



AN UPTREND AMONG STUDENTS: NOMOPHOBIA

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ABSTRACT

The term Nomophobia or No Mobile Phone Phobia is the biggest non- drug addiction of the 21st century. It is described as a psychological condition when people have a fear of being detached from mobile phone connectivity. The term Nomophobia is constructed on definitions described in the DSM-IV, it has been labelled as a “phobia for a particular/specific things”. Various psychological factors are involved when a person overuses the mobile phone, e.g., low self-esteem, extrovert personality. The burden of this problem is now increasing globally. Other mental disorders like, social phobia or social anxiety, and panic disorder may also precipitate nomophobic symptoms. It is very difficult to differentiate whether the patient become nomophobic due to mobile phone addiction or existing anxiety disorders manifest as nomophobic symptoms. The signs and symptoms are observed in nomophobiacases include- anxiety, respiratory alterations, trembling, perspiration, agitation, disorientation and tachycardia. The complexity of this condition is very challenging to the patients' family members as well as for the physicians as NOMOPHOBIA shares common clinical symptoms with other disorders.

Keywords : NOMOPHOBIA, phone addiction.

INTRODUCTION

Technology fulfills our natural human need for stimulation, interaction, and changes in environment with great efficiency. Since the emergence of the internet and smartphones, research is showing an increase in the number of people struggling with internet addiction, gaming addiction ,nomophobia and so on.

Claustrophobia, arachnophobia, acrophobia . . . there are phobias of all kinds, but perhaps the most modern-day phobia is nomophobia, or “no mobile-phone phobia. The term was created by YouGov, a research organization based in the United Kingdom.

Nomophobia, also called “the disease of the XXI century”, is the irrational fear of being without cell phone. It is a disorder suffered by half of the population. It occurs due to by the irrational dependence on these devices that generates a feeling of anxiety in the user to feel cut off from the outside

MATERIALS AND METHOD

DEFINITION.

Nomophobia is the irrational fear of being without your mobile phone or being unable to use your phone for some reason, such as the absence of a signal or running out of minutes or battery power

Nomophobia (no mobile phobia), is the fear an individual gets if he is out of mobile phone contact due to no network, has run out of balance or run out of battery; the persons gets anxious, which adversely affects the concentration level of the person.

Prevalence and incidence:

- According to statistics, users of smartphones consult phones an average of 34 times a day.
- A study was conducted by J Bharath and etal among under- graduate students of Mandya Institute of Medical Sciences, to determine the prevalence of nomophobia .The study revealed that its prevalence among undergraduate medical student was 99.0% and majority had moderate level of nomophobia. There was no association between nomophobia and gender, place of present residence, amount of money spent on last recharge.
- In a 2017 study looking at 145 first-year medical students in India found evidence to suggest 17.9 percent of the participants had mild nomophobia. For 60 percent of participants, nomophobia symptoms were moderate, and for 22.1 percent, symptoms were severe.
- A study done by Darvishi M ,Noori M and etal among medical students in Islamic Azad University , Tehran showed that nomophobia can lead to several complications like depression , anxiety , anger and aggression. In addition the study revealed the participants with lower age felt more discomfort, anger, anxiety and insecurity due to lack of access of mobile phones. This study also disclosed that the incidence of nomophobia was significantly lower among females.
- The Post Office commissioned YouGov, a research organization, to look at anxieties suffered by mobile phone users. The study found that nearly 53 percent of mobile phone users in Britain tend to be anxious when they “lose their mobile phone, run out of battery or credit, or have no network coverage.”

Etiologies

- Low self-esteem – Reflected in the need to be in continuous contact with others (fear of isolation or loneliness.)
- Excessive perfection – Caused by the thought of losing social events and consequent anxiety for not being present.
- Social anxiety – Also called “FOMO” from the acronym Fear Of Missing Out, is a form of anxiety associated to social networks and it’s reflected in the necessity to be continuously online.
- Feeling of insecurity, or lack of self-control and discipline, get easily bored or impatient, or have no other recreational hobbies and outlets etc.
- **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:** It can be divided into emotional symptoms and physical

symptoms

Emotional symptoms:

- Worry, fear, or panic when you think about not having your phone or being unable to use it
- Anxiousness and agitation if you have to put your phone down or know you won't be able to use it for a while
- Panic or anxiety if you briefly can't find your phone
- Irritation, stress, or anxiety when you can't check your phone
- Obsessive thoughts about mobile usage
- Loneliness, when not able to use the mobile phone
- A majority of phobic experience a full-fledged panic attack when separated from their phone for long periods.

Physical symptoms

- Tachycardia OR rapid heartbeat
- Headache and Stomach pain
- Chest tightness
- Trouble breathing normal
- Trembling or shaking
- Increased sweating
- Feeling faint, dizzy, or disoriented

Complication:

Phantom vibration syndrome or ringxiety :feelings of mistakenly thinking your phone is vibrating

Treatment:

- Exposure therapy :exposing the person with their phobia first through their mind in therapy sessions and then in real life situations
- Relaxation techniques such as mindfulness : will help you to cope with your cravings
- Reality therapy or reality approach : In this therapy the patient is advised to focus on behaviors (gardening, painting, playing, etc.) other than using mobile phones..
- Pharmacotherapy :Drugs like benzodiazepines and antidepressants (in normal dosage) are sometimes used in severe cases to control the symptoms.

Treatment groups and centers:

- Internet and Tech Addiction anonymous (ITAA): A 12 step, fellowship program aims to help those addicted to technology.

- Restart center: Center for digital technology sustainability. An 8-12 week program disconnected from digital media (internet ,gaming and cell phone)
- Morningside recovery: Located in Texas, California and Arizona. Specialized in diagnosis of nomophobia and other mental illness , such as anxiety
- Campgrounded: is similar to summer camp for adults. Consist of digital detox and interactive activities

Promoting healthy use of mobile phones:

- Adjust your notifications: break your app notifications into instant , relevant and kill(notifications which you really don't want to know)
- Ration your mobile phone usage :Set time periods in which you will not use your phone (i.e, 9 pm to 7 am)
- Designate activities in which phone is forbidden(eg : driving ,dinner time)
- Download an application: to help cut down on cell phone use
- Make the bed a no phone zone :Keep the device at least 5 feet away from you and turn off the Wi-Fi
- Use a real alarm clock

CONCLUSION

We have to stay in the real world more than virtual world. We have to re-establish the human-human interactions, face to face connections. So, we need to limit our use of mobile phones rather than banning it because we cannot escape the force of technological advancement.

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