Smart Phone Addiction and Emotional Intelligence among Adolescents

Abstract: Smartphone can keep us connected in our professional lives, through email and phone calls, they can keep us connected to friends and family through social media and text messages and they can give us an escape from reality through the various apps that fit one’s personal interests. Research has shown that personality traits such as neuroticism, agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, and self-esteem can influence how individuals use mobile phones and can detect patterns in mobile phone use. While it may seem obvious that smartphones impact most people’s day to day lives, an interesting question arises when we begin to wonder how smartphone usage may be impacting level of emotional intelligence, individuals with lower levels of emotional intelligence show less physical and mental well-being and possess a higher risk of developing Internet addictions. This also applies to smartphone Addictions. Further, different research questions arise when we begin to think of the relationship among emotional intelligence and smartphone use. Present paper elaborates the pervasiveness of smartphone along with associations between Smartphone usage and emotional intelligence.

Keywords: Adolescents, Smartphones, Emotional Intelligence.

INTRODUCTION

For the majority of adolescents and adults, smartphones is a major part of their everyday lives. Technology has advanced with years and has changed the way people purchase products, the way they live, the way they communicate, the way they travel, the way they learn and so many changes have been brought about by these technological advancements. The type of mobile phones people had in 1995 is no longer on demand in this century, the demands of mobile phone users have changed greatly.

Smartphone, with a large display screen, built-in personal information management system, personal digital assistant and operating system allows other computer software to be installed for web browsing, e-mail, music, video, and other applications. A smartphone may be thought of as a handheld computer integrated within a mobile telephone (Hosch, 2009) with internet at your fingertips and allows user to use the enormous features of smart phones to best fit their needs based on one’s environment, preferred lifestyle, and personal preferences (Barkhuus & Polichar, 2010).

Mobile has become the new babysitter. Kids are getting access to phones earlier than ever before (Kumar, 2017 in Sengupta & Basu, 2017). There’s been a 75% increase in cases over last year. There are cases when their fingers hover in the air like when on a phone, even during their sleep. Addicts go through huge withdrawal symptoms. It’s a fight getting them back to normalcy.

India will have 530 million smart phone users by 2018 as reported by The Hindu, 2017. With a rise in smartphone ownership globally; China will have the highest number of smartphone users, 1.3bn, in 2018, followed by India with 530mn users. The U.S. will be a distant third, with 229mn users. The increased use of smartphone and other mobile devices means more frequent contact between brands and consumers. It also gives consumer more opportunities to connect with media content wherever they are, at any time of the day (The Hindu, 2017).

With 1.18 billion mobile phone subscriptions, India is the second largest mobile phone market, clocking the fastest growth rate (Neeraj, 2017). The increasing penetration of Smartphone in India has considerable effects on consumers’ behavior. An online survey by CMR India recently conducted to understand the impact of a Smartphone on people’s daily life, found that, on average, 40% of Smartphone users spend nearly 9%–25% of their daily time on the Internet. Interestingly, two-third of the Indian Smartphone users checks their Smartphone within 30 minutes of waking up. The findings indicate clear contribution of Smartphone in people’s daily life along with an increase in obsession.
Reports also indicate that between 2013 and 2017, the time spent on Smartphone and mobile internet has doubled. With improved mobile internet infrastructure, declining price of high speed data and availability Smartphone are the primary reasons behind this radical shift in Smartphone users’ behavior. The findings indicate the increasing obsession as well as the contribution of Smartphone in people’s daily life. The maximum usage of a smart phone is found during the office hours. 42% of smart phone users make the most of their devices during the working hours, while 38% use during the night (Neeraj 2017).

The number of smart phone users in India is estimated to reach 299.24 million, with the number of smart phone users worldwide forecast to exceed 2.3 billion users by that time. Smartphone addiction has emerged as a significant physio-cognitive and social problem among users. Smartphone users have access to unlimited information and entertainment platforms 24X7 everywhere. This may lead to addiction in form of or habitual checking (Lee, 2015; Oulasvirta et al., 2012). People are now less attentive to whom they are and indulge themselves in their Smartphone (Wei & Leung, 1999). Psychiatrists and counselors say that Cases for smart phone addiction at leading clinics and hospitals as mobile addicts are increasingly being common in India, multiplying at an alarming rate, direct fallout of the growing dependence on the gadget. the number of people being treated for mobile addiction – belonging mostly students in the age group of 13-24 yrs. For past last two to three year alone reporting of addiction to gadgets has shot up anywhere between 75-100% and looks to jump multifold in coming years. MRI studies and CAT scans for mobile addicts have shown patterns similar to those suffering from heroin and cocaine addiction (Sengupta & Basu 2017).

Just as an individual’s personality traits have influence in many ways, emotional intelligence, and the ability to manage one’s emotions effectively and to maintain strong interpersonal relationships, is an important characteristic of individual. Emotional intelligence impacts an individual’s life, such as interpersonal relationship, life satisfaction, job success, and leadership capabilities (Goleman, 1998). As researcher are expanding the knowledge base concerning more insights about the association between emotional intelligence and smartphone usage, has become available.

**Emotional Intelligence**

The term emotion intelligence (EI) was created by researchers Peter Salovoy and John Mayer and became widely known in 1995 after it was introduced by Daniel Goleman in the book titled Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ. Since then, EI has been defined differently by several researchers producing a discrepancy on how it is understood and measured.

Emotional intelligence equips them with emotional competencies necessary for teamwork (Kukreti & Balodi, 2011).

Theoretically, emotional intelligence denotes an array of such skills as self- control, persistence, self-motivation and sensitivity to the feelings of others. The concept of Emotional intelligence is defined and explained by different scholars in the form of models consisting of a set of emotional skills.

**Components of Emotional Intelligence**

- **Empathy:** The ability to understand what other people are feeling will make us more sensitive and aware, resulting in more meaningful relationships.

- **Associating Actions with Consequences:** This understanding will enable us to make conscious choices in our life, so as to avoid unnecessary difficulties.

- **Good Judgment:** The gift of making well thought-out decisions and seeing people for who they really are will maximize the possibilities of success in all areas of our life.

- **Personal Responsibility:** When we hold ourselves, accountable and don't blame anyone else for our mistakes or misfortunes, we are empowered to change things for the better. Other people respect us because we own up to your part in your relationships.

- **Insight:** The ability to see clearly and to understand our own motivations allows for the possibility of personal growth. Insight into others makes us more empowered in our relationships.

- **Mental Flexibility:** Ability to alter one’s mind or to see things from different points of view makes it possible for us to navigate all sorts of relationships where other more rigid thinkers would fail.

- **Compassion:** seeing the truth with kind and gentle attitude is much easier. Compassion towards us facilitates personal transformation, and compassion toward others supports deeper, more loving connections.

- **Integrity:** Keeping one’s commitments and promises creates good-will in our personal and professional relationships, promoting success in both areas.

- **Impulse Control:** Thinking before speaking or acting gives us a chance to make deliberate, even sophisticated choices about how you present ourselves to others. Not acting on primitive
impulses, urges or emotion prevents social consequences.

- **Deferring Gratification**: Empowered individuals are able to tolerate waiting for the things they want. Mastery of our needs allows us to prioritize around life goals.

- **Perseverance**: Sticking with something, especially when it’s challenging, allow us to see it through to completion as well as demonstrating to others that you’re dependable and potentially a high achiever.

- **Courage**: Emotional courage (as opposed to the physical variety) enables us to do the right thing, see the truth, open our heart and trust ourselves enough to be vulnerable despite any fears. Others hold you in high regard, as a result. All these elements combine within us to make up our emotional intelligence.

According to Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, (2000) ‘there are two general approaches to conceptualize Emotional intelligence; an ability models and a mixed models. They propose the four branches to describe EI as an ability as-

a. perceive emotions in oneself and others accurately,

b. use emotions to facilitate thinking,

c. understand emotions, emotional language, and six signals conveyed by emotions, and

d. Manage emotions to attain specific goals” (Mayer et al., 2008, p.4).

Entertainment has emerged as the driving force behind people’s addiction of Smartphone. The digital content sharing and broadcasting habits have glued growing number of social media users in India to their device. Growing evidence suggests that Addictive Smartphone technologies are damaging not just attention spans and cognitive capacities; they’re causing anxiety and depression. Further, with craving for social approval and affirmation in the form of “likes”, “hearts”, love ‘emojies’ and other small mood-boosters, had made social media sites such as face book, instagram, likee and snapchat etc, very popular among its users to an extent of making them addicted to its. At the same time, the social media and chat sites’ devisor architects play with the emotions of the users as they know that too much of a punchy good thing quickly become dull thus devising complex algorithms tailored to each user’s feeds such that the happy stuff alternate with stuff that makes them relaxed, exciting, sad, panic, angry, and wistful. Lengthy scroll down facebook account potentially take one through a gamut of emotions - similar to talking to a close friend or going to a party. All these have a grave impact on the emotional state of the user (Neeraj, 2017).

In the studies by Griffiths (1999), Shaffer, (1996), Barashdi & Hafidha, (2015) is was exemplified that Smart Technological addiction involving extreme human-machine interaction makes people dependent on the device to reduce negative mood states or increase positive consequences. Researchers suggests EI to have an influence on internet technologies and smartphone usage (Engelberg & Sjoberg, 2004; Kun & Demetovaics, 2010; Parker et al (2208); Rozin, Taylor, Ross, Bennett, & Hejmadi, 2003). EI has been found to be negatively associated with preference for online social interaction also associated with more online duration and a preference for online social interaction to real face-to-face interaction (Casale, Tella, and Fioravanti, 2012). In addition, emotion management skills being a predictor of higher levels of Internet addiction, loss of control, persisting in a negative behavior despite the consequences, and a craving or compulsion in terms of Internet use (Oktan, 2011). Kaiser (2018) found ‘significant correlation between Smartphone usage and emotional intelligence, productive smartphone usage was found to be positively associated with relationship satisfaction, while problem smartphone usage as negatively associated with relationship satisfaction.

Wills, Pokhrel, Morehouse, & Fenster, 2011 found that poor emotional regulation in adolescents is associated with problem behaviors; Internet addicts are more likely to have problems with decoding facial expressions differentiation as well as the regulation of emotions (Engelberg & Sjoberg, 2004; Kun & Demetovaics, 2010). Furthermore, individuals having difficulties in coping with negative emotions easily prone to the Internet and smart mobiles (Kun & Demetovaics, 2010). In general, individuals with lower emotional intelligence illustrate lesser physical and psychological well-being along with higher risk of developing Smart phone addictions (Beranuy, Oberst, Carbonell, & Chamarro, 2009; Engelberg & Sjoberg, 2004; Parker et al., 2008). Such findings have implications for both Smartphone usage and emotional intelligence can impact social relationship and their satisfaction (Beranuy et al., 2009; Kun & Demetovaics, 2010).

**CONCLUSION**

Thus, Smartphone is pervasive in the lives of individuals, institutions, and societies all over the world, so in India. The recent decades have witnessed a dramatic increase in the use of the Smartphone usage which become a common instrument daily living of almost everyone and have a significant influence on quality of life. There are generation of students, who grew up with the Internet and Smartphone. Since its inception, it is generally acknowledged that its appearance, not only brings convenience to mankind, but also may cause a great deal of potential problems. There is a large body of research spanning several domains, disciplines, and approaches that has investigated’ use of technology, but very less work has focused on studying the dominance of Smartphone-users in various factors of lifestyle. Therefore, there is a
critical need to have standardized and more reliable research in this area as a way of advancing the Smartphone usage and providing an insight to determine discrepancy in the studies on whether Smartphone addiction is responsible for loneliness or loneliness leads to excessive use of Smartphone, similarly emotional Intelligence is responsible for loneliness or loneliness leads to excessive use of Smartphone or vice-versa. So, there is a need of more study and researches on Smartphone addiction and its impact on various spheres of life, because it is related to lives of everyone.

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