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Cell Phone Addiction and Teenager

The lives of millennial and successive generations are greatly influenced by cell phones and modern technology. With the advancement in information technology and telecommunication industry, mobile companies are launching state of the art products of mobile phones which have captured attention of masses. The Internet has revolutionized the mobile phone industry, as availability of network and fast rates has attracted users especially youth. Interaction with mobile phones and devices has become inevitable and highly embedded in modern societies across the globe. Further, the advent of smart phones with the availability of internet services has added fuel to this fire. Access of everything is bad and this rule is applied here in this case too. Despite its utmost importance and usefulness, a cell phone has various considerable harmful and negative aspects on people in general, and the youth in particular. Overuse of cell phones and being exposed to it for excessive time makes a person addict to it and such a person is referred as a mobile phone addict. Cell phones have associated different activities which can engage a person for an extended period of time including social networking, gambling and gaming. The excessive use of mobile phone is significantly related to teenagers and adolescents, as observed and has been indicated by many studies. Several studies have identified the addiction of using mobile phones and its negative impacts from social, medical and moral aspects. In this essay we will analyze how excessive use of cell phone and specifically social media platforms are perpetuating impulse-control problems in teenagers along with other issues due to several other online compulsions.

Excessive use of mobile phone or its addiction is responsible for several psychiatric issues and disorders. Psychiatric issues are often discussed in a medical perspective also having a link with the social realm. As indicated in the thesis statement, impulse control problems have been identified in teenagers. Impulse control disorders are a kind of personality disorder which is characterized by under-controlled or over-controlled impulses. In case of under-control impulse a person loses adequate control over his impulses and in the second case, the victim may find it difficult to regulate his nerves. According to a study about the relationship between mobile phone addiction and psychiatric issues in adolescents and teenagers of South Korean University, this age group is comparatively more vulnerable to adverse effects of mobile phone usage. In early adolescence, the possibility of developing mental disorders is characterized by deficiency in cognitive flexibility and impulse control due to addiction (Kim et al.). Lack of impulse control is responsible for many personality disorders including risky and irregular sexual behaviors, excessive tendencies of risk-taking, substance abuse, and binge eating. Also, this aspect is directly linked with certain familial and social confrontations and conflicts. All of these ailments and problems are expected to cause anxiety and dissociation. Most of the times, the issue is of psychological nature and impacts many areas of a person’s social relations and existence. Teenagers are more vulnerable to the reach a level of addiction because of their undeniable importance and significance.

Along with many other psychological and social issue, loneliness is also very important to discuss. Owing to easy accessibility and affordability, it has become comparatively easy for a teenager to gat a smart phone and use. As man is a social animal and socialization is an important requirement of a normal life of a person in his/her own personal capacity and domain. Cell phones with internet link a person to many social media sites and networks which claim to fulfill this basic requirement. Excessive use of social media and cell phone for social purposes destroy an active social life of a person where he/she tries to fulfill needs in a virtual world. Loneliness is in fact a state of mind where a person is overwhelmed by feelings of solitude or a difference between the expectations between ideal and experienced social relationships. According to a study carried out among teenagers in India to determine the correlation between the cell phone usage and loneliness, it was found that there is significant correlation between the two factors. The result was concluded after analyzing 100 teenager students of the college with 50 boys and 50 girls. The result of correlation between loneliness and mobile phone addiction was found positive which suggests that the level of addiction will be greater with higher levels of loneliness (Bhardwaj et al.). This can be understood by decreased social interaction of a cell phone addict, who may spend 4, 5 hours daily on a mobile phone. Cell phones are however beneficial for study purposes too as availability of internet and affordable data packages have enabled students to utilize online sources and services. This aspect has enabled misuse of mobile because teenagers get attracted to entertainment and social media comparatively more than the elder generation. Also, it is advisable to consider cell phone usage in the treatment of a teenager who may be suffering from dissociation and loneliness.

Early age relationships are observed to be more prevalent in new generation. In this age certain societal practices and biological factors develop urges and tendencies which move a teen to get into a relationship. A cell phone has become one of the important tool or source in order to get the job done. Teenagers are using many online platforms sing their cell phones including texting , Whatsapp, Facebook, and many other social applications. Studies have shown the relationship between excessive use of cell phones and problematic teenage relationships. Texting and chatting with potential partners at late hours are responsible for certain medical impairments. It causes irregular sleeping patterns which catalyze certain other issues including insomnia, RLS (Restless leg syndrome), sleep apnea and Narcolepsy. They significantly affect the overall health of a person and quality of life. Users of online dating sites are mostly teenagers where they find a lot of options to pick a potential partner. As a consequence, the possibility of rejections and denials increase significantly that result in low self-esteem and relationship problems. Loneliness, as discussed in the above paragraph, is a result of mobile phone addiction and is also linked with relationships. Loneliness and anxiety are observed in the addicts when they are unable to receive instant responses/messages or unable to send one due to any reason. This is also linked with stress and mood swings due to the need for an immediate response or urge to send a message.

Cell phone addiction and its impact on teenagers cannot be understood without considering online gaming. Nowadays, with the advent of state of the art mobile phones having big screens and more processing capabilities are common. These attributes have made cell phones compatible with the requirements of a gaming host device. Online games are very popular among the younger generation and are downloaded and installed at a large rate because they are mostly available free of cost. Most of the games are ‘freemium’ which means their initials stages and levels are available free but one reaches up to higher levels, a subscription is required. For premium versions of games, a gamer has to pay to unlock the next stages of games. These games are designed and developed so as to increase addiction in person with completion of each level. This not only forces an addict to play further to feed the required levels of dopamine but also cause significant financial strain. Time consumption involved in mobile phone addiction is mainly due to gaming in teenagers according to some surveys and reports. Too much exposure to a virtual world keeps a person separated from real-life problems and challenges resulting in loss of productivity and social interaction. One other damaging aspect of too much exposure to online gaming is the lack of physical activities. For a healthy life and body regulations, some sort of physical activity is essential. Playing games online on a mobile phone or other devices and not taking part in physical games is trending in teenagers, although there are some positive aspects too including sharpening the nerves and increase in decision-making abilities but only when a person is not too addicted so as to avoid its harmful effects.

As indicated in the thesis statement, there are several other online compulsions that are responsible for cell phone addiction. Mobile gambling is one of them and it refers to playing different types of games which include skill or chance for money. There are hundreds of casinos linked with this business and users from remote locations access these platforms using their cell phones and gamble. This tendency was also observed in teenagers because it provides a way to test the luck and earn money online. The context of gambling and usage of excessive cell phone among teenagers is a little interesting because gambling itself is an addiction which is catalyzed by another addiction. One of the important harmful effects of these online compulsions is the loss in academics. A teenager who spends most of the time on his/her cellphone cannot compete with other students who are not addicted. Firstly, they cannot develop a work ethic to complete the tasks assigned on time because of wastage of an ample amount of time on the cell phone. Secondly, attention is diverted a great deal making it very difficult to concentrate on studies. According to a study which was published in a journal of educational psychology, it was found that students who do not use electronic gadgets including cell phones and laptops score good grades as compared to those who use gadgets. 118 students were included in the research and were included into 2 groups where each group was taught the same material and syllabus(*Study: Cellphones | Education News | US News*).

# Conclusion

Cell phones are very important as they have become an important part of life. Excessive use of cell phones leads to addiction and it has been indicated by many studies that it is linked with anxiety, loneliness, and disorders related to the cognitive abilities of a human being. These tendencies are prevalent especially in teenagers and have significant harmful impacts as discussed in the above sections. The use of mobile phones has become somewhat of an epidemic in the teenage of the world in this day and age. The rise of psychological diseases like depression, stress and anxiety can be traced back to the rise of mobile phones. A number of social, psychological and psychiatric disorders have appeared due to the increase in screen time in our youth. These disorders include trends of being unhappy and anti-social in the real world. The art of problem-solving has become rare and is nowadays considered as a rare skill.

Works Cited:

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