



Mobile Phones; A Boon Or Bane For Mankind? - Behavior Of Medical Students

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Abstract:

As the science develops new innovations as well as new products come for the comfort and help of mankind to lesser physical and mental labor and input efforts for a particular task. One of the good examples is calculator and other is mobile phone, they help us to this extent that somehow we become dependent on both of them and to a larger extent on mobile phones. Today this is difficult to think a life without a mobile phone because this is not only a phone but also a calculator, camera, computer, e-mail, store house of information, play station and a lovely music system too. These reasons are enough compelling to have and use mobile phones in our day to day life for any gender or age .This usage of mobile phone is increasing day by day in numbers as well as in per hour per person usage too .This too much or unusual use or unsafe usage has become some sort of psychological and physical dependence to an extent of addiction lending in behavioral changes .This is dual sword. As a good citizen, we are in a position to analyze whether the science and technology like mobile is doing good to human beings or it harms if, so on what cost? mobile is lifeline in hands of health care professionals, aa need in emergency to anyone ,plumber ,electrician ,laundry ,food and catering services all are just a phone call away but misuses are also many like small time to big time thieves, terrorists, match fixing, MMS scandals, ransoms, crimes etc .Anything of too much becomes a nuisance, mobile phones are helpful or do much harm in terms of studies ,concentration , focus , behavior and dependency ? is the purpose of this survey and analysis in MBBS medical students.

Key words: mobile phone, use, misuse, behavior, medical students, dependency.

1.Introduction

Nowadays almost every adult is having a mobile phone, and so too many children have it. Nearly 500 crore people are using cell phone round the globe; mobile usage is highest in China, followed by India. This trend is having an upward swing specially in younger age group because of need as well as peer pressure. This changing trend of usage mobile phone for multitasking is day by day increasing as well as leading to certain changes in behavior and personality of users.

2.Advantages Of Mobile Phones

In addition to communication as prime purpose, recreation by games applications, mobile banking, finding locations by GPS, preparing presentations, calculator, photography, text mailing, music and radio, storage for numbers, addresses, data, reminders, even becomes a torch during power failure, alarm clock and a calendar too (1).

3.Disadvantages Of Mobile Phone

Radiations emitted have been blamed for various health hazards, linked to and are blamed for causing hearing loss, skin diseases, cancer. Overuse/ misuse may lead to problems, loss of privacy, psychosomatic disorders leading to personality changes. Many users use ear phones or headphones which may cause hearing problems as well as ear infections. Using mobile for listening music has been blamed for number of road traffic accidents, because of poor listening and attention to other vehicles and lack of concentration and control while driving.

There are advantages and disadvantages for each new technology and so is true for mobile phones too, it depends on how we use it. So in our survey we tried to find out the dependence (nomophobia), its benefits and harm in the Indian scenario considering the tremendous increase in the number of mobile phone users in the past decade. We decided to conduct the study in our college since the younger generation is the latest and largest consumer of the mobile phones. Youth under 25 year age group in professional colleges like medical colleges use mobile phones quite frequently since most of these reside in hostels. Day scholar students too want to be in constant touch with their family members and friends since they are out of their homes for the most active portion of the day and at nights while studying in colleges and working in hospitals.

4. Material And Method

The present study was carried out amongst 500 M.B.B.S. students from Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi , AIIMS Jodhpur and SN Medical college Jodhpur by circulating a questionnaire , students were given time to answer the questionnaire and these were analyzed in detail . Initially students from different batches and those pursue internship, both day scholars and hostlers, of sex, having and using mobile phones for more than one-year duration was included in the present study. Around one thousand students of the college met the above inclusion criteria of which every second student was selected by systematic random sampling. A pre-designed and pre-tested questionnaire [2] designed on the lines of one developed by Dr. Marcus L. Raines [3] was circulated and used to study mobile phone dependence among the study subjects. The questionnaire was modified according to the local conditions. The mobile phone dependents were then designated as nomophobes. (Questionnaire attached along with it)

The data was collected to explore the information on demographic and psychographic aspects of the respondents. The demographic variables included age, gender, education and residence. The psychographic variables included attitude towards usage of cellular phones, mobile phones dependence and associated anxiety. The questionnaire focusing on mobile dependence had eight components: duration of having mobile phone with self; use of mobile phone to call/ SMS, using it to take photos or movies/ send them to others, use of mobile as a personal organizer (e.g. diary, address book), use of it for chatting/ internet surfing, amount spent per month on recharge (options expressed in Rupees as compared to the original questionnaire that had options in Pounds); frequency of change of phone/SIM cards (the original questionnaire had an option focusing on termination of contract that was modified to change of phone every one to two years as India has an extensive network of prepaid subscribers who can change their phones and SIM cards as and when required); and its adverse effect on academic performance. Every question was compulsory and consisted of three options depicting maximum to minimum mobile phone association. The changes made according to local needs were pretested. The individual responses thus obtained were then compiled, processed and analyzed to arrive at the results on various issues. Involvement of students in sports and social activities was not included in the study.

5.Results

The study population comprised 310 (62%) male and 190 (38%) female students; of these 120 (24%) were day scholars and 380 (76%) were residents of hostels. Most of the students who participated in the study were born between 1985 and 1988 (accounting for 94.4% of the sample), meaning that they were aged between 17 and 21 when they completed the survey. About 65% of the students have been using cell phones for 2-5 years, mainly for SMS and receiving calls, around 5% have been using mobile for less than 1 year while 5.8% having mobile phones for 1-2 year and rest of them have been using it since 5-10 years. We also observed that female students outnumber the males in having and using mobile phones, reason for higher usage may be a feeling of sense of security by parents that they can be approached easily by their female child in any emergency and they are in touch. Approximately 73% students responded that they keep their mobile phones with them even when they go for sleep (for 24 h a day), around 11.4% student keep it along with <16hrs, while other 9% keep it along with around 16 hrs and remaining were in between them. Most of students are usually keep their mobile on silent mode but they use them for SMS even during lecture time. Around 60% student say that they reply back immediately on receiving a message or a missed call. All students feel that it is not safe to use mobile during driving. 44% students responded that they spend Rs. 250-500 per month for their mobile recharge, only 6% spent <100 rupee, 22.6% spent 100- 200 rupee per month while 27.4% student spent more than 500 rupee per month for mobile recharge in which male (around 26.4%) were outnumbered. 30% students said that they upgrade their mobile software at least once a year, 1.85% student upgrade it less than once in an year, 38.4% student done it 1-2 time in a year, remaining upgraded their mobile 2-4 time in year. 88% students responded that mobile phone is a necessary tool to help them keep connected with their family members; 76% students responded that they have habit to keep on checking their mobile phones for messages and calls; 33% students have at least one long duration call everyday for more than 30 min of which 42% comprised of females and 22% males. About 53% students kept their mobile phones either in the pocket of shirt or jeans close to their body so that they can have a feel of constant touch with their mobile phone.

Most of the students pat their pockets to check whether cell phone is still there? 55% students admitted of having a fear of being out of cell phone contact and 35% felt their cell phone to be ringing/ vibrating when actually it is not. 48% of student didn't feel shy to admit the fact that their academic performance get deteriorate after having mobile

because of their addiction of video game, internet chatting, SMS, new song downloading for caller tunes. (Reflected in table 1)

6. Discussion

Although in recent years, the world has witnessed a booming number of mobile phones. But at present there is not much information about the topic. A study from United Kingdom on 2163 people revealed that 53% of the subjects tend to be anxious when they lose their mobile phone, run out of battery or credit or have no network coverage. The study found that about 58% of men and 48% of women suffer from the phobia, and an additional 9% feel stressed when their mobile phones are off. About 55% of those surveyed cited keeping in touch with friends or family as the main reason that they got anxious when they could not use their mobile phones. [4] A study conducted by Market Analysis and Consumer Research Organization (MACRO) in Mumbai to study the various patterns and association of mobile phone usage reported that 58% of the respondents could not manage without a mobile phone even for a day.

Our survey shows increasing use of mobile phones among students and psychological dependence on mobile. They are also prone to develop nomophobia, phantom ring and habit of checking their pocket for mobiles. Long term usage may lead to certain personality changes.

The observations in the present study are from a small group of medical students only, which may not reflect the scenario worldwide since millions of cellular mobile subscribers are added every month indicating that full blown nomophobia has all possibilities to reach to epidemic scale. In reality these results give an alarming indication that in coming era more and more youth may become users and so will be more dependent on mobile phones, which may lead to serious psychiatric (5) and psychological problems among users.

7. Conclusion

In general, mobile phones have both pros and cons to our society. They make the people's lives and works become more easy and smooth, we are connected round the clock and globe. Yet, mobile phones still impact badly on health, time and communication of individuals. To avoid these problems, each person as well as society have to be take some precaution like usage of mobiles to the minimum and it must be used as phone only rather as multipurpose gadget . We have to develop certain dos and

don'ts for mobile usage .We suggest using land line or fixed phone while in offices or place of work and mobile must be switch off in all academics and office timings. We recommend land line phone for longer conversations (friends and lovers), use wave guard, be careful while you are driving and say strict no to ear phones during driving or while on roads. Give yourself a rest day once a week and same must apply to your mobile phones too. Do not allow transmitting towers to be fixed on you house top for few thousands of rupees, as you may be asking for genetic problems in your next generation.

No .	About mobile	Male (no.)	%	Female (no.)	%	Total %
1	Duration of mobile use (2-5 years)	150	30	175	35	65
2	Keeping mobile along with (24 hrs)	262	52.4	103	20.6	73
3	Keeping mobile during lecture	300	60	180	36	96
4	Immediate reply to call/SMS	186	37.2	114	22.8	60
5	Spend money (250-500/month)	95	19	125	25	44
6	Upgradation of software (once a year)	102	20.4	48	9.6	30
7	Way to connected to family	254	50.8	186	37.2	88
8	Checking of mobile time to time	256	51.2	124	24.8	76
9	Long duration call daily (> 30 min)	54	10.8	111	22.2	33
10	Keep mobile in cloths	178	35.6	87	17.4	53
11	Fear of being out of cell(nomophobia)	167	33.4	108	21.6	55
12	Phantom ringing	113	22.6	62	12.4	35
13	Deteriorate academic performances	128	25.6	112	22.4	48

Table 1: Mobile usage

8.Questionnaire On Mobile Usage

Sex

Age.....

1. Do you have mobile?

Yes

No

2. For how long you have been using it?

Upto 1 year

1-2 year

2-5 years

5-10 years

3. For what purpose is it used maximally?

Sending SMS

Receiving incoming calls

Making outgoing calls

4. Do you use mobile during lecture?

Yes

No

5. In what mode do you keep your mobile during lecture?

Switched off

Silent

Ringing

All

6. As soon as the lecture is over, do you have the habit of checking your mobile for SMS, missed call?

Yes

No

7. Do you reply back to SMS/ missed call immediately on receiving?

Yes

No

8. Do you have a habit of checking your mobile from time to time for any message or missed call?

Yes

No

9. How much time do you keep mobile along with you?

16 hr 16-20 hr 24 hr <16 hr

10. How much money do you spend every month on mobile recharge (in rupee)?

100- 200 250-500 <100 >500

11. Do you use mobile for chatting/ internet surfing?

Yes No

12. How many times do you upgrade software on your mobile in a year?

<1 1 1-2 2-4

13. Do you do long duration call daily (>30 minutes)?

Yes No

14. Do you change your handset/ SIM card frequently?

Yes No

15. Reason for changing the SIM card

Economic

Better service provider

Any other reason

16. Do you change your dialer tune frequently?

Yes No

17. Do you feel mobile usage is hampering your studies?

Yes No

18. Do you feel any difference in your academic performance before and after you started using your mobile?

Yes No

19. Do you have fear of being out of cell?

Yes

No

20. Do you use mobile while driving too?

Yes

No

9.Reference

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