

NOMOPHOBIA AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

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Abstract

As mobile phones surged faster than any other technology in the world, its excessive usage has become a thing of concern in our lives as humans. We affix to our phones so much that we depend on them for everything. It is very difficult to imagine our lives without a mobile phone as most of our work is done using mobile phones. The thought of getting disconnected from our mobile phones scare us a lot and this fear leads to an addiction called Nomophobia. Nomophobia is an abbreviated form of "no-mobile-phone-phobia. in 2018, Cambridge dictionary declared the word Nomophobia the people's word of 2018 which was shortlisted among other words and was voted for by all its users [1]. Cambridge Dictionary described the word Nomophobia as the stress and anxiety caused by being separated from your mobile phone or unable to use it. The main objective of this project is to assess the commonness of Nomophobia and mobile phone addiction among young people.

A cross-sectional survey was carried out by the School of Engineering and technology student at Sharda University. The survey form was distributed among young people and adults of whom some are students of Sharda University. The data were collected from Seven hundred and twenty eight (728) teens and adults.

A total of 727 population participated in the survey. The sample comprises of 483(66.1%) male, 244(33.4%) female and 0.6% participant who preferred not to mention their gender, categories in several groups such as students, unemployed, Employed, Own Business, Housewife, Self-employed and others and we also grouped them according to their age difference (reference to table 1). Students are the highest number with a total of 56.4%, 28.9% employed and 11.8% unemployed.

Keywords: Addiction, mobile phone, nomophobia, smartphone, anxiety

INTRODUCTION

Machinery and technology especially, has been the talk of the day with regards to its level of usage, affordability, availability, designs and most especially, global communication, as it has been more of a life style to many especially teenagers and young adults. These group of persons turn to use mobile phones for practically everything they engage themselves in; alarm clocks, reminders, notes, TV, games and other social media platforms. Mobile phone usage has impacted and it keeps impacting persons positively leaving them with no options but Nomophobia. Nomophobia is an abbreviated form of "no-mobile-phone phobia." NOMOPHOBIA is a word use to describe the fear or anxiety of being detached from mobile phone connectivity [2]. SecurEnvoy; Berkshire, 16th February 2012: First identified in 2008 found that about 66% of the 1,000 people surveyed in the United Kingdom say they fear losing or being without their phone [3]. Just four years ago a similar survey found that only 53% of people suffered from nomophobia (no-mobile-phobia). Deborah Netburn, The Los Angeles Times, 17 Feb. 2012 [4]. This has changed over the years according to statistics from the derived data, with the help of surveys, mobile phones of all sort of brands like Samsung and iPhones among others are highly in use among the youths since 3 years now and more. These smartphones are actually the most bought and most used technology globally as they are always in competition and in high demand, so too has it been the case of teenagers and youths competing with the their lives and No phones.

According to LEFTRONIC, 2021, smartphone usage statistics suggest that an average person spends 2 hours and 51 minutes per day on their mobile device [5]. What's more, 22% of us check our phones every few minutes, and 51% of users look at it a few times per hour. Since the year 2000, age groups 15yrs – 18yrs barely have access to these technologies as they barely could afford for them, although assistance and financial force came from other sources especially parents. After carrying out a survey, it was proven that 28% of the targeted group (teenagers and youths) are employed, 11.8% are unemployed, and 58% are students. It is but obvious they all have different engagements as far as mobile phone usage is concerned, but there are casualties that follows as a teenager or youth who owns a mobile phone. It leads to questions like: what happens when you no longer have a phone? As it seems to be the oxygen to teenagers and youths. However, it has been a

"question a vérifier" as we move with the current state of mobile phones and the phobias it brings in society and globally among teens and youths especially, students turn out to be the most populated group using mobile phones regardless the effects on them as it turns out to be an addiction[6].

LITERATURE REVIEW

As the term NOMOPHOBIA goes, it is an abbreviation of "No Mobile Phone Phobia". It is a phenomenon in the societies we live in nowadays. Mobile phones are devices which have been in use over the years now. The development of mobile phones have evolved drastically over the years likewise the users as well. Static phones were the majors in the early 1870's through to the 1940's as per the history of first phone created[7]. They were basically for office use only and having one of such device was a luxury in home. Its limitation was just within a limited area of about 1m maximum if anyone wishes to use away from the set phone base and there is little or zero phobia as far as phone usage was concerned.

However, the year 2000's came along with a drastic change with mobile phones. As the term Mobile was and is, that is the level phones got to. Most mobile phones this time was invented by the AT&T and the phones were considered as 0G (Zero G) as it was the really first mobile phone ever, and its level of tele-network was not up to the 3G or 4G and even 5G we have today, yet they still were a luxury[8]. These devices were created by a company, as it was used by few persons, so it has escalated the mobile phone market as many other companies are now producers on phones such as Microsoft and Apple among others with diverse operation systems like the Android and Mac and now it is booming in the world as youths now have access to these devices and they are equally yoked and hooked with the effects that come with these devices as they came with both predefine and dynamic android and mac applications.

It is important to note that the primary motive of these mobile phones was for communication purposes only, but evolution has taken its course, as phones are not only used for communication but for television purposes, gaming, calendars, stopwatches, health monitoring, the social media and much more. The Social media has gained the highest level of usage among youths and the teenage population since they are able to access mobile phones (smartphones), thereby giving opportunities for every criteria of

the youth group to have access to smartphones at even cheaper rates, increasing production and sales of mobile phones around the globe almost every second, likewise the phobia of no phone usage[9].

NOMOPHOBIA “No mobile phone usage” has grown rapidly over the years. With the help of a cross section survey, we were able to depict the depth and the level no mobile phone usage among of the youthful population. Some of them are employed, others are unemployed while most of them are students. They are mostly engaged with the social media like YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, twitter, snapchat and more. They have been engaged with these platforms so much so that it has so grave effects on them. They can barely live without them, they cannot stay a second without being connected online or watching YouTube or playing video games, or communicating with friends. It makes life so difficult and unbearable for them all. However, these devices turn to cause an increase anxiety just for having the devices or receiving favorable information, cause eye problems as most persons are affected by the light rays from the mobile phones, back aches for seating on same position for a long time, increase laziness from practically doing nothing but mobile phoning, insomnia from long calls[10].

The survey holds a total of 727 population who participated internationally. The sample comprises of 483(66.1%) male, 244(33.4%) female and 0.6% participant who preferred not to mention their gender, categories in several groups such as students, unemployed, Employed, Own Business, Housewife, Self-employed and others and we also grouped them according to their age difference (reference to table 1). Students are the highest number with a total of 56.4%, 28.9% employed and 11.8% unemployed.

However, this was the state of NOMOPHOBIA as per the data collected, it holds most persons still have that phobia because of its effects to their lives as they can barely stay without a phone meanwhile they draw breath, happiness, comfort and anxiety to a fault to the detriment of their own health, academic, professional, financial life styles as it is still a threat to most individuals and even to their existence.

METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS

This study was based on a cross survey on random persons worldwide as it entails questionnaires which were filled and submitted on no mobile phone (NOMOPHOBIA) among teenagers and the youthful population.

A pretested self-administered survey was used to inquire and acquire data and synchronized information regarding mobile phone addiction with regards to NOMPHOBIA. Content validity was assessed by some professionals and a group of students who modified the questions before sending them out and in return, developed the data to concrete information based on the cross sectional survey which has now led to the development till this level with 15.7% from the Sharda University and 74.3% from other areas out large. This is clear enough to prove that majority of the data collected shows firstly that, a vast number students (teenagers/youths) are owners of smartphones, provided they have mobile phone applications which pushes them to get these phones, permitting them to further associate with the outside world with the help of social media like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram among others, not leaving out the internet, with friendly Google. This is a clear indication of the level of addiction of smartphones[11] as it gives rise to nomophobia accordingly as will be seen below.

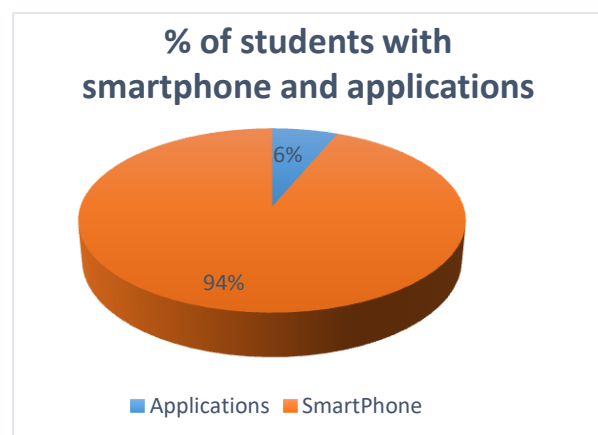


Figure (1) Distribution of the studied sample according to the smart phone usage

This study has brought out a lot as could be depicted the professional statuses of these individuals. Every segment as shown in the chart is an owner of a smartphones. Users of mobile

phones could be classified as students who have the greatest margin mobile phone usage of 56.4%, next the unemployed population (though unemployed they still have phones, and use them compared to business men and even the self-employed population.) with 11.8%, second highest owners and users of mobile phones[12].

RESULTS

A total of 727 population participated in the survey. The sample comprises of 483(66.1%) male, 244(33.4%) female and 0.6% participant who preferred not to mention their gender, categories in several groups such as students, unemployed, Employed, Own Business, Housewife, Self-employed and others and we also grouped them according to their age difference (ref. table 1). Students are the highest number with a total of 56.4%, 28.9% employed and 11.8% unemployed. The results were outstanding as it touched a great number of persons and equally created an atmosphere of awareness as they got to give answers to some basic things about the mobile phones they are in possession of and what they use it for and how they use it. These surveys permitted some credible information being released by the users; students, workers and even the unemployed population. This shows that students a

Professional Status

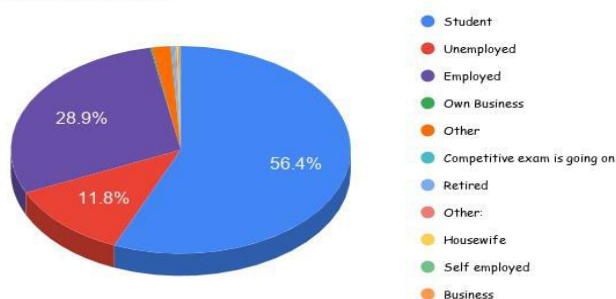
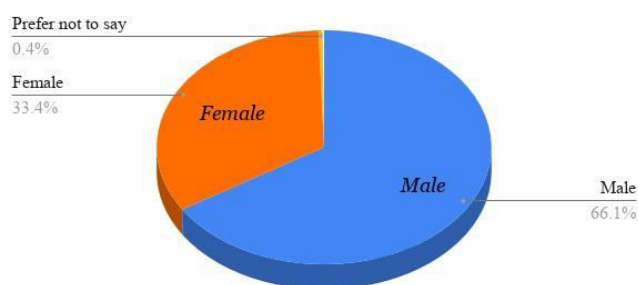


Figure (2) Distribution of the studied sample according to professional status

According to the survey, there are different age groups involved likewise different reactions equally to NOMOPHOBIA. Again, there are other professions involved in the usage of mobile phones like the adult population of which some of them are retired from their jobs, but not retired from their phones. The following chart segments the total percentage of male to females following the statistics from the questionnaire provided includes all age groups and professions and the rates of NOMOPHOBIA related to them. This will be further looked into below.

Gender



Figure(3) Distribution of the studied sample according to the gender

This chart synchronizes and narrows down the general information to the expected detail between the percentage of teenagers and youths, although a number of persons prefer not to say anything about their status, be it employed or not or their gender. This is also another phobia in itself as could be depicted. The total count of both gender and different age group was 243 females to 481 males and 3 participant who preferred not to mention their gender making it 727 in all.

Table 1: Distribution of the studied sample according to the age range and gender

Age Group	Female (N=243)		Male (N=481)		Prefer not to say (N=3)		Grand Total (N=727)	
	Number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
13-22 Years	121	50%	171	36%	2	67%	294	40%
23-32 Years	101	42%	247	51%	1	33%	349	48%
33-42 Years	8	3%	34	7%	0	0%	42	6%
43-52 Years	8	3%	22	5%	0	0%	30	4%
53-63 Years	5	2%	7	1%	0	0%	12	2%
Mean	48.6		96.2		1.5		145.4	
Standard Deviation	57.4134131		106.848959		0.70710678		162.280005	
Minum Years	5		7		1		12	
Maximum Years	121		247		2		349	

Since we used a cross section survey to carry out our research, there were a good number of questions, 23 in number. Following these questions, responses given were tied to age groups and the activities carried out using mobile phones as per

the day they owned a mobile phone till date and probably in the subsequent years to come. The chart below paints a general picture on mobile phone addiction and nomophobia level.

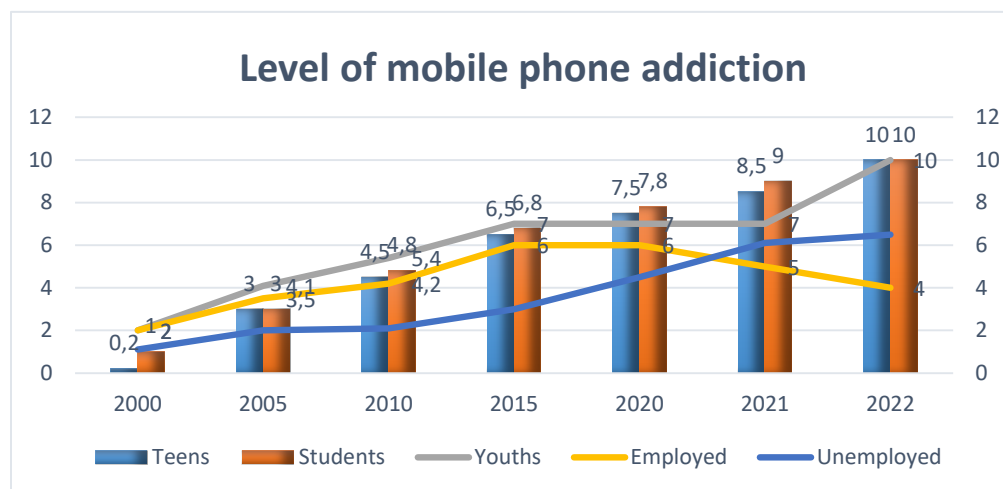


Figure (4) distribution of the studied sample according to the level of mobile phone addiction

While the research on this phenomenon is still limited, the available findings suggest that nomophobia is quite common. As

per the first 3 questions in Table2 based on what year and age users had their first phone, how much it cost and what mark

they got. These Q1 to Q3 proved that majority of them were very eager to have smartphones at early thirteen's and fourteens, and they were preoccupied with games and Facebook as it was the top rated application.

Moving on, this group of persons got extremely attached to their phones as it gave them comfort, yet the phone batteries dilapidated easily as they used the phones constantly. These brought some level of boredom among this group of persons, considering the fact that these devices were as gifts to some of them and to others they saved a lot just to get a phone. This was the case between the years 2000 to 2005 of some teens[13]. In the early 2000's: 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005 the level of phone usage increased from 0.2% to 30% in 2005, 40.5% in 2010, 60.5% by 2015, 70.5% by 2020 and currently 80.5% in 2021 and its likely going to 100% by 2022. This is because they have face difficulties such as having low batteries, and poor choice of mobile phones that have put their activities on halt. On the other hand, the student body is the most exceptional segmented group with the highest % of addiction. As early as the year 2000, statistics shows 10% of students were entitled to mobile phones, 30% by the year 2005, 40.8% by 2010, 70.8% by 2020, 90% by 2021 [14]. This shows a drastic change of level of engagement of users with their smartphones as they experience great level of stress as they get disconnected with friends close and afar, witnessing jealousy and conflicts between themselves as competition took over, and social media the talk of the day. They strongly agree this was catastrophic as it brought about insecurity. Again, the youths witnessed huge increase in addiction of mobile phones as it became part of their lives, communication, entertainment, research and job search is

concerned, having failure in network or malfunction of device made them miss important programs and appointments making them feel hopeless and incapable of handling their own affairs[15]. Other aspects such aspects such as YouTube took the place of local television where they followed their various programs. With no connectivity, they miss out a lot and there comes the rise of anger and transfer of aggression. These are ties to Q4 to Q15 as they strongly agree it is the case with them as they could no longer stay focused, but mostly distracted, preferred communicating via phones than meeting persons traditionally, get angry when being ignored for giving attention to phone, losing their jobs equally for not doing their job in time and as expected because they turn to answer all calls and reply all messages which are not office related. 40% of youths strongly attested to this fact as some of them make up the working population.

It is interesting how the employed population of youths also affirm the fact that they do calls while driving, having sleepless nights 100% couple with work, even when crossing the roads and other social life aspects. The responses to Q6 to Q23 comprised of youths especially with a number of them employed and the unemployed groups.

There is a turning point as far as these groups of persons are concerned. From the year 2000 the margin kept increasing at a fast rate, but got stable at between the years 2015 and 2020 as they got to experience the phobias of mobile phones and by 2021 the margin stars dropping with the employed and the unemployed population. The following 2 tables consist of the survey questions distributed and the responses of those who agreed to these question.

Table2. Sample of questions distributed base on Nomophobia

Item	Question
1	How many mobile phones do you have?
2	Which mobile phone do you use and how many hours do you spend on it?
3	Maximum cost of Mobile you have
4	On Scale of 1 to 10 how much do you use your phone?
5	Usually check your Whatsapp/Facebook/SMS/Youtube notification as soon as you receive them during the day (rate on 10)

6	Usually check Whatsapp/Facebook/SMS/Youtube etc notification received while resting in light sleep?
7	Impulsively check for Whatsapp/FB/SMS/Youtube notification while attending a class or in an important meeting?
8	Usually impulsively check for Whatsapp/FB/Youtube/SMS notification right after waking up from sleep?
9	Having a hard time concentrating in class, while doing assignments, or while working due to mobile use.
10	Preferring talking with my smartphone buddies to hanging out with my real-life friends or with the other members of my family
11	Usually check your mobile phone even while engaged in group participation
12	Using your mobile phone longer than you had intended to
13	Always thinking that you should shorten your mobile phone usage
14	The people around you complain that you do not pay attention to them due to mobile phone use
15	Get annoyed or shout if someone asks you to decrease the use of mobile phone
16	Feeling impatient and fretful when you are not holding your mobile phone
17	Experience stress when not using your mobile phone
18	Experiencing light headedness or blurred vision due to excessive mobile phone use
19	Feeling pain in the wrists or at the back of the neck while using a mobile phone
20	Feeling tired and lacking adequate sleep due to excessive mobile phone use
21	Cannot imagine living without my mobile phone
22	Compulsively respond to calls or messages at places where it is dangerous to do so like driving or crossing the road
23	Average total time spent (hour) on using Mobile phone per day?

Table3: Determinants of Nomophobia among the young people in association to gender. Grading from item No.5 from the above table.

Responses			
Item	Yes	Female	Male
5	455	137	318
6	325	87	238

7	269	92	269
8	428	138	290
9	318	100	218
10	67	24	43
11	304	82	222
12	268	85	183
13	239	73	166
14	255	72	183
15	134	33	101
16	148	43	105
17	214	49	165
18	204	42	162
19	31	10	21
20	74	14	60
21	229	74	155
22	127	44	83

CONCLUSION

We use our phones as communication devices, but now with the integrated GPS, cameras, and constant access to social media, they have become too smart to get rid of. It's becoming harder to see a person on the street without their phone in their hand. By the way, Nomophobia not only affects the mind, but also relationships, where a person is physically present but psychologically absent[16][17]. It can also cause distraction which results in a lack of concentration and creativity, it is a

problem that is typical of the digital age and caused by the rise of mobile technology in people's daily lives[18].

Stopping cell phone use entirely is not realistic, but learning how to set limits and boundaries on how much you allow your phone to control your life can help. Also Publicizing the negative consequences, creating awareness and health education during admission to graduates will definitely provide a ray of hope of opt utilization of mobile phone and decrease the chances of mobile addiction.

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