



AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY OF 'NO MOBILE PHONE PHOBIA' AMONG SCHOOL GOING ADOLESCENTS ATTENDING COACHING INSTITUTE, JAIPUR, RAJASTHAN

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ABSTRACT

Background: Nomophobia refers to a psychological condition in which people fear being disconnected from their mobile phones. Nomophobia is connected with feelings of loneliness, low self-esteem, and unhappiness, particularly among adolescents. Using mobile phones in an inappropriate way is very hazardous for school and college students as it results in poor academic performance due to disturbance during classes or lectures, accidents due to poor concentration while driving, and degraded social relations due to the preference for the mobile calling and avoiding nearby people. **Objective:** To estimate the prevalence of Nomophobia and its associated factors among school going adolescents attending coaching institute, Jaipur. **Material and Methods:** Observational cross-sectional study was conducted among 122 school going adolescents attending coaching institute of class 11th and 12th. **Results:** Out of all students enrolled in study everyone had Nomophobia; while only 19% had mild Nomophobia, most of the students had moderate (53%) to severe (28%) Nomophobia. **Conclusion:** Our study finds moderate to severe Nomophobia in 81% of adolescents which is serious concern specially for coming generation and workforce of country. Nomophobia is an alarming issue and it should be addressed on priority basis. Regulations to use mobile phone in schools and at home should be done by teachers and parents, parental control on mobile phone uses should be there for children.

KEYWORDS : Nomophobia, Mobile phone, School going adolescents attending coaching institute, NMP-Q

INTRODUCTION

Today, it is difficult to imagine a world without mobile phone. In the last decade, the mobile or smart phone has become a primary tool for communication and connectivity. It is also used for entertainment, gaming, streaming music, photo and video sharing, leisure activity, news updates, education, information, social media and many other activities of daily life.

In 2021, the number of mobile users worldwide stood at 7.1 billion, the highest penetration rate among smartphone users was in the age group of 16 to 24 years, with 37%.¹

In India number of mobile users are 1.10 billion (77% of total population) which is one of the largest and fastest-growing markets for digital consumers, second only to China. The number of adolescents is highest in India (253 million) which is one-fifth of the Indian population and around 22% of them live in urban areas. In India around 50% users of smartphones are between 15 and 24 years old and mostly students.^{2,3} More than half of total time spent on smartphone is engaged in chat, video streaming, browsing, social networking, and image apps.³

Nowadays mobile phone has taken a very important place in a person's life. Appropriate use of mobile phone can be a boon for the people but its overuse can create problems. The overuse and too much dependence on mobile phone for most activities may lead to problems like behavioral addiction and a new emerging term "Nomophobia". Nomophobia i.e., "No Mobile Phone Phobia" is a phenomenon characterized by discomfort, anxiety, or nervousness caused by being out of contact of mobile phone and associated technology. It also characterizes repeated checking of the mobile screen for notifications and sleeping with mobile device in bed. It appears to be a behavioral addiction rather than a phobia.⁴

Globally, the prevalence of mobile phone addiction is varying from 2.4% to as high as 60.3% among adolescents and school-going children.⁵ A high burden of Internet addiction and mobile phone addiction-like behavior and Nomophobia is present among Indian youth.⁶

Nomophobia is connected with feelings of loneliness, low self-esteem, and unhappiness, particularly among young people.⁷ School, work, and general productivity are negatively influenced.⁸ Prevalence of Nomophobia is high among students, who were more afraid of not being able to access information. Moreover, Nomophobia is higher in younger age group of students.⁹ The triggering factors for addictive behaviors include ownership of a smartphone at an early age and increased hours of usage per day.¹⁰ Inappropriate use of mobile phone is very hazardous for school and college students as it results in poor academic performance due to disturbance during classes or lectures, accidents due to poor concentration while driving, and degraded social relations due to the preference for the mobile calling and avoiding nearby people.¹¹

Nomophobia, if not identified and corrected at the earliest phase possible, can emerge as a significant public health issue in the coming years. There is a lack of in-depth understanding of the perception and attitude that lead to Nomophobia. More critical studies are required to gain more knowledge about the patterns and perception about Nomophobia.

As India has huge number of smartphone users which is more used by young school and college going students, they are at risk of developing Nomophobia. Since there is a lack of such study in Rajasthan, so we have done this study to estimate prevalence of Nomophobia and its associated factors among school going adolescents attending coaching institute of Jaipur, Rajasthan.

OBJECTIVES

- To estimate the prevalence of Nomophobia among school going adolescents attending coaching institute, Jaipur
- To find out the severity of Nomophobia among school going adolescents attending coaching institute, Jaipur
- To find out factors associated with Nomophobia among school going adolescent, Jaipur

METHODS

Study Area: Vidhyasagar Coaching Institute, Jaipur

Study Type and Design:

Observational type of Cross-Sectional Study

Study Period:

January 2023 to February 2023

Study Population:

School going adolescents attending coaching institute of coaching institute, Jaipur

Sample size:

A sample size of 122 was taken considering prevalence of Nomophobia 91.2% at 95% confidence level and 5% absolute allowable error.¹³

Study subject recruitment:

Randomly selected 122 students of class 11 and 12th present on the day of data collection and willing to participate in study; students using mobile phones for at least one year.

Study Tool: NMP-Q

Nomophobia Questionnaire, a twenty-item validated scale, was used to assess Nomophobia scores.¹² It has questions under four main domains.

The score obtained in each of the twenty items, measured with a Likert scale, is totaled to get a final score for each participant. These scores are divided into four categories, based on which the severity of Nomophobia is determined. The scores below 20 are considered as the absence of Nomophobia, 21 to 60 as mild, 61 to 100 as moderate, and 101 to 140 as severe Nomophobia.

Exclusion Criteria:

Students not using mobile phones or not possessing mobile phone with them; students using mobile phones for less than 1 year.

RESULTS

Out of 122 students enrolled in study, 51 were females and 71 were males. All of the students had Nomophobia, while only 19% (23) had mild Nomophobia, most of the students had moderate 53% (65) and 34%(28%) had severe Nomophobia.

Among females, only 20% had severe Nomophobia whereas among males 34% had severe Nomophobia.

67% of total participants agreed that they feel nervous due to disconnection from their online identity in the absence of mobile phone.

64% agreed that they feel anxious as they could not keep in touch with family when they don't have smartphone. 50% of participants agreed that they feel uncomfortable due to lack of constant access to information when they don't have smartphone. 51% agreed that if they don't have mobile phone they would not know what to do.

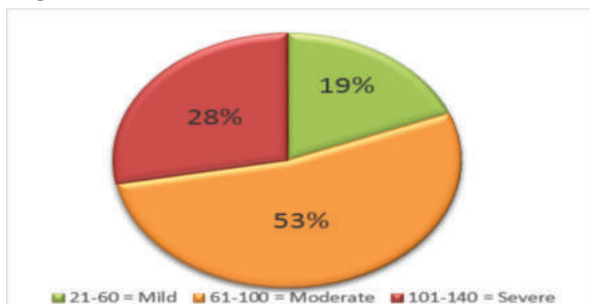


Figure 1 Prevalence of Nomophobia among school going adolescents attending coaching institute, Jaipur

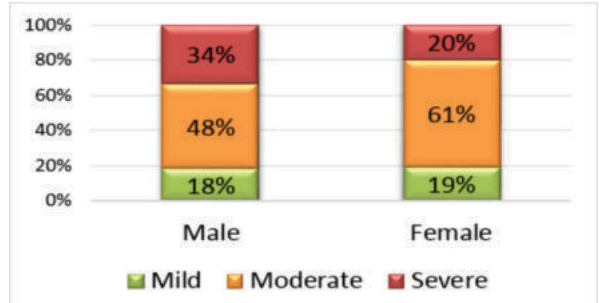


Figure 2 Severity of Nomophobia distribution according to gender

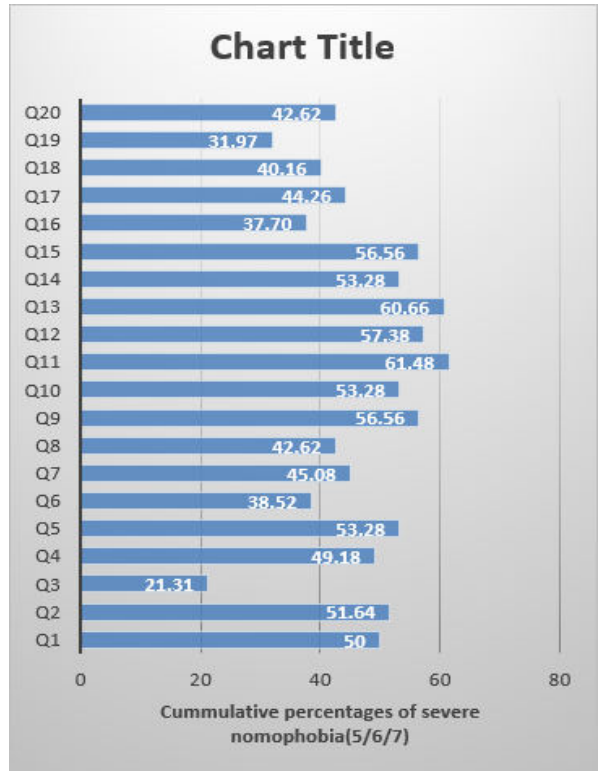


Figure 3 Cumulative frequency of severe Nomophobia

DISCUSSION

Globally, the prevalence of mobile phone addiction is varying from 2.4% to as high as 60.3% among adolescents and school-going children.⁵ In our study, all participants had Nomophobia. 19% had mild, 53% had moderate and 28% had severe Nomophobia which is consistent with a meta-analysis which showed that Nomophobia was present in 90% of participants in which 20% had mild, 50% had moderate and 20% had severe Nomophobia.¹⁴ A similar study done among students in Puducherry, India also showed that 97% of participants had Nomophobia out of which 20% had severe Nomophobia.¹⁵

Our study found that prevalence of severe Nomophobia was more among males (34%) than females (20%), which is similar to a study done in Mumbai, India.¹⁶ This also shows similarity to a study done in Puducherry, India which found that male gender was more associated with Nomophobia.¹⁷ This similarity in the findings may be attributed to the increased freedom males have in their homes and society and females experiencing more parental control in parts of developing countries like India.

Majority of participants agreed that when they are not having mobile phone, they feel anxious and nervous due to fear of disconnection from their family and online identity.

Around half of participants agreed that if they don't have mobile phone with them, they would feel uncomfortable because of lack of information and they would not know what to do without having their mobile phone with them.

Strength And Limitations

The strength of the present study is that it assessed a new rearing challenge in child rearing as mobile phones are essential gadgets in today's modern life and digital era. Our study has limitations that it focused on a special subgroup of commerce students going to single coaching institute.

CONCLUSIONS

Nomophobia and addiction like behavior to smartphone among school going adolescents is becoming a public health issue. Our study concluded that all school going adolescents attending coaching institute which were enrolled in our study had Nomophobia. The severity of Nomophobia was more among males than females. Majority of school going adolescents attending coaching institute feel anxiety and nervousness due to loss of connection with family and their online identity when they don't have mobile phone and uncomfortable due to lack of constant access to information.

Recommendation

Early identification of Nomophobia and mobile phone dependence among school going adolescents attending coaching institute so as to create awareness. Unnecessary excessive use of mobile phone should be avoided. More focus should be given to yoga and sports like activities in schools. Proper counseling methods by trained health professionals can play a crucial role in curbing Nomophobia. There is also a need for more studies focusing on the behavior and perception of the population regarding Nomophobia.

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