



REVIEW OF THE EMERGING SITUATION OF MOBILE ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH

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ABSTRACT Smartphones are now used daily by many which has greatly improved communications, work and ways for people to be entertained. However, the use of technology is leading to more problems with mobile addiction. Because of people's frequent use of smartphones, this behaviour is now often related to poor mental health among adolescents and young adults. It gathers information from a range of studies to address the number of mobile addictions, what leads to them, their effects on the mind and body and how they might be treated. Because the digital world is advancing so quickly, policies, improved knowledge and clinical care are needed to protect people's mental health.

KEYWORDS : Mobile Addiction, Mental Health Problems, Teens, Technology, The Effects On Psychology.

INTRODUCTION

The world's 90.8% of population uses smartphones these days. Technological advancements in these devices have dramatically shaped people and our surroundings everywhere. The people who used smartphones for talking earlier, now rely on messaging, internet surfing, entertainment, studying, finding directions and social networking. The smartphones are always available and accessible, some people end up using them excessively which experts now call mobile addiction or smartphone addiction [1]. The phenomenon which isn't officially listed as a psychiatric issue, shares some symptoms with addictive behaviour that lead to anxiety, depression, stress and emotional dysregulation, so it concerns doctors, teachers and policy makers alike [2]. We aim to assess the related studies, looking at the effects of mobile addiction on mental health, as well as the risk factors to prevent and provide treatment. The society is affected by technology, we should try to use digital devices wisely and responsibly [3].

Getting To Know Mobile Addiction

One of the important signs of Mobile addiction, is when one's everyday routine is harmed and psychological symptoms includes modifications in one's mood, salience, withdrawal, tolerance, conflict and relapse [4]. Like internet and gaming addiction, mobile addiction includes losing control over the use of devices and habits and not reducing these actions despite experiencing negative results. Neuroscience studies prove that dopamine in the brain contributes to making it difficult for a person to stop using mobile devices [5].

Signs of mobile addiction:

- Always checking the phone, even if no messages appear
- Getting upset or uneasy away from their phone
- Affects sleep by using the phone at night
- Increases screentime and decreases productivity

Statistics Around And The Factors Involved

Students and teenagers face an unhealthy attachment to their phones since they spend a lot of time using digital tools for activities such as schooling, leisure and socializing [6]. A meta-analysis published in 2019 internationally concluded that rates of mobile addiction vary from 10% to 30% depending upon a person's age, area and the criteria applied [14]. In the South-East Asia region, youth have been found to experience rates as high as 60% [7].

Common Causes of Heart Disease with Mobile addiction

- **Personality Characteristics:** Low self-esteem, feeling anxious in social situations and having emotional issues can lead to using the phone too often [8].
- **Family Settings:** Lack of digital restrictions, Wi-Fi availability and peer pressure leads to addiction.
- **FOMO (Fear of Missing Out):** frequently watches social media notification [10].
- **Design Choices:** App companies use endless scrolling, send out alerts and give out likes to make users stay longer on their apps [18].

Effect on Mental Health

Numerous studies demonstrated that excess use of smartphones hurts a person's mental well-being resulting in substance abuse, mood and behaviour disorder. Several studies also have demonstrated a link between smartphone addiction and higher levels of anxiety and depression. Many who are addicted to their phones often say they constantly feel worried, restless and sad [11]. Students who spent more than six hours a day using their phones were at twice the risk of depression than students who used their phones for a moderate amount [15].

Sleeping Disorders

Blue light from screens alters melatonin levels, makes it difficult to fall asleep and reduces the quality of sleep. Often looking at phones at night upsets body's rhythms, causing long-lasting problems such as insomnia, tiredness and difficulties in functioning [6].

Problems with Thinking

Using a smartphone for a long time causes less concentration, a poorer memory and lower academic results. Jumping between various apps reduces concentration and increases tiredness of the mind [17].

Unstable Or Strong Emotions

People with mobile addiction is likely to be irritable, mood swings and lack self-control and become impulsive. The patterns in these cases are similar to the symptoms of certain disorders, like Attention Deficit Hyper Activity Disorder (ADHD) and borderline personality disorder [11].

Social Isolation And Loneliness.

While mobile phones make it simpler to talk online, they may also discourage people from having face-to-face conversations. If someone uses social media too often, it could make them less empathetic and more emotionally detached from their relationships, especially when they are still young [16].

Both The Body And Actions Of Individuals Can Be Affected.

Additionally, mobile addiction lead to physical and behavioural consequences. Obviously, spending a lot of time looking down can result in frequent neck, shoulder and back aches. After using eyes on digital devices for too long, they become strained and may feel dizzy and tired.

Too Much Screen Time: Excessive usage of smartphones may compromise physical exercises that result in obesity, heart-related illnesses and diabetes. Texting during walking or driving is dangerous because it often results in injuries and car crashes. In addition, spending too much time on smartphones may increase a person's cortisol levels, leaving the immune system weakened over time [16].

Vulnerable Populations

A few demographic groups are more vulnerable to having a mobile addiction.

Young Adults and Adolescents use electronic devices mostly and experience harm because of their identity quest, peer pressure and unreliable emotions [17]. Children who are exposed to TV and screens for too long as toddlers may experience difficulties with language, mental development and interacting with others [19]. Those with depression, anxiety and ADHD often depend on their smartphones for comfort and to feel better [11].

How Designers Leverage Changes in Technology

They apply psychology to keep their products engaging for everyone. The use of variable rewards, automatic play, endless scrolling and push messages is known to take advantage of attention span. As a result, the brain releases its reward chemicals, causing the person to check the device more often and continue using it for long periods. According to a study covering persuasive app design, 70% of well-known mobile apps purposefully applied psychology concepts to encourage people to use them [13]. This points out the ethical issue connected to designing technology for people's well-being.

Different Way Of Intervening And Managing Such Situations

As mobile addiction increases in importance for public health, some interventions have been developed.

- CBT (Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy) helps manage behavioural addictions. It enables users to discover faulty ideas about smartphone use, learn new ways to handle them and start changing their behavior [15].
- Breaking away from technology for a while.
- Setting times aside without using devices or social media apps has been connected to less stress and feeling better.
- Mindfulness and Managing Your Emotions: Various mindfulness techniques help people manage their urges and remain aware of what is happening in the moment [15].
- There are apps designed for parents to set limits on children's phone use.
- Using the special tools, adults can manage the children prevent misuse mobile, thereby encouraging proper use of media [10].
- Strategies an Educator Can Use at School: Embedding digital and emotional literacy into school lessons teaches students to use digital technologies sensibly.
- Solutions Involving Technology, is also a potential answer to these problems. "MindShift" is an app that offers tailored advice to assist its users in cutting down their phone use [15].

Policy Implications

Officials should acknowledge that mobile addiction is a significant issue for public health. Some policy suggestions are listed below.

- Supporting research that studies the link between digital addiction and mental health
- Ensuring the design of apps eliminates what makes them addictive
- Providing digital wellness education for students at school
- Assistance for programs teaching parents new skills
- Agencies like the WHO and APA are including behavioural addictions more in their classifications and pointing out the value of teamwork among different sectors.

CONCLUSION

The growth of technologies has led to more people experiencing mobile addiction today. Smartphones offer useful features, but sometimes, their unfavourable use and overuse can cause health, social and mental problems. Understanding the biological and social aspects of this addiction is critical when creating successful strategies to help. Because society is affected by technology, we should try to use digital devices wisely and responsibly. All those concerned about mental health should join hands to construct a secure environment in which everyone can be safe.

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