

УДК 316.613

Elizaveta A. Logvinenko

Student at the Faculty of Pedagogy, Psychology and Communicative Studies

Kuban State University

Russia, Krasnodar

Valeria A. Malutina

Student at the Faculty of Pedagogy, Psychology and Communicative Studies

Kuban State University

Russia, Krasnodar

Tatiana V. Volkodav

Ph.D., MA in Pedagogy and Psychology, associate professor

in the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology

and the Department of English Philology

Kuban State University

Russia, Krasnodar

SOCIAL ISOLATION AS A FACTOR OF SMARTPHONE ADDICTION IN ADOLESCENTS

Abstract

The article is devoted to the problem of studying the adults' smartphone addiction caused by the lack of real life communication. The research attempts to establish the correlation between smartphone addiction and loneliness in adolescents on the basis of the survey, attended by N= 61 young people (F=37, M=24) aged from 18 to 23 years old, who live in Krasnodar Region.

Keywords: *smartphone addiction, loneliness, adolescents, relationship, users.*

Introduction

Loneliness is the unpleasant experience that occurs when a person's network of social relations is deficient in some important way [1, c. 31]. According to Robert Weiss, an American psychologist and therapist, loneliness is an occasional acute experience of anxiety and tension associated with an unsatisfied desire to have a friendly or intimate relationship [2, c.3]. People feel lonely when their relationship with others is not at the desired level. This feeling of loneliness makes them feel unhappy, especially during their youth [3].

In many countries, smartphone addiction has been studied in correlation with loneliness. The results of these studies have shown that the long-term use of the smartphone entails negative consequences. In a recent study, researchers from Korea found out that smartphones satisfy both functional (primary) and emotional needs of users. They sometimes influence user intention and behavior through the interaction between the user and product [4, c. 563]. According to another study, which was conducted by the Chinese psychologist Motoharu Takao in 2009, lonely people tend to maintain daily contact with their peers through calls to make up for their social loneliness [5]. In 2012 Korean researchers Boraе Jin and Namkee Park from the Yonsei University confirmed that if a person is sociable, i.e., often interacts with other people face to face, he has a low level of loneliness. Therefore, a person who prefers to communicate via his smartphone has a high level of loneliness [6, c. 3].

The results of another study, conducted by American Psychologists Robert Kraut and Michael Patterson, showed that introverts, who often use the Internet and other smartphone functions, turn out to be lonely. They have more negative emotions than positive ones as well as a low self-esteem. The researchers emphasize that long-term use of the Internet leads to a decrease in the relationship between family members, which is accompanied by an increase in depression [7, c. 1025]. Thus, many people are very lonely, even if they are constantly among other people. For this reason, young people are immersed in a

virtual world where they can communicate in social networks, exchange messages, watch videos, listen to music, etc., trying to fill the emptiness in their social life. Adolescents tend to think they are not alone. As a result, they gradually become addicted to smartphones.

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted on the basis of educational institutes and colleges of Krasnodar Region (Russia) using an online survey, which consists of 15 questions (Table 1). The purpose of the current survey is to establish the correlation between smartphone addiction and social loneliness of adolescents. The subjects of the research include 61 respondents aged from 18 to 23 years old. The total number of the respondents is 37 female students (60,7%) and 24 male students (39,3%).

Table 1. Questionnaire “Loneliness and social isolation as a factor of smartphone addiction in adolescents”

Question	Possible answer	Percentage
1. Sex	<i>1) female</i>	60,7%
	<i>2) male</i>	39,3%
2. Age	<i>1) 18-20</i>	72,1%
	<i>2) 21-23</i>	23%
	<i>3) 24 +</i>	4,9%
3. How often do you use a smartphone every day?	<i>1) rarely (by necessity)</i>	3,2%
	<i>2) 1~3 hours a day</i>	8,2%
	<i>3) only in my free time</i>	14,8%
	<i>4) most of the time</i>	54,1%
	<i>5) constantly</i>	19,7%
4. If you were alone with a stranger, what would you prefer, a smartphone or a talk with a stranger?	<i>1) a smartphone</i>	68,9%
	<i>2) a talk with a stranger</i>	31,1%
5. How often do you get distracted by a smartphone when you are in the company of friends?	<i>1) constantly</i>	14,8%
	<i>2) sometimes</i>	80,3%
	<i>3) I turn off my phone when I'm in the company of friends</i>	4,9%
6. How would you prefer to watch a film, in a movie with a friend or through a smartphone at home alone?	<i>1) in a movie with a friend</i>	73,8%
	<i>2) at home alone</i>	26,2%
7. What makes you feel more comfortable, communication through a smartphone or a real life conversation?	<i>1) communication via a smartphone</i>	42,6%
	<i>2) a real life conversation</i>	57,4%
8. Do your friends get offended when you	<i>1) no</i>	37,7%

are distracted by a smartphone while communicating with them?	2) <i>yes</i> 3) <i>it distracts them</i>	21,3% 41%
9. Do you use your smartphone as a remedy for loneliness?	1) <i>yes</i> 2) <i>no</i> 3) <i>sometimes</i>	44,3% 21,3% 34,4%
10. What would you choose, communication with your family or your smartphone?	1) <i>smartphone</i> 2) <i>family</i>	13,1% 86,9%
11. What do you usually choose, communicating with your family or checking your smartphone?	1) <i>family</i> 2) <i>smartphone</i>	63,9% 36,1%
12. Do you consider people who choose to spend most of their time checking their smartphones, to be lonely?	1) <i>yes</i> 2) <i>no</i> 3) <i>I don't know</i>	27,9% 29,5% 42,6%
13. Do you feel lonely using your smartphone?	1) <i>yes</i> 2) <i>no</i> 3) <i>sometimes</i>	21,3% 34% 44,3%
14. Do you notice that sometimes you surf the Internet aimlessly (constantly checking email, updating the news on the social network, etc.)?	1) <i>yes</i> 2) <i>no</i> 3) <i>sometimes</i>	82% 1,6% 16,4%
15. How long could you survive without gadgets and the Internet?	1) <i>not a minute</i> 2) <i>one day</i> 3) <i>two days</i> 4) <i>a week</i> 5) <i>month</i> 6) <i>half a year</i>	14,8% 44,3% 11,5% 21,3% 4,9% 3,2%

Results and conclusion

After analyzing the data obtained in the course of the study, it was found that 19.7% of the respondents are constantly using a smartphone or checking it most of the time (54.1%). It is noteworthy that only two respondents (3,2%) use a smartphone only if necessary. According to the results of the survey, 82% of the participants reported that they spend time aimlessly surfing the Internet, for example, constantly checking emails, updating the news on the social network, etc.

Additionally, it was interesting to find out whether the respondents themselves are able to understand their addiction. It should be noted that a small percentage of the adolescents surveyed (8.5%) is ready to give up their smartphones for more than a week. The survey showed that 14.8% of respondents admitted that they cannot survive without a smartphone even for a

minute. These results indicate that the majority of people surveyed have a vital need for gadgets; they are immersed in the virtual world and escape from the real-life problems and responsibilities.

When choosing between communicating with a stranger and a smartphone, many respondents (68,9%) opted for the latter, which indicates that today's young people are less likely to come into contact with the outside world. Furthermore, 80,3% of the respondents admitted that sometimes they are distracted by a smartphone when communicating with friends. Moreover, young people who took part in the survey, have communication problems in the real world. Nevertheless, 4,9% of the respondents turn off their phones when communicating with friends.

It should be noted that only 21,3% of the participants refuse to use a smartphone as a remedy for loneliness; the rest resort to the phone to protect themselves from loneliness. According to the results obtained, 13,3% of the respondents usually spend more time checking their smartphones instead of communicating with the family. In other words, some adolescents are not interested in spending their free time with relatives.

Thus, the study has established a certain correlation between the two variables (loneliness and a smartphone) in adolescents. Therefore, social loneliness is one of the factors that lead to smartphone addiction.

References

1. Perlman D., Peplau L.A. Toward a Social Psychology of Loneliness. *Personal Relationships: 3. Relationships in Disorder*. London: Academic Press. – 1981. – С. 31-56
2. Weiss R. S. (1989). Reflections on the Present State of Loneliness Research. *Loneliness: Theory, research, and Applications*. – 1989. С. 1-16

3. Teppers E., Luyckx K., Klimstra T.A., Goossens L. Loneliness and Facebook motives in adolescence: A longitudinal inquiry into directionality of effect // Journal of Adolescence. – 2014. – Retrieved from URL: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4857285/>
4. Jin B.S., Yoon S.H., Ji Y.G. Development of a Continuous Usage Model for the Adoption and Continuous Usage of a Smartphone // Journal of Human – Computer Interaction. – 2013. – №29. С. 563 – 581
5. Takao M., Takahashi S., Kitamura M. Addictive personality and problematic mobile phone use // CyberPsychology & Behavior. – 2009. – Retrieved from URL: <https://clck.ru/EnAwb>
6. Jin B., Park N. Mobile voice communication and loneliness: Cell phone use and the social skills deficit hypothesis // New Media & Society. – 2012. – №0(0). С. 1-18
7. Kraut P., Patterson M., Lundmark V., Kiesler S., Mukopadhyay T., Scherlis W. Internet paradox: a social technology that reduces social involvement and psychological well-being? // American Psychologist. – 1998. – №53(9). С. 1017-1031