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IMPACT OF MOBILE PHONE ON CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract: The increasing use of mobile has raised concerns about how exposure patterns may affect mental health of children and adolescents. At one hand, there are several advantages of smartphone use such as improving academic skills, reading recognition and enriching vocabulary and expressive language. On the other hand, overuse of mobile phones may lead to mental or behavioural problems including poor academic performance, decreased real-life social interaction, neglect of one's personal life, relationship disorders and mood dysfunction. Parents faced challenges in the controlling screen time of their children. This was partly likely due to their attempts in finding a complex balance between personal and working life, and family responsibilities. Parental monitoring of mobile use by adolescents was essential to prevent adolescents from becoming victim of mobile phones addiction. Hence, there is need to minimise exposure to mobile phone by adopting appropriate strategy

Index Terms - Mobile, smart phone, health, emotion,

I. INTRODUCTION

The increasing use of technologies has raised concerns about how exposure patterns may affect wellbeing of children and adolescents. Mental health illnesses constitute one of the dominant health problems of children and adolescents (Patton, Sawyer, Santelli, Ross, Afifi, Allen, Arora, Azzopardi, Baldwin, Bonell (2016). At one hand, O'Connor et al. (2013) stated that there are several advantages related to smartphone use such as improving academic skills, reading recognition and enriching vocabulary and expressive language. On the other hand, overuse of mobile phones or MPD may lead to mental or behavioral problems including poor academic performance, decreased real-life social interaction, neglect of one's personal life, relationship disorders and mood dysfunction (Duan et al., 2020; Soni et al., 2017). In modern societies, Smartphones are accessible to children which fulfills the urge of addicts and decrease reaction time and level of inhibition (Choi, Kim, Choi, Ahn, Choi, Song et al, 2015). A study was conducted on Japanese adolescents by

Kamibeppu and Sugiura (2005) which showed that they used mobile phones more frequently for e-mailing than as a phone and that greater e-mail use was associated with increased psychological instability. A study was conducted in United Kingdom on 10–15-year-old children. Study revealed that those with a high duration of time spent electronic gaming displayed more externalizing problem, internalizing problems and less prosocial behaviors. On the other hand children who spent a low duration of time showed more prosocial behaviors and less internalizing and externalizing problems as compared to non- and moderate-gaming children Przybylski, 2014). In addition to that (Király, Potenza, Stein, et al. 2020) revealed that the excessive use of smartphones may also affect sleep patterns by reducing rapid eye movement sleep, slow wave sleep and consequently causing sleep deficiency. At the time of COVID period there was an increased use of smartphones which could potentially lead to internet use disorders and gaming disorders and eventually be attributed to mental health issues such as stress, anxiety and mood disorder and sleep deprivation, Further, Smartphones may also be used during face-to-face social interactions, which may negatively impact those interactions and blunt their usually positive impact on well-being (Dwyer et al., 2018).

Sohn, Rees, Wildridge, Kalk, and Carter, 2019) in a recent meta-analysis and systematic review reported that on an average tentatively one in every four children and young people (CYP) had problematic smartphone use. Problematic smartphone or mobile phone use (PSU) is generally considered maladaptive in coping with stress and negative emotions (Whang, Lee and Chang, 2003), Children and adolescents reporting more Problematic Smartphone Use symptoms also showed lower quality of life, more behavioural difficulties, and poorer school performance, independently of age, gender, socio-economic status, and daily smartphone usage time (Kliesener, Meigen, Kiess and Poulain, 2022). The emotional development of childer has been negatively influenced by excessive use of parental mobile by parents. Such effect may vary across different types of media use and outcomes of interest (e.g., Modecki et al., 2020). Mobile phone overuse is also associated with more psycho-pathological symptoms, like depression and anxiety (Elhai, Levine, Dvorak and Hall, 2017). Overuse of smartphone shares hidden mechanisms with other addiction related behaviors such as gambling disorder, impaired activity in the prefrontal cortex, reduced cognitive control which affects decision-making and emotional processing (Moccia, Pettorusso, De Crescenzo, De Risio, di Nuzzo, Martinotti, et al. 2017).

At a time, Andone, Błaszkiwicz, Eibes, Trendafilov, Montag and Markowetz, 2016) concluded that youngsters use their phones for longer period of time mostly for social interactions and for entertainment whereas older population has lesser phone use and preferably getting information and knowledge. Vrijheid et al(2010) recently published results reporting no association between prenatal exposure to cell phone use and neurodevelopment at 14 months among a smaller pregnancy cohort. The results of the study revealed the possibility that exposure to cell phone may have different causal pathway for behavioural problems. According to (Panova and Carbonell, 2018) one possibility of the conflicted findings may be that it is not smartphone use per se that is associated with poor mental health, but particular patterns of smartphone-related behaviour. The researchers and the mainstream media have highlighted the possibility that individual can become addicted to smartphone use in the academic profession, this is not clear. According to Lewis, 2020)

the absolute reason for such adolescents to depend on mobile phones can be attributed to their internal loneliness. During pandemic, social isolation impair interpersonal interaction and separate adolescents in meaning situations.

At the time of pandemic, parents faced challenges in the controlling screen time of their children. This was partly likely due to their attempts in finding a complex balance between personal and working life, and family responsibilities (Ozturk Eyimaya and, Yalçin, 2021). Parent's insecurities and wish to upgrade child's educational methods, use as a distracter for children, and a way to handle children's behavior are all different ways to start indulging children in the use of mobile /smartphones which later becomes a habit and an addiction which affects not only physical wellbeing but also social and emotional behavior (Kabali, Irigoyen, Nunez-Davis, Budacki, Mohanty and, Leister, et al. 2015). During the COVID-19 pandemic, stressful periods of confinement were related with excessive use of smartphone in connection with various aspects of life of children. People at home were doing web surfing, social interaction, gaming and frequent messaging to each other which lead to physical and psychological health issues (Trabelsi, Ammar, Masmoudi, Boukhris, Chtourou and Bouaziz et al.(2005). Parental monitoring of mobile use by adolescents was essential to prevent adolescents from becoming victim of mobile phones addiction. Among middle school students, parental monitoring was significantly negatively related with problematic mobile phone use. When parents monitor their children, parents phubbing does not contain a significant relationship with their children (Ding, Zhang and Zhou, 2019). However, it is necessary for parents and educators to establish a debate about the motivations of young people and how to encourage healthy leisure and free time habits, as well as reducing the use of mobile devices (Aznar, Trujillo, Romero and Campos, 2019). Providing autonomy to the family members is more effective than uniform pre-regulation for solving the problem of smartphone addiction. Also, to prevent smartphone addiction, you should be aware of your own habits rather than coercive attitude (Khoe , 2020).

Conclusion:

In short, excessive engagement with the mobile phone has become widespread problem in the society. The children and adolescents are not spared with the impact of this device. Common physical and the mental health issues faced by such population is irritation, decreased attention, impulsive behaviour, decreased sleep, digestion problem and poor academic performance. In this situation the parents need to monitor the children and implement effective strategies to curb this issue.

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