

Nomophobia among young Vietnamese people

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Abstract

Nomophobia, also called no mobile phobia, is a term to describe fear without communicating with people through a mobile phone. It is very important to recognize that people are becoming the victims of nomophobia. The present study was designed to study the nomophobia among young. The aims of study were to measure the level of nomophobia in young people and to study the cognition of young people regarding the advantages and disadvantages of mobile phone usages. This is a cross-sectional study that would be used for a period of 1 months from 18th November 2021 to 29th December 2021 to survey about 278 young Vietnamese people in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam. Findings show that most of participants of this study in the age group of 18-33 years. This study indicated that 26.13% of population have severe nomophobia, 49% have moderate nomophobia and 24.18 % were mild nomophobia. A higher proportion of males had severe nomophobia compared to males. In sum, prevention is better than cure, most of the subjects using mobile phones belong to younger age group therefore the program for intervention and education should be targeted to youth to help them know how to use mobile phones effectively and prevent some harm from physical and mental health.

Keywords: nomophobia, young people, mobile user, Vietnam, gender

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1. Introduction

Mobile phones have become very popular in recent years for many people and especially among young adults with constant technological improvements (Hadi, Hussein, & Asadi, 2020). Walsh et al. (2008) express that it is not too surprising that some young people are extremely attached to their mobile phone considering the integration of mobile phones on people's lives and the number of its functions (Gezgin, Hamutoglu, Nazire, & Ayas, 2018). Smartphones have the potential to gather volumes of objective data at low cost, can be used to develop interactions and social networks. And they also can be used for entertainment seeking, security, relaxation and education (Yildirim, 2018). Research reveals that majority of people especially young generation remains busy in calling, checking messages, watching or sending videos, up-dating, chatting and many others. This then became an inevitable part of an individual's life (Rather & Rather, 2019).

Mobile phones have undoubtedly made a lot of advantages in young generation's daily activities in terms of communication, entertainment and so on, However, it is very necessary to see the other side of the problem that smartphones have shown to result in excessive usage checking habits, suffering from lower sleep quality (Bartwal & Nath, 2020), behavioral addiction and another problem that has recently introduced to our lives with smartphones been is nomophobia (Akhoro, 2019), stands for No Mobile Phone Phobia (Gurbuz & Ozkan, 2019) and it was considered as possibly the biggest non-drug addiction of this century. It has origination in England that is the phobia of being without a mobile phone and nomophobia refers to discomfort, anxiety, nervousness or anguish caused by being out of contact with a mobile phone or computer (Sethia, et al., 2018).

Nomophobia affecting mental status of the mobile phone users has been proposed to be included in the DSM-V (Diagnostic and Statistical manual of Mental disorders, fifth version) a gold standard manual for assessing psychiatric diseases (Dongre, Inamdar, & Gattani, 2017). According to one study in Britain during 2020 with the result found that nearly 53% of mobile phone users tend to be anxious when they "lose their mobile phone, run out of battery or credit, or have no network coverage". A survey (2012) on American mobile users found that 94% of people are concerned about losing their phone. When asked to select which feeling they best identified with, when they lost their phone, 73% reported feeling "panicked" and 14% reported feeling "desperate". 72% of people stated that there is very little chance that they will ever move 5 feet away from their phone. A study (2010) in Sweden revealed that 23% men and 34% women having high use of mobile phones indicated sleep disturbance and over 30% of women reported up to two symptoms of depression. (Kanmani, Bhavani, & Maragatham, 2017).

They decrease their physical activities, and their body becomes feeble. Many physical abnormalities such as muscular stiffness, pain and discomfort in the limbs, neck, and back, headaches, and eyestrain starts affecting their bodies. It also affects digestion; people can also suffer from low endurance, obesity (increased bodyweight), and many other abnormalities. This study aims to evaluate the level of nomophobia in Indian students (Kumar, Kumari, Bharti, & Sharma, 2021). Since several researches have dedicated that young people from varied socioeconomic, age, educational background use smartphones more frequently and have effect negatively on the physical, mental health. This study investigated to find out the prevalence of nomophobia among young people in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam

1.1 Objectives

- Identify the sociodemographic characteristic to sample
- To find out the proportion of having nomophobia among young Vietnamese people

- To measure the level of nomophobia based on the gender

2. Methodology

A cross-sectional study would be used for a period of 1 months from 18th November 2021 to 29th December 2021 to survey about 278 young Vietnamese people in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam. The researcher has sent the informed consent to all the participants and they are free to do. Before answering the questionnaire which was sent to the participants via the social media platforms such as messenger, fiber, Zalo which were popular in Vietnam. It took approximately 15 minutes to complete the survey. The researcher has committed to keep confidential for participants' personal information. A questionnaire was designed for this study include three parts: Demographics questionnaires, identified the usage patterns of Smartphone. Nomophobia questionnaire (NMP-Q) conducted by Yildirim and Correia and The advantages and disadvantages of nomophobia.

Demographic questionnaire: This study has used a demographics questionnaire to collect information of participants such as gender, marital status, occupation.

The usage patterns of the Smartphone: smartphone brand, the number of smartphones possess, the duration of smartphone usage, participant's goals for their smartphone purpose, mode of smartphone while sleeping, level of checking their smartphones and asking Wi-Fi in a new place.

Nomophobia questionnaire: This study, based on 20 items tested nomophobia questionnaire (NMP-Q) developed by Yildirim and Correia in 2015 which was used to measure the nomophobia behaviors of young people. It concludes twenty items addressing four subscales of nomophobia: 1- Not being able to communicate (items 1-4), 2- losing connectedness (items 5-9), 3- not being able to access information (items 10-15) and 4- giving up convenience (items 16-20). In the present study, all items are valued using 7 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The total score on the NMP- Q is 20 at its lowest (20*1) or 140 (20*7) at its highest Total scores were used to classify young people into absence of nomophobia (NMP-Q score 20), mild level of nomophobia (NMP-Q score: 21-59), moderate level of nomophobia (NMP-Q score: 60-99) and sever nomophobia (NMP-Q score: 100-140) (Manu Sharma, 2019).

Data collection - The questionnaires were sent to the participants via active instant messaging groups on social media platforms and asked to fill survey form. After completing the questionnaire, the participants were asked to share the survey link with their friend's group who owned any smartphone.

Analysis - Data were analyzed statistically by simple proportions.

3. Result

3.1 General characteristic participants

In this study, 278 young Vietnamese people were randomly selected among 18-35 years old in different socioeconomic areas in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam. This study was conducted from 18th November 2021 to 29th December 2021. All participants completed the questionnaire and here are demographics are presented. Out of 278 participants. 143 (51.4%) were female and 135 (48.6%) were male. The age of participants ranged from 18-35 years. The participants of the survey belong to 45,2% were in the 18- 20 age range, 31 % were in the 23-30 age range and 20,55 % were in the 30-35 age range. An overwhelming percentage of the participants were students 44.2% while the smaller portion were in Teacher (15.8%), Official staff (12.2%), workers (5%), salesman (4%) and others profession were over (18 %). In this study, there were 235 respondents who were possessing one smartphone while 72 respondents possess two smartphones and maximum with three smartphones were possessed by 21 participants.

Table 1*Sociodemographic responses*

Items	<i>n</i> (%)
Gender	
Female	143 (51.4)
Male	135 (48.6)
Occupation	
Salesman	11 (4)
Workers	14 (5)
Teachers	44 (15.8)
Students	123(44.2)
Office staff	34 (12.2)
Others	52 (18.7)
Smartphone brands	
Apple	117 (42.8)
Asus	2 (0.71)
Huawei	4 (1.43)
Nokia	6 (2.15)
Oppo	27 (9.71)
Samsung	64 (23.02)
Sony	3 (1.07)
Vivo	8 (2.87)
Xiaomi	19 (6.83)
Others	28 (10.07)

N=278

Table 2*Level of frequently checking smartphone*

Frequency	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Percentage	1.40%	38.12%	49.28%	11.15%

The current study indicates that there is 49.28% of young Vietnamese people usually check their phone daily while 1.40% of population seldom check their phones. It can be said that cellphone has become the things necessary in the young's daily life.

Table 3*Indicating the purpose of mobile usage of total sample*

Purposes	Texting and talking with family and friend	Access information	Need for study	Entertainment	Other purposes
Percentage	17.26%	8.18%	34.49%	30%	10.07%

In regards to smartphone purpose usage, 17.26% claimed that they used a smartphone for contact with their families and friends. Whereas 34.49% out of a population used a smartphone for study. 30% stated that they used a smartphone for entertainment. 8.18% of the population used a smartphone for accessing information. 10.07% used a smartphone for other purposes like shopping, camera, sharing photos or online banking. In this current seems to bring the positive things of using smartphone when the highest percentage of participants is found that they used their smartphone to study while just only a small amount of people reports using their device for shopping or access information.

Table 4*Duration of daily smartphone checking time*

Duration	2-4h	4-6h	6-8h	8-10h
Percentage	22.20%	34.70%	24.41%	18.69%

This study reported that 22.20% of study participants used a smartphone for duration of 2-4h/day whereas 34.70% used it for 4-6h, 24.41% used for the duration of 6-8h a day and 18.69% of study participants used mobile phone for 8-10h.

Table 5*Checking smartphone immediately after waking up*

Duration	2-4h	4-6h
Percentage	75.30%	24.70%

The result shows that 75.89% of population check their phone immediately after waking up and just 24.10% of the population said no with checking their phone immediately after waking up.

Table 6*Asking Wi-Fi when coming to new place*

Response	Yes	No
Percentage	62.50%	37.42 %

The current study reported that 62.50% of population asked Wi-Fi when they come to a new place.

Table 7*Indicating level of Nomophobia classified according to age*

Age	Severe Nomophobia In (%)	Moderate Nomophobia In (%)	Mild Nomophobia In (%)	No Nomophobia In (%)
18-23	38 (29.24%)	70 (53.84%)	21(16.16%)	1 (0.76%)
24-27	16 (28.57%)	30 (53.57%)	10 (17.85%)	0%
28-30	7 (21.21%)	16 (48.48%)	10 (30.30%)	0%
31-35	30 (50.84%)	16 (27.11%)	12 (20.33%)	1 (0.69%)

The result of the current study shows that age group (31-35) is the highest nomophobia is 50.84% severe nomophobia. While the highest percentage of moderate nomophobia belongs to two age groups (18-23) and (24-27) with 53.84% and 53.57%. It is noticed that there are two age groups (24-27) and 28-30) have 0 % no nomophobia.

Table 8*Indicating level of Nomophobia classified according to gender*

Gender	Severe Nomophobia In (%)	Moderate Nomophobia In (%)	Mild Nomophobia In (%)	No Nomophobia In (%)
Male	25.18%	59.25%	14.80%	0.74%
Female	28.67%	43.35%	27.27%	0.69%

According to this study, 0.74% of the male were having no nomophobia, 14.8% were having mild nomophobia, 59.25% were having moderate nomophobia and 25.18% were having severe nomophobia while for female, it is reported that 0.69% of the participants were having no nomophobia, 27.27% were having mild nomophobia, 43.35% were having moderate nomophobia and 28.67% were having nomophobia.

Table 9*Indicating level of nomophobia of total population*

Severe Nomophobia In (%)	Moderate Nomophobia In (%)	Mild Nomophobia In (%)	No Nomophobia In (%)
26.13 %	49 %	24.18%	0.69%

As represented in this figures, it is evident that only less than 0.70% of the population is found to be not Nomophobic while almost 49% of population is found to have moderate nomophobia. This may be attributed to the growing number of mobile users in Vietnam. The level of addiction to the smartphone would result in people falling into various categories of nomophobia.

4. Discussions and Conclusion

This study sought to identify the level of nomophobia among young Vietnamese. For this purpose, the Nomophobia Questionnaire, as developed by Yildirim and Correia (2015) were translated into Vietnamese so the participants can complete it. According to the researcher's plan, the best sample for this study would be around 300 participants. However, the researcher could not find enough the participants. From total 278 participants, 143(51.4%) of them were female while 135 (48.6%) were male. From total also, 11(4.0%) of population were salesman, 14(5.0%) of them were workers, 34 (12.2%) of them were Office staff, 44(15.8%) of them were teachers, 52(18.7%) of them work as free job and the remainder with highest percentage is student with 123(44.2%). In this current study, the professional also contribute the significance when it may affect the participants' purpose for phone usages. In figure 2 shows that 34.49% of population use phone for learning while 17.26% of population use their phones for contact with their families and friends, 27.33% of them use their smartphone for entertainment and 17.26% of them use their smartphone for accessing information.

The findings from this study show that most participants have at least one smartphone. Moreover, the participants used their smartphone minimum for per day were 2- 4 hours and maximum for per day were 8-10 hours with different purpose such, as texting and chatting with family and friends, logged in to media accounts, education, shopping, sending emails, video calls..... According to Bhattacharya et al. (2019), cell phones become one of the biggest non-drug addiction of the 21st century". The researchers showed that a day's college students are spending more than 9 hours per day on their mobile phones, which leads to addiction. Per a study, Experts have explored that people who have used their smartphone for over three hours per day have a high risk of getting nomophobia.

The current study reported that 62.50% of population asked Wi-Fi when they come to a new place. As the results of the study by Yildirim et al. showed that 42.6% of the young people had nomophobia disorder, and that their greatest fear was connected with the dimension "not being able to access information". The study also showed that participants had developed and demonstrated nomophobic behaviors. that nomophobia is a growing problem among mobile phone users, especially young people, and that the phenomenon requires the special attention of researchers, as does the necessity for mitigating action towards its prevention. Moreover, the current study revealed a significant difference was found between male and female young Vietnamese people in terms of nomophobic behaviors being exhibited significantly more by females than males in severe nomophobia. However, in a study of Kumar found that male are more affected by nomophobia than the female (Kumar, Kumari, & Sharma, 2021).

The current study showed that 24,18 % had mild nomophobia,49 % moderate nomophobia and 26,13% severe nomophobia. Up today, there are some study on nomophobia in Vietnamese and one was conducted by Nguyen and Le (2022) showed that most of the nomophobia scores fell within the moderate range, similar to our results.

4.1 Limitation

The study is limited to those who do not have cellphone so it should not be generalized to the whole population of Vietnam. Another limitation in this current study as well, only participants in Ho Chi Minh City were included so generalizations cannot be made to other areas of the country. Finally, all participants of this study did not know English so all questionnaires were translated into Vietnamese. It sometimes cannot convey all the meaning of the original words

4.2 Recommendation

This study highlights the level of nomophobia among young people in Vietnam and its disastrous consequences. Awareness should be raised about the growing incidence of nomophobia not only among Vietnamese youth, but among the general population as well. The research suggests more studies in this area,

particularly in a larger sample of the population for more accurate outcomes. Moreover, new programs and articles for young people on the correct use of smartphones and educating them about the disadvantages of wrong use of these devices. Lastly, developing an intervention program for dealing with nomophobia young people is necessary.

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