

The Influence of Social Anxiety on Phubbing Behavior among Young Adults: The Moderating Role of Attachment Styles

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ABSTRACT

Phubbing, the act of prioritizing mobile device use over in-person interactions, has emerged as a disruptive force in social relationships. The current study aims to investigate the relationship between phubbing and social anxiety and whether attachment styles moderates this relationship among young adults. The study included a sample size of 102 young adults. The following standardized questionnaires were used to measure the study variables: The Phubbing Scale (PS; Karadağ et al., 2015) was used to measure phubbing behavior, Social interaction Anxiety scale (SIAS; Mattick & Clarke, 1998) was used to measure Social Anxiety and the revised Adult Attachment scale (AAS; Collins, 1996) to assess the attachment styles. The sample for the study was selected through a convenient and snowball sampling method. Descriptive statistics was computed to summarise the data and inferential statistics such as Pearson product moment correlation was used to find the relationship and hierarchical regression analysis was used to assess the moderating effect of attachment styles. The results indicate that there was a significant positive relationship between social anxiety and phubbing. Both Avoidant and Anxious attachment styles are significantly related to social anxiety and phubbing among young adults. Furthermore, Anxious Attachment significantly moderate the relationship between social anxiety and phubbing among young adults. However Avoidant attachment style did not significantly moderate this relationship. These findings highlight the importance of addressing social anxiety and attachment-related factors in interventions aimed at reducing phubbing and improving the quality of interpersonal relationships among young adults.

Keywords: Attachment styles, Anxiety, Avoidant, Phubbing, Social anxiety

In the world we live in today, where digital and social media have become an integral part of everyone's life, they have also been a major cause of relationship issues. Phubbing, a phenomenon that involves ignoring real-world interactions to be on the phone, is a widely discussed issue. It is defined as the act of snubbing someone in a social setting by concentrating on one's mobile phone (Chotpitayasunondh and Douglas, 2018). So, an individual, when focusing on the mobile phone instead of the person in front of them, will not only make the other person feel disrespected but also might lose the relationship they have with the person. Apart from these, there are various other effects phubbing can have on individuals. Rachman et al. (2020) revealed that there is a significant effect of phubbing on

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academic procrastination. In another study, it was seen that trust building was affected, and negative emotions were triggered. It was also found that those who got phubbed, their feelings of ostracism triggered (Knausenberger et al., 2022). Phubbing has also been shown to reduce relationship satisfaction (Chotpitayasunondh and Douglas, 2018). In a study by Hidayat et al (2021), many causes for phubbing, such as obtaining updated knowledge and information that leads to social media use more often, eliminating boredom, seeking entertainment and staying in touch with parents and friends. Phubbing commonly occurs across various social contexts, where individuals prioritize smartphone use over face-to-face interactions, leading to a decline in meaningful communication. It is increasingly evident in everyday situations, such as friends engaging with their devices instead of each other, couples ignoring one another in social settings, and families spending time together while remaining psychologically disconnected. This behavior is not limited to personal environments but is also prevalent in professional settings, where attention is frequently diverted from colleagues to mobile devices. Over time, phubbing has become a socially normalized behavior, adversely affecting interpersonal relationships and communication quality. Al-Saggaf and O'Donnell (2019), reported that smartphone addiction, SMS addiction and social media addiction, boredom, fear of missing out, and lack of self-control all predicted phubbing behavior, along with need for multitasking and immediate gratification. Moreover, the habitual nature of phubbing creates a cyclical pattern, wherein individuals turn to their devices to cope with stress or loneliness, inadvertently weakening their social bonds and increasing feelings of isolation. This cycle can contribute to psychological concerns such as anxiety and depression, while also influencing broader social norms and values.

Social anxiety is when a person feels anxious in social situations and social interactions. The situation in which they feel anxious can include having a conversation, meeting unfamiliar people, they can also include being observed when doing a small task like eating and drinking. Social anxiety can also include being anxious while performing any task in front of a crowd. "A persistent fear of social or performance situations in which embarrassment may occur." (Clark & Wells, 1995). Cheng and Yang (2022) examined the cause of social anxiety among young adults. They stated that when one's self-esteem and social abilities are poor, then social anxiety also emerges. They also stated that those who avoid social interactions due to social anxiety also look for comfort in the digital space. Lai et al. (2023) found that when a person actively engages in social media, their social anxiety tends to be lower. But at the same time, a person actively engaging in social media can affect their communication capacity. In understanding these variations in social experiences, it is essential to consider attachment, which underlies how individuals form, maintain, and respond to interpersonal relationships.

The first noteworthy research done on attachment was by Bowlby, who defined attachment as the first and most important relationship that children have with their caregivers (often the mother, but not necessarily). Attachment is not developed for mere safety and survival reasons, but attachment is something humans need as we are all social beings. Every individual's attachment style is different and the way they get attached and show attachment is different. Mary Ainsworth gave 4 major attachment styles of humans:

Secure attachment style: In the context of the experiment done by Mary Ainsworth, the child showed distress when the caregiver left, but was instantly able to console themselves when the caregiver returned. Individuals with a secure attachment style tend to feel comfortable with intimacy and trust in relationships. They have a positive view of themselves and others, are able to express emotions openly, and maintain balanced, healthy interpersonal relationships. Individuals with an insecure avoidant attachment style tend to maintain

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emotional distance from others and may avoid closeness or dependency. They often have difficulty expressing feelings, prefer self-reliance, and may appear indifferent in relationships. In Insecure-ambivalent or anxious attachment style, the child is very distressed when the caregiver leaves, but when they return, though they want contact and comfort, they resist. Individuals with this type of style often seek high levels of closeness and reassurance but experience fear of rejection or abandonment. They may display clingy, dependent behavior while simultaneously feeling insecure and uncertain about their relationships. In the last type of attachment style - The Disorganized and dismissing attachment style - the child's attachment style was not consistent; sometimes it displayed an approaching, freezing, or avoidant style. This usually occurs in cases of abuse or trauma.

In conclusion, phubbing has emerged as a significant interpersonal issue in the digital age, influencing not only everyday social interactions but also deeper psychological and relational processes. As the literature suggests, factors such as social anxiety, attachment styles, and excessive engagement with social media play a crucial role in shaping phubbing behavior. Individuals with higher social anxiety may turn to digital spaces as a coping mechanism, while insecure attachment styles may further influence how individuals engage in or perceive phubbing within relationships. Understanding these underlying factors is essential for addressing the negative consequences of phubbing and for promoting healthier communication patterns and relationship satisfaction in an increasingly digital world.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Büyüksakar and Çelik (2024) examined the relationship between attachment styles, loneliness, and phubbing. The sample consisted of 288 students. Relationship scales questionnaire, the UCLA Loneliness scale short form, and the General phubbing scale were used to assess the target variables. The results indicated a significant positive relationship between phubbing and fearful attachment, dismissive-avoidant attachment preoccupied attachment. Furthermore, fearful attachment and preoccupied attachment significantly predicted phubbing behavior.

Sun and Miller (2023) investigated the relationship between insecure attachment styles and phubbing behavior. The study employed 444 Southwestern University participants aged between 18 and 37 years who possessed a smartphone. The target variables were measured using the following measures: Experiences in close relationships - Revised (ECR-R; Fraley et al., 2000), Smartphone addiction scale - Short version (SAS=SV; Kwon et al, 2013), and phubbing scale (Karadag et al., 2015). The results indicated that anxious- preoccupied and dismissive-avoidant attachment was positively associated with phubbing. Insecure attachment styles indirectly predicted phubbing through problematic smartphone use.

Chu et al. (2023) examined the relationship between phubbing and social anxiety and the mediating effect of problematic social networking. 1379 undergraduates were included as the sample of the study. The study found that social anxiety was significantly positively related to phubbing. Furthermore, problematic social networking significantly mediated the relationship.

Marynowski et al. (2022) investigated the gender differences in the effects of Phubbing among college-aged samples. A sample of 83 college-age participants was partnered with same-age confederates. They were asked to complete anagram tasks with or without interruptions from phones for Confederates. The results indicated that in the phubbing condition, the negative

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effect increased in females from pre-task to post-task and did not change in males. This suggests that mood, anxiety-related attention bias, and affect are negatively impacted by phubbing behavior with notable differences between males and females.

Hidayat et al. (2021) explored the causes of phubbing and the impact of phubbing among students. This qualitative study used focus-group discussion and In-depth interviews as methods to collect data. Thematic analysis was carried out to consolidate the data. The results indicated that students who engaged in phubbing behaviors tended to forget the interaction activities in their surroundings. Phubbing was also found to be impacting anxiety, fear, discomfort, and a disruption in social interactions.

Khare & Qasim (2019) studied the relationship between phubbing behavior and anxiety among male and female university students. Sinha's comprehensive anxiety test (SCAT) and a self-devised questionnaire for phubbing by the authors was used to assess the variables. The findings indicated a positive relationship between phubbing behavior and anxiety among both genders.

Studies consistently demonstrate that insecure attachment styles—such as fearful, dismissive-avoidant, and preoccupied attachment—are positively associated with phubbing behavior (Büyükşakar & Çelik, 2024; Sun & Miller, 2023). These attachment styles not only directly predict phubbing but also indirectly influence it through problematic smartphone use. Additionally, social anxiety has emerged as a significant predictor of phubbing, with evidence suggesting that individuals experiencing higher social anxiety are more likely to engage in phubbing, often mediated by excessive social networking (Chu et al., 2023). Gender differences have also been observed, with females showing greater negative emotional responses to phubbing situations compared to males (Marynowski et al., 2022). Further, qualitative findings indicate that phubbing contributes to anxiety, discomfort, and disruptions in real-life social interactions (Hidayat et al., 2021), while quantitative studies confirm a positive relationship between phubbing and anxiety across genders (Khare & Qasim, 2019).

Need for the study

Despite growing interest, the current body of research has key limitations. Most studies focus on singular aspects, such as either attachment styles or anxiety, rather than exploring how these variables interact. Considering this, the current study aims to examine how attachment styles and social anxiety relate to phubbing behavior. Also, most studies have examined these variables independently or have focused on mediation effects, with limited attention given to how attachment styles may influence the strength or direction of the relationship between social anxiety and phubbing. Given that attachment styles shape individuals' interpersonal expectations and coping mechanisms in social situations, they may play a crucial moderating role in determining how socially anxious individuals engage in phubbing behavior. Focusing on young adults—who are highly immersed in technology—this research emphasizes the urgent need to understand the emotional and relational costs of phubbing in everyday interactions.

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

Aim: To assess whether attachment styles moderate the relationship between social anxiety and phubbing among young adults.

Objectives

1. To analyse the levels of social anxiety and Phubbing among young adults

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2. To assess the different attachment styles (anxiety or avoidant) present among young adults.
3. To explore the association between attachment styles, social anxiety, and phubbing among young adults.

Hypotheses

- **H₀₁:** There will be no significant relationship between social anxiety and phubbing among young adults
- **H₀₂:** There will be no significant relationship between social anxiety and anxious attachment style among young adults.
- **H₀₃:** There will be no significant relationship between social anxiety and avoidant attachment style among young adults.
- **H₀₄:** There will be no significant relationship between phubbing and anxious attachment style among young adults.
- **H₀₅:** There will be no significant relationship between phubbing and avoidant attachment style among young adults.
- **H₀₆:** Anxious attachment style will not significantly moderate the relationship between Social anxiety and Phubbing among young adults.
- **H₀₇:** Avoidant attachment style will not significantly moderate the relationship between Social anxiety and Phubbing among young adults.

Variables

Independent Variable. *Social Anxiety*

Conceptually, social anxiety is defined as fear of social situations in which an individual anticipates negative evaluations by others or perceives that their presence will make others feel uncomfortable (Hofmann et al., 2010).

Operationally it is defined by the total score yielded by the Social Interaction Anxiety scale (SIAS) developed by Mattick and Clark in 1988. The higher the scores, indicates higher levels of social interaction anxiety.

Dependent variable. *Phubbing*

Conceptually, Phubbing refers to the act of an individual looking at his or her mobile phone during a conversation with other individuals, dealing with the mobile phone and escaping from interpersonal communication (Karadağ et al., 2015).

Operationally phubbing is measured using the Phubbing Scale (PS; Karadağ et al., 2015). Higher Score scores indicate higher levels of Phubbing behavior.

Moderator. *Attachment style*

Attachment styles can be conceptually defined as the emotional and behavioral patterns individuals develop in intimate relationships stemming from their early interactions with caregivers (Bowlby, 1969)

In this study Attachment styles are operationally defined along two dimensions: anxious attachment and avoidant attachment. These dimensions will be assessed using the subscales of Revised Adult Attachment Scale (Collins, 1996) with higher scores indicating greater levels of anxious attachment and avoidant attachment respectively.

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Research design

The study employed a cross-sectional correlational research design to assess the relationship between the target variables. The nature of the study is descriptive and a survey method is employed for data collection. Further, the study examines the moderating role of attachment styles on the relationship between social anxiety and phubbing among young adults.

Sample

The study is intended to examine the target variables among the young adult population. Young adults comprise people falling between the ages of 18 and 25 (Arnett, 2000). The study employed 102 participants as a sample for the current investigation. The sample was selected using convenient and snowball sampling techniques.

Tools Used

- ***Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS)***: Social anxiety is measured using the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS; Mattick & Clarke, 1998). It assesses the fears or anxiety towards general social interaction. The scale consists of 20 items, each illustrating a social situation or interaction to which the respondent rates their level of anxiety or discomfort. The scale collects responses in a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (Not at all characteristic of me) to 4 (extremely characteristic of me). Positively worded Items (5, 9, and 11) are reverse-scored. The total score is obtained by summing the responses to all the items after reverse scoring. The scores yielded can range from 0-80. Higher scores indicate higher levels of social interaction anxiety. The scale yielded satisfactory psychometric properties in the Indian context. The reliability of the scale was established through the internal consistency metric with Cronbach's $\alpha=0.91$ at a 99% confidence interval. Concurrent validity was established through correlation with the social phobia inventory (SPIN), with a correlation coefficient $r = 0.81$, $p<0.001$ (Sahu et al., 2024)
- ***Phubbing scale (PS)***: Phubbing behavior among the respondents were measured through the Phubbing Scale (PS; Karadağ et al., 2015). This measures the degree to which an individual looks at their phones during a conversation with other people, deals with mobile phones, and escapes from social interaction. The PS is a self-report measure with 10 items. The responses are recorded on a 5-point Likert scale. The responses are collected in terms of varying frequency, i.e., 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). The scale includes two factors of phubbing behavior: Communication disturbance and Phone obsession. The total score is calculated by summing the responses of all items. The total score can range from 10 to 50, with a higher score indicating more severe phubbing behavior. An Indian study reported that the PS Scale has an internal consistency Cronbach's α value of 0.892, which is highly satisfactory (Verma et al., 2019).
- ***Adult Attachment Scale (AAS)***: The attachment styles of the sample are measured using the revised Adult Attachment Scale (AAS) by Nancy Collins in 1996. The revised AAS is an 18-item self-report measure rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The respondents record their degree of agreement with each statement, ranging from 1-Not at all characteristic of me to 5-Very characteristic of me. The scale contains two scales: Anxious Attachment and Avoidant attachment. Anxious attachment reflects the extent to which individuals fear being rejected or abandoned in close relationships, whereas avoidant attachment reflects discomfort with closeness and dependence on others. (Collins & Read, 1990). The total scores are obtained by summing the items about each dimension after reversing the scores of specified items. A higher score indicates

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the dominant attachment style. The scale showed satisfactory psychometric properties with Cronbach's alpha 0.77 for Avoidance and 0.79 for Anxiety (Hankin et al., 2004).

Procedure

The data was collected from the sample via google forms circulated through online social media platforms. The Google Forms consisted of demographic details and questionnaires for measuring the target variables. The collected data are then subjected to descriptive and inferential analyses.

Statistical Analyses

Data analysis was carried out in SPSS 20 software. The following tests were computed to find the results of the study. Descriptive statistics such as mean, Standard deviation, and frequency are computed to summarise the data. Shapiro Wilk test was computed to test the assumption of normality of the data. Pearson's product-moment correlation was carried out to assess the relationship between the variables and Hierarchical regression analysis was performed to assess the moderating effect of Attachment styles.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The sample consists of 102 young adults between the age group 18 and 25 years. The mean age of the sample was found to be 20 years with the majority of the sample comprising 18- and 20-year-olds. The majority of the sample were students and females.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of the target variables (N=102)

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Social Anxiety	102	37.24	13.388	3	68
Phubbing	102	25.89	7.630	10	47
Anxious Attachment	102	16.14	5.269	6	30
Avoidant Attachment	102	36.79	5.804	23	49

From table 1, it is noted that the mean for social anxiety is 37.24 this shows that there is a moderate level of anxiety among the 102 participants. In phubbing, the mean of 25.89 indicates that there is a moderate level of phubbing among the participants. With anxious attachment style the score of 16.14 and avoidance attachment style is 36.79 which also indicates that they are in moderate level among participants and the standard deviations also suggest that there is a lower variability in these variables among the participants.

Table 2 Shapiro-Wilk test of Normal distribution for the target variables (N=102)

Variables	N	W	Sig.
Social Anxiety	102	.992	.775
Phubbing	102	.987	.444
Anxious Attachment	102	.979	.106
Avoidant Attachment	102	.980	.118

Table 2 indicates the results of the Shapiro Wilk test for normality. From the table, it can be concluded that all the variables met the criteria for assumption of normality. The significant values for Social Anxiety ($p=.775$), Phubbing ($p=.444$), Anxious Attachment ($p=.106$) and Avoidant attachment ($p=.118$) are all above 0.05 which indicates that the data is normally distributed.

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Table 3 Pearson's product moment correlation between social anxiety and phubbing (N=102)

	Phubbing		
	N	r	Sig (2-tailed)
Social Anxiety	102	0.460*	0.00

** Correlation significant at 0.01 level

Table 3 shows the pearson's product moment correlation between social anxiety and phubbing. The significant value is less than 0.01 which shows that there is a correlation between social anxiety and phubbing. Therefore, the null hypothesis H_{01} is rejected. Oral and Karakurt (2024) found that Social anxiety significantly predicted both phubbing and problematic social media use and mediated the relationship between them. It indicates that a person with social anxiety is likely to do phubbing more which might be due to the need to avoid social interaction which makes them anxious or as mentioned in the study the phubbing behavior can also be due to the problematic social media usage.

Table 4 Pearson's product moment correlation between social anxiety and anxious, avoidant attachment style (N=102)

Variables	Social Anxiety		
	N	r	Sig (2-tailed)
Anxious Attachment	102	.365*	.000
Avoidant Attachment	102	.349*	.000

** Correlation significant at 0.01 level

Table 4 shows the Pearson product moment correlation between social anxiety and attachment scales. The significance value is lesser than 0.01 which shows that there is a significant correlation between social anxiety and anxious attachment style. The correlation coefficient for anxious attachment ($r=0.365$, $p<0.01$) and for avoidant attachment ($r = 0.349$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between social anxiety and anxious attachment and between social anxiety and avoidant attachment. Therefore, the null hypotheses H_{02} and H_{03} are rejected. Meta analysis by Zhang et al (2025) shows that there is a significant and positive correlation between insecure attachment and social anxiety. This tells us that if a person has social anxiety, whose interpersonal skills are affected, his/her attachment style also gets affected. The poor interpersonal skills might reinforce the anxious or avoidant attachment styles.

Table 5 Pearson's product moment correlation between phubbing and anxious, avoidant attachment style (N=102)

Variables	Phubbing		
	N	r	Sig (2-tailed)
Anxious Attachment	102	.395**	.000
Avoidant Attachment	102	.349**	.001

** Correlation significant at 0.01 level

Table 5 shows the Pearson product moment correlation between phubbing and attachment scales. The significance value is lesser than 0.01 which shows that there is a significant correlation between phubbing and anxious attachment style, avoidant attachment style respectively. The r value between the Phubbing and anxious attachment is 0.395 and r value

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between Phubbing and avoidant attachment is 0.349 this indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between Phubbing and anxious attachment and between Phubbing and avoidant attachment. Therefore, the null hypothesis H_{04} and H_{05} are rejected. Ozimek et al (2026) confirmed that attachment anxiety is positively associated with both enacted and perceived phubbing, while attachment avoidance is positively related with perceived phubbing only but not enacted phubbing.

Table 6 Model Summary for Hierarchical regression between Social Anxiety, Phubbing and Anxious attachment

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig
Social Anxiety	.460	.211	.203	26.775	.000
Social Anxiety	.520	.271	.256	18.379	.000
Anxious Attachment					
Social Anxiety					
Anxious attachment	.553	.306	.284	14.384	.000
Social Anxiety X Anxious attachment					

Table 6 indicates the model summary for the hierarchical Regression analysis conducted to examine the moderating role of Anxious Attachment on the relationship between Social Anxiety and Phubbing among young adults. Social Anxiety explains 21% variance in phubbing. Adding Anxious Attachment increased the explained variance to 27%. The interaction term between social anxiety and Anxious attachment was added in the step 3 which further increased the explained variance to 30%. Overall, the model is found to be statistically significant as the p value for the interaction falls under 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that Anxious Attachment significantly moderates the relationship between social anxiety and phubbing among young adults

Table 7 Hierarchical Regression Analysis examining the Moderating Role of Anxious Attachment on the Relationship Between Social Anxiety and Phubbing (N=102)

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficient	S.E of B	Standardized Coefficient(Beta)	t-value	Sig
Step 1					
Social Anxiety	.262	.051	.460	5.174	.000
Step 2					
Social Anxiety	.207	.053	.363	3.948	.000
Anxious Attachment	.380	.133	.262	2.844	.005
Step 3					
Social Anxiety	.194	.052	.340	3.741	.000
Anxious Attachment	.459	.136	.317	3.380	.000
Social Anxiety X Anxious Attachment	-.021	.009	-.194	-2.221	.029

Table 7 shows the coefficients of hierarchical regression. In step 1 and 2 Social Anxiety ($\beta = .46$, $p < 0.05$) and Anxious Attachment significantly predicted phubbing ($\beta = .26$, $p < 0.05$). In step 3, the interaction term between social anxiety and anxious attachment is found to be

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significant with a coefficient value of ($\beta = -.194$, $p < 0.05$). The negative value indicates that higher levels of anxious attachment weaken the relationship between social anxiety and phubbing among young adults. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{06}) stating that Anxious attachment style will not significantly moderate the relationship between social anxiety and Phubbing among young adults is rejected

Table 8 Model Summary for Hierarchical regression between Social Anxiety, Phubbing and Anxious attachment

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig
Social Anxiety	.460	.211	.203	26.775	.000
Social Anxiety	.488	.238	.223	15.461	.000
Avoidant Attachment					
Social Anxiety					
Avoidant attachment	.498	.248	.225	10.752	.000
Social Anxiety X Avoidant attachment					

The model summary from table 8 indicates social anxiety explains 21% variance in phubbing. Adding Avoidant Attachment increased the explained variance to 23%. The interaction term between social anxiety and Avoidant attachment was added in the step 3 which further increased the explained variance to 24%. However, the Change in R² at Step 3 was minimal.

Table 9 Hierarchical Regression Analysis examining the Moderating Role of Avoidant Attachment on the Relationship Between Social Anxiety and Phubbing (N=102)

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficient	S.E of B	Standardized Coefficient(Beta)	t-value	Sig
Step 1					
Social Anxiety	.262	.051	.460	5.174	.000
Step 2					
Social Anxiety	.227	.053	.399	4.257	.000
Avoidant Attachment	.230	.123	.175	1.866	.065
Step 3					
Social Anxiety	.229	.053	.401	4.291	.000
Avoidant Attachment	.256	.125	.195	2.047	.043
Social Anxiety X Avoidant Attachment	-.009	.008	-.100	-1.120	.265

Table 9 shows the coefficients of hierarchical regression. In step 1 Social Anxiety significantly predicted phubbing ($\beta = .46$, $p < 0.05$). In Step 2, Avoidant Attachment significantly did not predict phubbing ($\beta = .17$, $p > 0.05$). In step 3, the interaction term between social anxiety and avoidant attachment also did not significantly predict phubbing ($\beta = -.100$, $p > 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis H_{07} stating that Avoidant attachment style will not significantly moderate the relationship between social anxiety and Phubbing among young adults is accepted.

CONCLUSION

1. There exists a significant positive relationship between social anxiety and phubbing among young adults
2. Both Avoidant and Anxious attachment styles are significantly related to social anxiety and phubbing among young adults.
3. Anxious Attachment style significantly moderate the relationship between social anxiety and phubbing among young adults. Anxious attachment style weakens the relationship between social anxiety and phubbing among young adults.
4. Avoidant attachment style did not significantly moderate the relationship between social anxiety and phubbing among young adults

Implications

Results indicate that if social anxiety increases phubbing also increases. This implies that phubbing might not be an intruding behavior but could be used as a coping strategy. These findings carry strong implications, suggesting that interventions aimed at reducing phubbing should not only focus on regulating technology use but also address underlying social anxiety and attachment-related patterns, thereby promoting healthier communication and more secure interpersonal relationships among young adults. Similarly, working on the person's attachment style and helping them to work on their attachment issues through interventions and therapy might also help with regulating healthier social interaction. Working on their emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills can help reduce their phubbing behavior. Digital wellbeing techniques and reduction of screen dependence interventions can also be done. Psycho-education for young adults on digital dependence and their effects, along with more awareness about how phubbing is related to attachment and their social anxiety can be focused on to gain more self-awareness as well.

Limitations

The first limitation is that the relatively smaller sample size reduces the generalisability of the results and similarly the sample were of specific geographical location due to which the results need not be true for other geographical locations as well. The use of convenience and snowball sampling methods, both of which fall under non-probability sampling, may have introduced sampling bias. Furthermore, the data were collected using self-report measures, which are susceptible to response biases. Participants' responses may have been influenced by various internal factors (such as mood or social desirability) and external factors potentially affecting the accuracy of the data. Furthermore, the study assessed attachment using only two dimensions: anxious and avoidant attachment, thereby excluding other attachment styles such as secure and disorganized. This may not fully capture the complexity of attachment patterns.

Suggestions

Future Researches can work on a larger sample for generalizability and can do the research on different populations and cultures. The researcher can also use a longitudinal study to help understand the effects of these variables better. An experimental study with control group and experimental group will also help in understanding the effect of independent variable on dependent variable better. The use of mixed methods may provide deeper insights into individuals' experiences and motivations behind phubbing behavior.

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Conflict of Interest

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