Necessary of human relationship in current life: Do SMS addiction is threat or opportunity?

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Objective: Aim of this research is study of necessary of human relationship in current life. The use of the mobile and other technology tools has increased considerably over the last few years. With this increasing number of mobile users, the problem of SMS addiction has attracted high attention from psychiatrists, psychologists and educators.

Materials and Methods: In this study the descriptive method used. All of the student of Islamic Azad university Mazandaran Province were considered as population of this research. The sample included 345 students were selected by using Kerjcie and Morgan's table. The research instruments was Social Anxiety and SMS addiction questionnaires. As for the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach -Alpha coefficients were calculated 0.81. and 0.76. The scores obtained from both questionnaires were subjected to a number of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: Results of research showed that: There is a relationship between students SMS addiction and their social anxiety (r= 0.389, P<.05). There is significant difference between SMS addiction in Married and No married students (t= 2.648, P<.05 ). There isn’t significant difference between social anxiety in students of university with different age. (F= 0.706, P>.05 ).

Conclusion: Cellular phone use (CPU) is an important part of today life. Text-message dependency may be based on an acute need for interpersonal communication. SMS addiction not only is a threat for life but also it have many opportunities for success and achievement.

Key words: social anxiety, SMS addiction, college students.

Introduction

Internet addiction and text-message dependency or SMS addiction is handled as a dependent tendency on some particular behavior in relation to usage of the communication media rather than as a unique psychiatric disorder [44]. Some of researchers believe that text-message dependency would be mainly induced by certain predispositions such as impulse control problems and social anxiety. In other words, Internet and text-message dependency should be treated with more care for its antecedents and may have some threats for good human relationship. In today life, world of technology, SMS and Internet addiction is a relatively common problem especially among students. Text messaging or instant messaging, is on the rise among young people. SMS and Internet addiction have symptoms such as poor human relationship, loneliness, low self esteem, negative attitudes toward others etc [13,14]. The Internet was once used by adolescents to fulfill their needs for entertainment or to learn new information [42]; however, today they are increasingly using it to interact with friends. Problematic CPU could be considered as one form of technological addictions. Because DSM-IV-TR does not offer a category for addictions [1], confusion has reigned in the diagnosis, treatment, and research of these conditions. A popular response, reflected in the work of addictions researchers such as Griffiths [10], is that non-substance addictions are compared to the diagnostic criteria for established substance addictions to provide both a biopsychosocial context and a direction for a comprehensive model of addiction [9,39]. Cell phone use is also on the rise among young people. A recent Pew Internet research study reported that approximately 33% of teens not only have a cell phone [25], but approximately 64% of them said they send text messages on a regular basis. Mirroring the uses of IMs, young females also tend to use text messaging more so than do males.

Although some research suggests that computer mediated technologies and socially interactive technologies promote and even increase face-to-face social interaction [30], others argue that these technologies allow users to avoid or replace face-to-face communication [34]. If the person is shy (socially anxious) and feels uncomfortable with face-
to-face interactions, these technologies may serve as a useful tool for avoiding such unpleasant situations and therefore may replace face-to-face communication. Social anxiety influences technological versus face-to-face communication. Although the widespread availability of text-messages provides a convenient way of communicating, it has been pointed out that some people show overdependence on text-messages in their daily lives, or the so-called 'text-message dependency' [17]. According to the definition and the characteristics of Internet dependency introduced above, this study operationally defines text-message dependency as "text-messaging-related compulsive behavior that causes psychological/behavioral symptoms resulting in negative social outcomes." Although this definition involves broader ranges of phenomenon caused by text-messages, this study particularly aims to focus on the relationship between psychosocial factors and psychological/behavioral symptoms throughout the process of text-message usage.

In terms of text-message dependency, interpersonal relationships with intimate friends are considered to be a significant trigger [32,41]. The contextual mobility of mobile phones provides freedom of choice to users in both private and public situations [20]. In particular, text-message dependency may be based on an acute need for interpersonal communication. Text-messages are exchanged mainly within existing social networks composed of acquaintances who have already known each other [19]. Although text-messages are useful for maintaining weak and strong relationships, they also cause 'text-messaging ostracism' that leads to isolation or exclusion in text-message-mediated friendship networks [40]. Thus, some people may be obsessive about receiving and sending text-messages to avoid rejection, implying that text-message dependency is related to a compulsion for gaining approval from intimate friends. Compulsive use of communication media may produce negative social outcomes.

Due to excessive time spent online, psychological/behavioral symptoms, such as sleeping disorder and social withdrawal, come to appear [46]. Existing research has revealed a strong positive relationship between psychological/behavioral symptoms and the amount of time spent on the Internet [46]. In fact, while people who use the Internet for many hours can become dependent on the Internet, it is also plausible that one can spend large amounts of time on the Internet without experiencing psychological/behavioral symptoms. For example, recent research has reported that first year college students in Japan exchange 20.1 text-messages on average in a day [17]. Recently, Igarashi et al. [19] proposed three factors of self-perception related to psychological/behavioral symptoms of text-message dependency. The first factor is the perception about excessive use of text-messages. Heavy message users spend a substantial amount of time exchanging messages throughout the day and may perceive themselves as being too involved in text-messages without self-control. The second factor is the perception about relationship maintenance function of text-messages by means of an alternative for face-to-face communication. While text-messages are most frequently used among adolescents, there is evidence that adolescents especially yearn for building close relationships and having a strong anxiety toward failure in communication [25].

Although there is no specific personality factors predicting Internet dependency, several studies have examined the relationship of Internet dependency with individual dispositions, such as self-esteem [2], perceived social skills [5], and loneliness [17]. However, CPU may result in physiological and psychological complications. For example, cellular phone radiation can lead to the change of genetic regulation [47] and exacerbate oxidative stress in corneal and lens tissues [3]. Long-term CPU can cause neck, shoulder and low back pain [11]. Frequent computer-related activities increase the risk of neck–shoulder and low back pain in adolescents. Previous studies also found that long-term CPU might lead to brain tumors [12,15]. Although it is still controversial whether CPU can replace smoking in adolescents [6,22], intensive CPU has been found to be associated with adolescent alcohol drinking and weekly spending money [22] and increased body mass index [24].

Kamibeppu and Sugiura [21] also found that the insecure feeling about not receiving a reply message or call on cellular phones would make adolescents start staying up late at night engaged in message exchange, and their regular daily schedules were interfered with. Meanwhile, while there is legislative control for CPU when driving in many countries, it is evident that people disregard such bans in favor of using their cellular phones in the face of potential danger [23]. Researchers and psychologists need to be concerned about the behavioral and psychological aspects that play a role in defining problematic CPU behavior [4,44].

However, gender gaps in usage extensity and intensity soon narrowed, and in many places, women even began to lead after 1998. In his Norwegian study of 2001, Rich Ling found that among teenagers, more females than males were in possession of a mobile phone [28], while among young adults (over 20), the reverse was the case. In this advanced age, more males than females owned a handset, and they used it more intensively [29,27]. Women reached their peak usage intensity relatively early, at 18, while men reached it much later, at about 23, when they sent significantly more calls than women of the same age [27,8]. The researchers concluded that when access to a readily borrowed mobile telephone...
Materials and Methods: The method of the study was descriptive. All of the student of Islamic Azad University Mazandaran province were considered as population of this research. The sample included 345 students were selected by using Kerecjie and Morgan's table. The research instruments was Social Anxiety and SMS addiction questionnaires. A short-version of the self-perception of text-message dependency scale [18] serves to measure the way in which people perceive their usage of text-messages along with their attitude toward compulsive use of text-messages in the context of interpersonal relationships. The original scale consists of three subscales: perception of emotional reaction(1-5), excessive use(6-10), and relationship maintenance(11-15). The emotional reaction subscale measures sensitive responses to text-messages (e.g., "I feel disappointed if I don’t receive any text-messages"). The perception of excessive use subscale involves self-perception about compulsive usage of text-messages (e.g., "I sometimes spend many hours on text-messages"). The relationship maintenance subscale is composed of items related to fear of disruption of relationships without text-messages (e.g., "I cannot maintain new friendships without text-messages"). For the current study, we chose five representative items from each subscale based on the factor loadings of the original scale. The scores obtained from both questionnaires were subjected to a number of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Methods:

Results:

Hypothesis number one. In this study, the t-test (t=2.648, p<0.05) showed that there is significant difference between SMS addiction in Married and No married students.

Hypothesis number two. In this study, the F-test (ANOVA) (F= 0.706, P>.05) showed that there isn’t significant difference between social anxiety in students of university with different age.

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Hypothesis number three. In this study, since coefficient of correlation \((r=0.389)\) with degree of freedom of \(df=343\) in confidence level of 95 percent \((\alpha=0.05)\) is more than critical coordination coefficient \((r=0.195)\), \(H_0\) is rejected and research hypothesis is approved. It is concluded that there is a relationship between students SMS addiction and their social anxiety.

**Discussion:**

Results of research showed that students of university have social anxiety and SMS addiction. There is a relationship between students SMS addiction and their social anxiety. There is significant difference between SMS addiction in Married and No married students. There isn’t significant difference between social anxiety in students of university with different age. Interpersonal transactions are a fundamental element of society, and by extending the reach and immediacy of communication, the mobile phone has changed the scope of interpersonal interaction [36]. Sometimes, if people with text message dependency do not receive an instant reply to the message they send, they may feel neglected or isolated, have negative feelings about others, and their anxiety about being ostracized would increase [35]. Introduced to the Australian market in 1987, mobile phone connections exceeded the number of landline connections by 2001, and a nationwide estimate in 2004–5 revealed that at least 81% of the Australian population used a mobile phone. The phenomenal uptake of this technology indicates that it has struck a strong chord within the community in a way that some other technologies might not have [16]. Hence a consideration of factors associated with the uptake of the mobile phone may be informative when contemplating other innovations. Nevertheless, despite having a tremendous impact on the lives of many people, the mobile phone and internet, with some side effects such as anxiety, loneliness, low self-esteem, poor human relationship etc., [13,14], has only recently started to attract the interest of psychologists and experts. As a communication tool, the mobile phone is used mostly for either business or social purposes, but as it is such a personal device it is also used as an illustration of status, security and identity [36]. It is therefore highly likely that the personality of an individual will predict types of mobile phone use [4]. In modern times, we can trace the desire to call certain behaviors without drugs “addictions” to the rise and popularity of coin-operated and home video games in the 1970s and 1980s. Really, is SMS and texting an addiction, or just the latest technological fad that people obsess about for awhile? Cellular phone use (CPU) is an important part of current life in many developed countries [7]. In the Asia Pacific region, Taiwan is the first economy to have more than 100 subscribers of cellular phones per 100 inhabitants. To moderate such obstacles in face-to-face situations, adolescents may prefer indirect communication via text-messages. Consequently, it may cause compulsive use of text-messages, and thus psychological/behavioral symptoms are incurred. Finally, the third factor is emotional reaction to text-messages. Since text-messaging is asynchronous communication, people with text message dependency would pay excessive attention to message replies. Most people would attribute a delay in response to inevitable causes, such as the receiver being busy at work, or already being engaged in a conversation with another person. However, if people with text message dependency do not receive an instant reply to the message they send, they may feel neglected or isolated, and increase their anxiety about being ostracized. Thus, these perceptions, rather than the actual amount of text-messages, would be potential causes of psychological/behavioral symptoms. However, the use of the mobile and other technology tools has increased considerably over the last few years. With this increasing number of mobile users, the problem of SMS addiction and effect of text message dependency on good communications has attracted high attention from psychiatrists, psychologists and educators.

**References**


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