more than half were men (*mail online, 2008*).

Over a period of time from 2008 to 2017, now the result of the data will just be the double of the earlier report. As, within this period of nine years, the usage of phones has taken an adverse height in the demand and supply of mobile phones. This high on demand and supply is because, the youth of the country is becoming more advance in an young age i.e, where there is a time for them to learn, read and play outdoors, are now drowning in the world of smartphones, which is not only making them lazy but also taking them away from their happy childhood. The real cause of this problem are, their parents who are allowing them with an early exposure to the gadgets like smartphones, tabs, etc.

Nomophobia is considered as an side product of interaction between people and communication gadgets, and it is also said that nomophobia brings out the symptoms of psychological as well as physical dependency, as people who are tend to be nomophobic feels a great psychological anxiety, pressure, irritation, anger, uneasiness when he/she is not around to their phones and talking about physical dependency, it states that people are more inclined towards phone for every minute, work be it online shopping of clothes, or vegetables, ordering of food, booking of tickets, and many more. All this state of being physical dependent makes a creature more detached to the world around him/her. In other words, it may be also said that nomophobia influences **social phobia** by making them disinterested, aloof from the society they live in.

The effect of this type of fear of cell phones not only deals with behavioral, psychological, physical problems but also with the some anxiety disorders like **panic disorder** and **agoraphobia** which clearly defines the level of anxiety little rapidly or frequently than normal and the fear of being in the crowded places because it makes the person less open and restricts the person to use the phone, which makes him irresistible to be in that environment.

This happens because, people with moderate or severe nomophobia have a habit of checking their mobile phones again and again without a good time interval. They are so prone their phones that if they are not checking their phones for a long time they become anxious and irritated of not being able to use it. They tend to be always busy with their phones not caring of the environment they live with, they will always be piled up with their phone apps that they don't need anyone else in their life. They don't care what others i.e, their parents, family are saying to them or when they are with their families for a picnic, they always want to be busy in their phones, also sometimes for no reason. They even get anxious when they don't receive any text message from anyone and tend to check the phones in almost every second. Nomophobia is an upcoming rising disease or a disorder which is engulfing every human living on this earth and truly it is not easy to prevent the people of society from this disease as, even if we are not willingly, will be the part of this addiction somewhere because the

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technologies are increasing so rapidly that nobody will be able to live without it and will not be ready to accept the change taken for improvement in the effect of nomophobia. But still it is our foremost duty to look for some appropriate solutions which could lessen the mobile phobia.

Precisely, nomophobia is a state where again the need or freedom of something important is taken for granted or has been misused by the upgrading technologies and still forcing people to look forward to this dangerously increasing addiction by providing more flexibility in offers and upgrading of apps and also by giving the benefits of free or low cost internet.

So, here this research is being conducted to see how many people suffering from moderate and severe nomophobia and in that data we will analyze that whether males are high or females. Therefore, to continue with this self-research report sample of 100 students is being taken, in which 50 are males and 50 are females between the age group of 16-25. This data will be collected with the help of a *NMP-Q (nomophobic-questionnaire)* which will help us in determining the level of nomophobia in youths. And with that data we will try to analyze and take some measure to lower down the rising effect of nomophobia.

### *Objective of the Study*

1. To examine amount of youth suffering from nomophobia
2. To examine whether males or females are high on the level of anxiousness about their phones
3. To study the main reason behind the spreading Nomophobia
4. To learn about some measures which can help to reduce the effect of Nomophobia

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

To get to know in detail about **NOMOPHOBIA**, some various articles have been taken for a complete study. There were many articles which discussed different issues of nomophobia like, early age mobile phones exposure; impact on psychological and physical dependency; problem of influencing panic disorders, agoraphobia and social phobia and whether they are actually reducing it or helping in worsening the problem, etc.

Beginning from the main and foremost element of widespread problem of nomophobia which was the young children's early contacts with cell phones *Noorshahira Mohd Fadzil, Mohd Yusof Abdullah and Mohd Azul Mohamad Salleh (Mokhtar Muhammad, 2008). Wayne Warbuton and Kate Highfield (2012)*. It is considered to the fault of the parents that they don't keep a check on their children's life. They think that giving them cell phones and providing them only games in it with help them in keeping them engaged so that they could not be able to trouble them (parents) much, but this is not the actual case, as the most important stage of life is our childhood and if are not only paying attention to it and making ourselves engaged in some other irrelevant addictions, the we will be lost in our own selves. So, every parent should help in building up their child extrovertly rather than introvertly and also without mobile phones.

Coming down to the actual cause of increasing in number of mobile phones and its services, theses mobile connection company's plays a major role, by introducing more number of attracting apps and features in mobile phones that no one can resist from taking it. It has been observed that the sales and production of mobile phones and its services have increased rapidly within no time and this all was due to the demands of the customers *Francine Cheese(30/11/2015)*. This is because Nomophobia is considered as a by-product of the interaction between people and communication technologies. As various famous studies are

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conducted by *UK RESEARCH ORGANISATION*, (*Secur Envoy*, 2012) which shows that the rate of nomophobic population increased from 2008 to 2012 by 53% to 66% and the most interesting fact was this time females were high on this graph of feelings anxiety towards their mobile phones.

When we are talking about *psychological* and *physical dependency* of the people due to the effect of nomophobia, it is a matter of concern that do we really want to worry about it much? *BIVIN.J.B1*, *PREETI MATHEW2*, *PRAVEEN C. THULASI3*, *JINTO PHILIP4*, (*May01 2013*). The answer for this question is absolutely yes, that we should always take into consideration for each and every habit when it is transforming in any addiction and so is the case in this. The habit on using phones of people in society was normal on a daily basis, but no one ever came to that their these habits are slowly and gradually changing into an unbreakable addiction which can be harmful for them in a psychological way and will make them physically dependent.

Psychological problems relate to feelings of anxiousness towards their phones, irritated even if they have not used their phone for so long, anger if someone is not allowing them to use their phones, when they needed it, anguished, etc.

*Physical dependency* relates to that stage where people are so much dependent on the mobile phones, i.e.; for shopping, buying vegetables, ordering food, paying online bills, etc that they are not in a mood to take any pain to stand and go out to do all these tasks, so that it can keep them active for long. But this activeness in humans is disappearing now-a-days and also making them detached and careless for their contribution to the society. This can be proved by a small example that, in today's scenario when anyone is in need of help or in a state of death, the people would be more interested in making the video rather than saving someone's life, they will be more happy and concerned in making every accident and incident sociable, forgetting the rules of humanity. (*Nursing, Dental Science, Physiotherapy & Ayurveda*, 2013); *ChimataPu Sri NiKhita1*, *PradeeP r Jadhav2*, *ShauNaK a. aJiNKya3*, *psychiatry*.

Connecting to this physical dependency comes **Social Phobia**, *Dr. Şengül Uysal* (*THE GLOBAL eLEARNING JOURNAL VOLUME 5, ISSUE 2, 2016*) which gets influenced by nomophobia. This happens when the youth of the country when taken as a sample showed that serious effects of nomophobia in them, as a nomophobic person feels worried in every moment when he/she is away from the phone's contact and which somewhere leads to social phobia, which includes shyness in public, unfriendly because he/she might be having a craving for using their phones, nervous, quiet, and aloof, etc as the sufferer may be wanting a chance of using the phone.

The addiction of mobile phone is so dangerous that it can lead to the state of DSM-IV which includes **panic disorders** and also **agoraphobia**, *Anna Lucia Spear King* (*Clinical Practice & Epidemiology in Mental Health*, 2014), (*psychology research and behavior management*, 2014). It states that panic disorders, referring to frequent attacks of anxiety and agoraphobia, referring to fear of crowd places all gets also influenced by nomophobia. This is how when a person is not able to live without his cell phone even for a minute feels irritated and gets anxious and he may get attacks of anxiety in severe cases. It leads to agoraphobia because a nomophobic person cannot live in an environment of limited autonomy which is easily found in crowded places, because there are so many people around them that sometimes it gets hard for them to take out their phones and check out. *Health psychologist. Psychotherapist*.

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Nomophobia is getting so widespread day by day, that it is getting more and more hard to get in its control. The problem of getting to attach to mobile phones is not just restricted to one single area rather it is spreading like an epidemic disease over the years, be it in India, Australia, America, UK, etc and this is also not necessary that only adults are mostly being the part of this addiction rather, in some cases there are adolescence, children, or old age people all the generations are getting drowned in this volcano of gadgets.

### METHODOLOGY

The research design included the combination of both exploratory and descriptive type research. The data for this research paper was collected from the age group of 16-25 years old with the help of **NMP-Q (NOMOPHOBIA-QUESTIONNAIRE)** which included sample size of 100, of both 50 males and 50 females. A non-probability sampling was used for data collection and data was then analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation of the obtained result measuring the high amount of NoMoPhobia a gender reflects.

In this study firstly qualitative and secondary data (articles from different journals) were used and then a Questionnaire was taken on Nomophobia to get quantitative analysis of the research. After that both primary and secondary data were combined in completing this paper.

**Hypothesis:** for this research on nomophobia, a hypothesis is also assumed that among both males and females, females tend to be more high on the scores of nomophobia in comparison to males. And this all will be generalized clearly through the results and discussion of the sample collected.

### RESULTS

#### Data Analysis

The results of the data collected from 50 males and 50 females of sample size 100, shows the **MEAN** differences in the scores of both groups, i.e, **78.64** and **79.32** respectively. This differences in their means tell us that both the genders suffer from almost same the level of nomophobia.

A complete study of the result is done with the help of **Descriptive Statistics** which calculates every aspect of differences held between the scores of males and females. Therefore, the tables of complete analysis of result are given below:

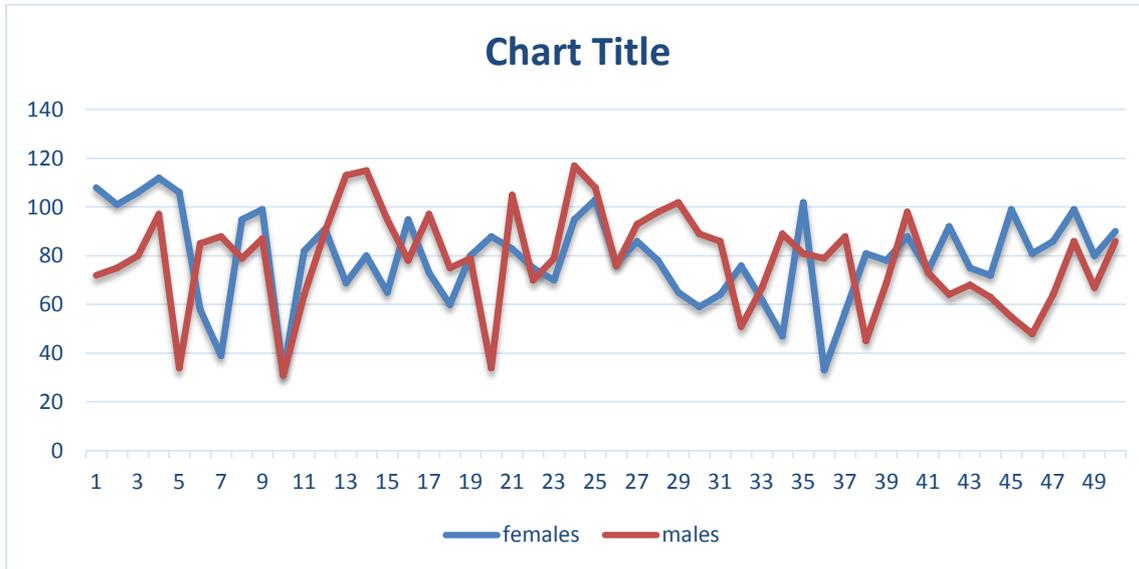
FEMALES		MALES	
Mean	79.32	Mean	78.64
Standard Error	2.676342311	Standard Error	2.855107847
Median	80	Median	79
Mode	95	Mode	79
Standard Deviation	18.92459797	Standard Deviation	20.18866119
Sample Variance	358.1404082	Sample Variance	407.5820408
Kurtosis	0.171189257	Kurtosis	0.131327704
Skewness	-0.582673038	Skewness	-0.423314361
Range	80	Range	86
Minimum	32	Minimum	31
Maximum	112	Maximum	117
Sum	3966	Sum	3932
Count	50	Count	50

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Moreover, variation in the scores of both males and females individually, can be clearly exhibited by plotting their scores on the three types of **Graphs** as follows:

And from this we can observe that in most cases **females** score higher than **males** and their **Graph** of the means also shows a notable difference in their scores as a whole.

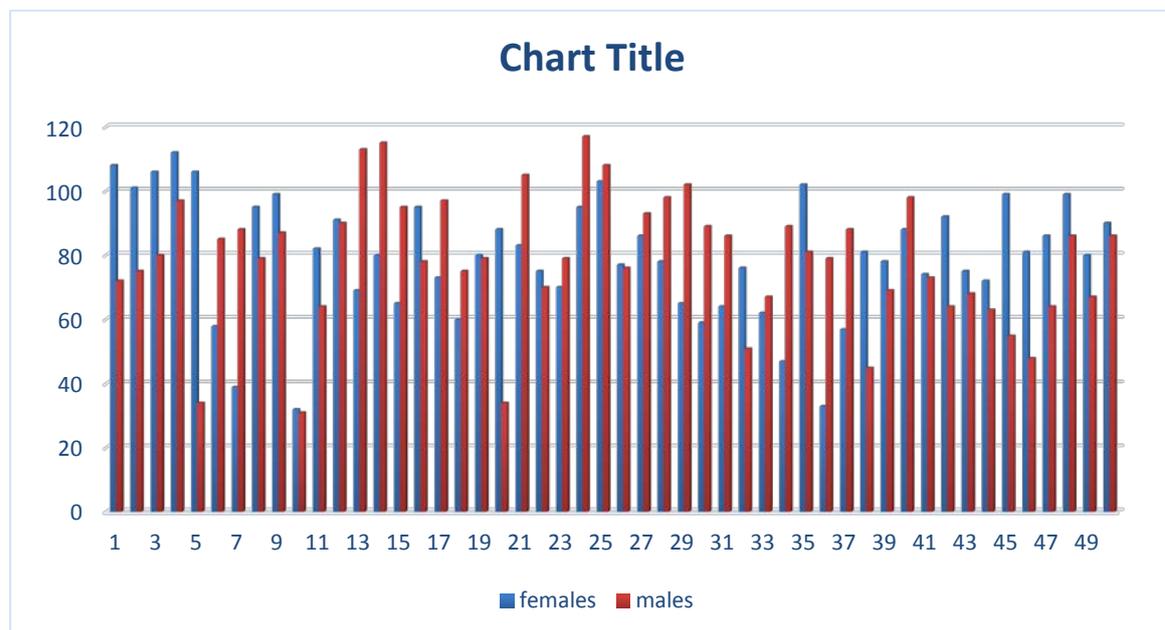
### a) THE LINE GRAPH



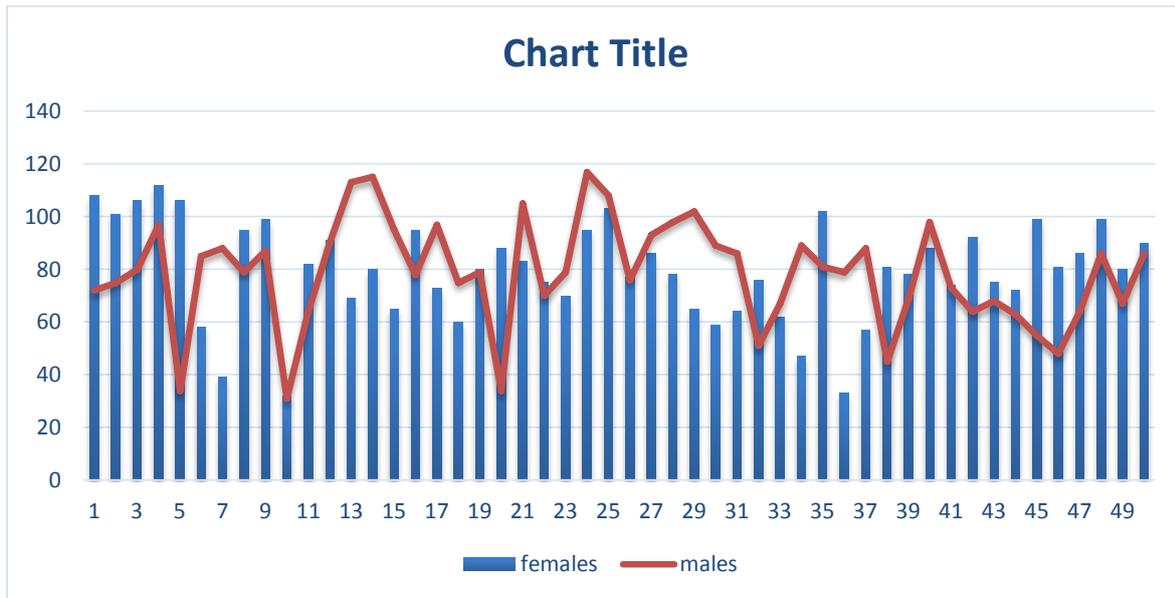
THE LINE GRAPH shows the clear drift in the rate of the scores by both males and females in red and blue color lines respectively.

### b) THE COLUMN GRAPH

THE COLUMN GRAPH is showing the ratings of individual scores of both males and females in the form of bar diagram, which understandably compares the score of each individual with the opposite gender. Like in 1<sup>st</sup> column blue and red color is compared as scores of 100-120 which a female has rate with blue and between 60-80 male with red color has rate the scores.



c) THE CLUSTER GRAPH



THE CLUSTER GRAPH is a combination of both line and column graph, which shows the distinction in the individual scores by combining both the above graphs.

## DISCUSSIONS

NOMOPHOBIA a serious rising issue, which states the fear of losing link from a smartphone. This widespread disease is common now-a-days that even a one year old child know about that four sided object, and feels happy when playing with it. So, by means of this research article, a survey on 100 students of age between 16-25 years is being measured to record the number of sample suffering from this critical issue known as NOMOPHOBIA.

For doing this, a questionnaire on NOMOPHOBIA was taken with a 7-piont scale and 20 items in it, which measures the level of nomophobia an individual is suffering. Its interpretation was done as follows:

- 0-20:** *not at all nomophobic*
- 21-60:** *mild nomophobic*
- 61-100:** *moderate nomophobic*
- 101-120:** *severe nomophobic*

Taking a view of results, it shows that females tend to score high on the level of nomophobia when calculated averagely i.e, 79.32 whereas males tend to score a little low than females on the level of nomophobia i.e, 78.64. These results clearly states that the disease of nomophobia is seriously affecting both the genders equally but females are slightly more than males. Therefore, the reason behind this matter can be anything like this happens because females are more emotional and tend to be more socially active to others than men and whenever they have any argument or anyone who care for them so they get attached to them so easily that they can't even think to live without them and the medium through which they can touch in contact of their loved ones is that smartphone which is making them nomophobic.

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The mean of average scores of both males and females clearly defines their moderate level of nomophobia, which says that a person in this level is pretty much attached to the phone and they often keep on checking for updates and become anxious when they are disconnected. The average population falls in the category, As out of sample of 100, 74 students scored **moderate nomophobia** which tells that they are way forward to **severe nomophobia** if not controlled.

Coming down to more precise discussion of the sample scoring, In this discussion will be held between both the genders, individually who scores more high on the level of nomophobia. By collecting 50 questionnaires from each of the gender, it can be seen that 38 males out of 50 were marked on the moderate level of nomophobia and in case of females only 36 out of 50 were lying in the category of **moderate nomophobia**. But when calculated as an average score females tend to be slightly high on the level of nomophobia from males.

Well, validating the level of **severe nomophobia** in both the genders, it was detected that only 5 males were falling in the phase of severe nomophobia, whereas, females were specifically more than males by detecting 7 females in this group. This eventually shows the reason behind the decreased rate of females in the level of moderate nomophobia, and we can even see that the decrease in the rate of moderate nomophobia increases the rate of severe nomophobia in females which demonstrates that people in this type of case can barely go for 60 seconds without checking their phones and they are considered to be the most serious time for intervention and prevention from this disease because if not prevented can lead disasters in their life.

This empirical study undoubtedly exhibits that females tend to be more high on the level of nomophobia as the rate of severe nomophobia is more in females as compared to males and directly states that females are more prone towards their addiction for mobile phones, they tend to be always attached to their gadgets so much that they start feeling rapid mood swings in their behavior and get very anxious when they are not able to receive any notification from their gadgets. This can be even calculated from the amount of selfie addiction females have, they tend to take so many clicks for one perfect click and then making that single click socialize on every social networking site. It is also observed that Females are more attention seeker than males, that's why they upload their pics more and more on social sites so that they could get more compliments from the people who follow them. They even have a good quality of always trying to be socialize and friendly in the environment they live in, whether it be parents, relatives, friends, etc. they always want to be in contact with everyone as much as possible and this might add in rising their level of nomophobia for their smartphones.

Leaving behind the concern of levels of *not at all nomophobic* category and *mild nomophobia* states that there is no one in today's scenario who can fall in the category of *not all nomophobic or can score below 20*. Whereas, yes there are people who fall under the category of *mild nomophobia*, which says that they don't feel anxious when they forget their phones at home and even can live without it for a day or two without getting hyper or irritated.

These kind of people tend to believe in living their life to the fullest without making gadgets their priority in life, they are even more happier than the unusual nomophobic person. They engage themselves in their work and are more practical towards living. They are considered the most happening creatures on the earth in this era.

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The TABLE of Descriptive Analysis shows the clear difference among column1 and column2 i.e, FEMALES and MALES respectively, in case of Means, Standard Deviation, Median, Mode, and many more.

The different types of GRAPHS, makes everyone clear regarding the drift in the individual scoring obtained by MALES and FEMALES and also difference in the scoring of individual item in each questionnaire.

### CONCLUSION

The advancement of the technologies is with no doubt considered beneficial for the development of the country and for the society, but with this upgrading growth in technologies, one must also keep in mind to the leading pros and cons of the severely increasing issues of gadgets. One example of such mounting problem is covered in this report of NOMPFOBIA. And hence, overtly claims that truly this should be considered an issue of concern as both the genders rated high on this, and are in progress of moving forward with this issue making it more dangerous for people to live with peace in their lives. More than 70% of the population has already drowned in the well of moderate nomophobia and if not taken into account, with this soaring time everyone will be a part of severe nomophobia and it will be hard to get them rid out of this disease.

### Recommendations

As an informer of this spreading disease, would also like to provide some suggestions for preventing and saving the youth of the world, they are as follows:

1. Parents should restrict their child from playing with their mobile phones at a young age
2. They should become more careful regarding the bringing of their child
3. Institutes, schools, should not provide with any homework which require the use of internet or mobile phones for children
4. There should be an age limit barrier for using the powerful gadgets like mobile phones, laptops, etc.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors carefully declare this paper to bear not conflict of interests

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### ANNEXURE

#### (QUESTIONNAIRE USED)

#### NOMOPHOBIA QUESTIONNAIRE

Study participants were asked to respond to the following statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Total scores were calculated by adding the responses to each item. The higher scores corresponded to greater nomophobia severity.

1. I would feel uncomfortable without constant access to information through my smartphone.
2. I would be annoyed if I could not look information up on my smartphone when I wanted to do so.
3. Being unable to get the news (e.g., happenings, weather, etc.) on my smartphone would make me nervous.
4. I would be annoyed if I could not use my smartphone and/or its capabilities when I wanted to do so.
5. Running out of battery in my smartphone would scare me.
6. If I were to run out of credits or hit my monthly data limit, I would panic.
7. If I did not have a data signal or could not connect to Wi-Fi, then I would constantly check to see if I had a signal or could find a Wi-Fi network.
8. If I could not use my smartphone, I would be afraid of getting stranded somewhere.
9. If I could not check my smartphone for a while, I would feel a desire to check it.

#### *If I did not have my smartphone with me:*

10. I would feel anxious because I could not instantly communicate with my family and/or friends.
11. I would be worried because my family and/or friends could not reach me.
12. I would feel nervous because I would not be able to receive text messages and calls.
13. I would be anxious because I could not keep in touch with my family and/or friends.
14. I would be nervous because I could not know if someone had tried to get a hold of me.
15. I would feel anxious because my constant connection to my family and friends would be broken.
16. I would be nervous because I would be disconnected from my online identity.
17. I would be uncomfortable because I could not stay up-to-date with social media and online networks.
18. I would feel awkward because I could not check my notifications for updates from my connections and online networks.
19. I would feel anxious because I could not check my email messages.
20. I would feel weird because I would not know what to do.