

Nomophobia and Its Relation with Self-esteem among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

High dependency on mobile phones may cause cognitive, emotional, and academic impairments among students. This study aims to assess the level of nomophobia among young adults and evaluate the relationship between nomophobia and self-esteem. An exploratory study was conducted online, collecting data from 204 participants aged 18 to 24 through purposive sampling. Among the participants, 75 were male (36.8%) and 129 were female (63.2%). The tools used for the study included the Nomophobia Questionnaire (Yildirim and Correia) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized to analyze the results using SPSS. The Mann-Whitney U test and Spearman's correlation were applied. The findings indicate that there is no significant difference in the level of nomophobia between male and female participants. Additionally, there is a negative correlation between nomophobia and self-esteem.

Keywords: *Nomophobia, Self-Esteem, Young Adults, Mobile Phone, Dependency*

In today's digital age, mobile phones have become indispensable tools, especially among young adults. While these devices offer numerous benefits, their pervasive use has led to the emergence of "nomophobia," a term describing the fear or anxiety of being without a mobile phone. This phenomenon has garnered significant attention due to its potential implications for mental health, particularly concerning self-esteem among young adults.

Nomophobia, a portmanteau of "no mobile phone phobia," refers to the discomfort or anxiety experienced when individuals are unable to access their mobile devices. Research indicates that this condition is prevalent among young adults, a demographic that heavily relies on mobile technology for communication, socialization, and entertainment. A study by Zeb et al. (2022) explored the relationship between nomophobia, sleep deprivation, and leisure activities in adolescents and young adults, highlighting the widespread nature of this issue.

Self-esteem, defined as an individual's overall sense of self-worth or personal value, plays a crucial role in mental health and well-being. Low self-esteem has been associated with various psychological issues, including depression, anxiety, and social withdrawal.

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Understanding the factors that influence self-esteem is essential, particularly among young adults who are navigating critical developmental stages.

The relationship between nomophobia and self-esteem has become a focal point in recent research. Some studies suggest that individuals with low self-esteem may be more susceptible to nomophobia, using their mobile phones as tools for seeking validation and avoiding face-to-face interactions. Conversely, excessive mobile phone use can lead to a decrease in self-esteem due to increased exposure to idealized images and lifestyles on social media platforms, fostering negative self-comparisons. Khan and Atta (2020) investigated the prevalence and relationship of smartphone addiction, nomophobia, and social anxiety among late adolescents, finding a significant association between high levels of nomophobia and low self-esteem.

Further research has explored mediating factors that might influence this relationship. For instance, Altinel et al. (2019) examined the effect of social appearance anxiety and loneliness on nomophobia levels in young adults. Their findings suggest that individuals with higher social appearance anxiety and feelings of loneliness are more prone to nomophobia, which can adversely affect their self-esteem.

The pervasive use of mobile phones also raises concerns about their impact on sleep patterns, academic performance, and overall mental health. Excessive screen time, particularly before bedtime, has been linked to sleep disturbances, which can negatively affect cognitive functions and emotional regulation. Moreover, the constant need to remain connected can lead to increased stress and anxiety levels, further contributing to a decline in self-esteem. A study by Zafar (2022) focused on nomophobia, insomnia, academic performance, and mental health among students, highlighting the complex interplay between these factors.

Understanding the relationship between nomophobia and self-esteem is crucial for developing effective interventions aimed at promoting mental well-being among young adults. By identifying the psychological mechanisms underlying this relationship, mental health professionals, educators, and policymakers can implement strategies to mitigate the negative effects of excessive mobile phone use. Such strategies may include promoting digital literacy, encouraging healthy mobile phone habits, and providing support for individuals struggling with low self-esteem and anxiety related to mobile phone use.

In conclusion, the rise of nomophobia among young adults presents significant challenges to mental health, particularly concerning self-esteem. As mobile phones continue to play an integral role in daily life, it is imperative to understand the psychological implications of their use. Further research is needed to explore the complex relationship between nomophobia and self-esteem, with the goal of informing interventions that promote healthier interactions with technology and enhance the well-being of young adults.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pavithra M, Suwarna M, Mahadeva M (2015) A Study on Nomophobia - Mobile Phone Dependence, Among Students of a Medical College in Bangalore. A cross-sectional study was carried out in 200 students of a medical college in Bangalore. 79(39.5%) students were Nomophobic in this study and another 27% were at risk of developing Nomophobia. The result of our study is indicative of increasing prevalence of Nomophobia among younger generation.

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Soumitra S, Veena M, Satish M Angelin P., Mahesh G, Amreen K. (2018) the object to find out the prevalence of nomophobia in Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal. A cross-sectional study conducted for a period of 3 months. Total of 473 students from Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal. The results show that (61.5%) were having moderate, 6.1% having severe nomophobia and only one participant was not suffering from nomophobia.

Nagapraveen V, Ravi K B P, Hanisha V, Sowmya G, Swathi T K (2019) A study on nomophobia and its correlation with sleeping difficulty and anxiety among medical students in a medical college, Telangana. The objectives are to study grading of nomophobia and to find out any correlation exists between nomophobia and sleeping difficulty and anxiety among medical students. A cross-sectional study is conducted for duration of 6 months among medical students. The study showed that out of 364 students, 62 (17%) have mild, 234 (64.3%) have moderate and 68 (18.7%) have severe nomophobia. There is a weak positive correlation between nomophobia and sleeping difficult and anxiety. There problem of nomophobia is alarming; there is a need to reduce nomophobia, and to evolve effective strategies to enhance human interaction.

Chethana; Nelliyanil, Maria; Anil, Manjula, (2020) Prevalence of Nomophobia and its Association with Loneliness, Self-Happiness and Self Esteem among Undergraduate Medical Students of a Medical College in Coastal Karnataka. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 228 undergraduate students. It was observed that, 100% of the participants had nomophobia. Nomophobia was found to be positively correlated with loneliness and negatively correlated with self-happiness and self-esteem, however only correlation of nomophobia and self-esteem was statistically significant.

Objectives of the study

1. To understand gender difference in the Nomophobia.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the level of Nomophobia among Hostel Students across gender.

Sample:

The sample consists of around 30 students, 15 male and 15 female, from different departments who stay in hostels, pursue undergrad and Postgrad studies, and use mobile phones.

Sample Technique:

The present study utilized a purposive sampling method. Participants were recruited through WhatsApp, email, and phone calls to take part in the study, which included a link to Google Forms containing the scales. Participation was voluntary.

Sample Criteria:

Inclusion:

1. Selecting young adults between the age group of 18 to 24 years.
2. Participants should be residents of Hostel, SDM College, Ujire.
3. Participants should be students of undergraduate or postgraduate studies.

Exclusion:

1. Dropouts from school/college.

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2. Participants staying in PG or with family (day scholars)
3. Participants who do not own a smartphone.

Variables

A. Independent Variables

1. Gender a) Male b) Female

B. Dependent Variables

1. Nomophobia

Research Tools

- **Nomophobia Questionnaire by Yildirim and Correia (2015):** The Nomophobia Questionnaire (NMP-Q) was originally developed by Yildirim and Correia (2015) in the USA. This 20-item instrument assesses four factors using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The total score varies from a minimum of 20 to a maximum of 140. In a study conducted with the Peruvian population, the overall reliability of the NMP-Q was reported as $\alpha = 0.96$, with the four dimensions demonstrating reliability coefficients of 0.94, 0.93, 0.86, and 0.87, respectively (Franco-Guanilo et al., 2022).

Research Design

The present study's research design is exploratory in nature. It utilized a qualitative survey technique to collect the necessary data.

Procedure

The assessment was done individually. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants, and the participant's willingness to participate in the study was ascertained. The sociodemographic details were collected. The participants were briefed about the scale and provided with clear instructions. The Nomophobia scale was administered through a Google form. Then, the responses obtained were scored, and interpretation was made.

Statistical Analysis

- The descriptive statistics- Mean and Standard Deviation
- Inferential statistics- Independent Sample t-Test
- To analyze the result through SPSS. (SPSS version - P22)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table shows the Mean, SD and the t-value on nomophobia among hostel students.

Table No-1

Gender	Mean value	Std. Deviation	t-Value	P-Value
Female	67.67	19.845	1.009	0.322
Male	76.20	26.053		

The hypothesis indicating no significant difference in the level of nomophobia between male and female young adults was tested using an independent samples t-test. The obtained value was 1.009, which is not significant. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the level of nomophobia between male and female young adults. This finding is supported by a study conducted by Burhanettin, Ozlem, and

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Irshad in 2017, which also showed that the main effect of gender on nomophobia was not statistically significant, indicating that the differences between male and female students regarding nomophobia were nonsignificant.

The present research was to study nomophobia among male and female young adults staying in hostels. The sample included 30 participants in the young adult age group, comprising 15 males and 15 females. The age group was 18 to 24—any participant pursuing an undergraduate or postgraduate degree at SDM College, Ujire. The results indicated no significant difference in the level of nomophobia between males and females.

CONCLUSION

Mobile phones and new technologies have both positive and negative aspects. They have not only helped improve worldwide communication; newer technology through new social media, social network sites, social informatics, and “social software” enables us to perform many jobs quickly and efficiently. The result showed increasing Nomophobia among the younger generation, especially those staying at hostels.

Implication

The study's findings can be utilized by Parents, Teachers, and Educational and Mental health professionals to learn more about smartphone usage among youngsters. Because of the psychological, emotional, and academic impairments of students with nomophobia symptoms and cellphone overuse, an effective intervention should be developed for nomophobia and other communication problems.

Limitations

1. The small sample size
2. Focused on only one institution.
3. The socioeconomic status and domicile were not considered.

Scope For Further Study

1. Studies on interventions can be done.
2. Multi-centric studies are required to assess the real problem
3. Investigate the psychological aspects and solutions for nomophobia in more depth.

Ethical Consideration

1. No usage of wrong or harsh comment/ remarks which degrade any community.
2. The department review committee has approved the research.
3. Consent was taken from the participant.
4. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.
5. Data collected is used only for academic research purpose

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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