

Original Research Article

Expressed Views of Parents Regarding the Use of Mobile Phones and Its Impact on Mental Health among their Children – Grounded Theory Approach

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Abstract: A qualitative study on expressed views of parents regarding the use of mobile phones and its impact on mental health among their children in selected urban area of Panipat.” The methodology adopted in this study was the qualitative research approach and, grounded theory a type of qualitative research design was adopted. Sampling technique adopted for this study was non – probability method and purposive sampling technique was used. The data analysis of this study was done by using Strauss and Corbin’s coding method. The following themes were identified through data analysis in the study are as follows, Mobile phones are indispensable in children, age limit of minimum 12 years to own a phone, psychosocial impacts of mobile phone use such as disruptive scholastic performance, maladaptive communications, smart phone dependency, social media significance, parental supervision and rule of thumb. The study concluded. Parents have health conscious on psychosocial impacts of mobile phone of mental health of children’s.

Keywords: Views, Parents, Mobile Phone, Mental Health, Impact, Psychosocial Issues, mobile phone dependency, mobile phone addiction.

INTRODUCTION

Since the appearance of the cell phone, the anomalous use of this device has called into question whether the abuse of its use could lead to addiction. This problem is identical to the one regarding the existence of behavioural addictions as opposed to substance addictions [1]. The existence of cell-phone addiction, as opposed to it being the manifestation of an impulsivity disorder, has been questioned without necessarily considering the concept of addiction [2].

Mobile phones are considered to be an important part of one’s lifestyle today. Parents provide small children with cell phones, maybe under the mistaken assumption of keeping a check on them, but it may prove to be more harmful than good. There are evidences that point to the fact that cell phone usage has the potential to not only cause physical effects which range from headache to dysaesthesiae of the scalp, but also addiction like any other substance [3].

Mobile phone growth in India has been fast and it has reached all segments of society, especially the young [4]. There have been situations where the mobile phone usage among the young has been seen as problematic by the surrounding people. In recent years, a psychological problem which results from the excessive use of mobile phones which is called “Ringxiety” has been reported. It is a condition where individuals hear the phone ringing when it actually hasn’t, which is also called “phantom ringing [5]. It has been estimated that 25% of the mobile phone users in India could be suffering from this disorder [6]. Excessive mobile phone use has been found to be associated with headache, stress, sleep disturbances and depression [7].

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Need for the Study

The current generation is the first generation of children growing up with mobile devices from birth (Radesky, Schumacher, & Zuckerman, 2015); hence, no empirical longitudinal data exist on the long term effects of mobile device usage on children's development. A review of the literature on both mobile devices and social interaction practices indicated that, although mobile communication is becoming more prominent, what is not known is the extent to which social competency is affected by the way mobile devices are being used [8].

Parents play an important role in modelling, monitoring, and regulating mobile device usage to ensure it is done in an appropriately meaningful way. However, research on parental monitoring so far has focused more on strategies parents can use to monitor, limit, and regulate online activities, and less on how parental monitoring affects psychosocial outcomes [9].

The study asked the following research questions:

- For what purposes do children utilize their parents' mobile phones?
- How frequently and for how long do children use their mobile phones?
- What parents perceives regarding their children mental health in relation to the mobile phone use.
- How the parents do looks at the effect of mobile phone use on children psychological, physiological and social health aspects?

Statement of the Problem

A Qualitative Study On Expressed Views Of Parents Regarding The Use Of Mobile Phones And Its Impact On Mental Health Among Their Children In Selected Urban Areas In Panipat, Haryana.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the parents view about the use of mobile phones by their children.
2. To assess the impacts of mobile phones on children's mental health.

METHODOLOGY

For the present study, the researcher used qualitative research approach. The research design used in this study was grounded theory. In the present study, the samples were selected from 'Sukdev Nagar' – Panipat Haryana. Sample size of this study was 11. Samples were selected by means of non – probability sampling technique in which purposive sampling method. Data were collected through in – depth interview field notes and observation method. The collected qualitative data were analysed on the basis of Strauss and Corbin's coding system.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table I: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Samples According to Socio – Demographic Variables (N = 11)

S. No	Socio – Demographic Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Age (Years)		
	a. 35 – 40	7	63.63
	b. 41 – 45	3	27.28
	c. 46 - 50	1	9.09
2.	Gender		
	a. Male b. Female	4 7	36.36 63.34
3.	Relation to Child		
	a. Father b. Mother	4 7	36.36 63.64
4.	Education of parents		
	a. Diploma b. Graduate / Post - Graduate	5 6	45.46 54.54
5.	Number of children		
	a. One b. Two c. More than two	4 4 3	36.36 36.36 27.28
	7.	Type of mobile owned	
a. Simple phone b. Smart / android c. Apple i-phone		0 8 3	0 72.72 27.28
8.		Phone owned by their children	
	a. Yes b. No	4 7	36.36 63.64

9.	Previous knowledge regarding impact of mobile phone on mental health of children		
	a. Yes	11	100.00
	b. No	0	0.00

Table 1 shows the distribution of samples in the study according to socio demographic variables. With regard to age majority of the samples 7 (63.63%) were in age group between 35 – 40 years. Majority of the samples were females 7 (63.63%), and they are mothers of the children’s. With regard to educational status of the parents majority of them 6 (63.54%) were graduate / post – graduates. Equal number of parents 4 (36.36%) were having one and two number of children respectively. Majority of the samples 8 (72.72%) were having smart phones at home rest of them were having an Apple I Phone. Number of children’s having their own mobile phones were less 4 (36.36%) All the samples in the study had previous knowledge regarding impacts of mobile phone on children’s mental health.

Table II: Themes and Subthemes of the Study

Objectives	Themes	Sub themes
1. To assess the parents view about the use of mobile phone’s by their children. 2. To assess the impact of mobile phone’s on children’s mental health	Theme – I: Indispensable	1. Practicality 2. Necessity 3. Responsibility 4. Games 5. Social communications 6. Studies 7. Safety 8. Connectivity
	Theme – II: Age limits	1. Safety Reasons 2. 12 years is most appropriate 3. Depends on Child IQ level
	Theme – III: Psychosocial Impacts	1. Impairs emotional development 2. Increase impulsivity 3. Outrageous anti-social behaviour 4. Sleep deprivation 5. Impaired communication skills
	Theme – IV: Disruptive Scholastic Performance	1. Disturbed brain activity 2. Academic malpractice 3. Inattention 4. Trouble at school 5. Peer pressure 6. Classroom disruptions 7. Inappropriate behaviour
	Theme – V: Maladaptive Communication	1. Communication gap 2. Clash and conflict 3. Less reliable information
	Theme – VI: Parental Supervision	1. Trust 2. Freedom 3. Supportive 4. Out of control
	Theme – VII: Social Media Significance	1. Hobbies 2. Spree spending 3. Knowledge upgrading 4. Communication 5. Prestige
	Theme – VIII: Smart Phone Dependency	1. Addiction and dependence 2. Nomophobia 3. Ringxiety 4. Infertility 5. Text neck syndrome 6. Brain tumors 7. Sensory impairments 8. Relaxation exercises 9. Counselling and Guidance
	Theme – IX: Rule of Thumb	1. Put your phone away 2. Use your cell phone for important calls only 3. Deny access to illegitimate site

Section – IV: Grounded Theory Emerged from Parents Views Regarding Children’s Using Mobile Phone and Its Impact on Mental Health

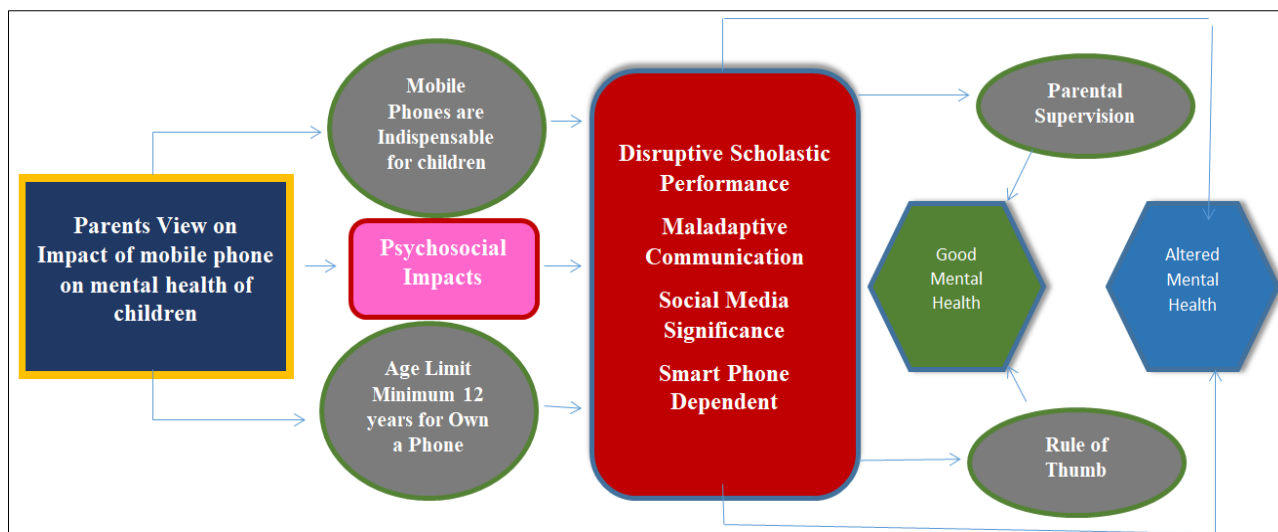


Figure 1: Schematic Representation of Concept: Grounded Theory

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study were discussed according with the supportive literatures according to the supportive studies.

Parent’s Views on Impact of mobile phone on children’s mental health

Majority of the samples in the study expressed their views on keeping mobile phones at home for their children’s need. Most of them agreed with the importance of having a mobile phone for the day to day life of children. These samples also stated their children’s needs mobile phone for various reasons in a day which includes, to communicate with their parents when they are not near to them, these children’s also need mobile phones for fun and entertainment. Some parents stated that mobile phones were used as an education tool for their children’s. Parent’s viewed these mobile phones helps the children to develop fine motor moments while they touch it physically.

The findings of the above studies were similar to the study done by Seong-Soo Cha and Bo-Kyung Seo (2018) study aimed to examine smartphone use patterns, smartphone addiction characteristics, and the predictive factors of the smartphone addiction in middle school students in South Korea. Study results revealed the adolescents used mobile messengers for the longest, followed by Internet surfing, gaming, and social networking service use [10].

Parents View on Psychosocial impacts of mobile phone on mental health of children

In this study parents viewed that more psychosocial problems could arise among children’s who use mobile phones without control. They also opined their view that children’s daily engaging in with mobile phones has more risk for creating dependency and addiction problems. They found some children have lost their ability to think independently and took decision in life when using mobile phones for a prolonged period of time. Parents told most common behaviour changes noticed in all children were anger, impulsivity, poor time management, avoiding responsibilities and feeling of loneliness when they were out of mobile phones.

Findings of the present study, which was supported by the study done by Thomee S (2018) the purpose of this study was to carry out a review of observational studies that consider links between mobile phone use and mental health from a psychological or behavioral perspective. The main research results included associations between frequent mobile phone use and mental health outcomes, such as depressive symptoms and sleep problems. Mobile phone use at bedtime was associated with, e.g., shorter sleep duration and lower sleep quality. “Problematic use” (dependency) was associated with several negative outcomes [11].

CONCLUSION

Parents have more awareness and knowledge regarding the impacts of mobile phones on mental health of children’s. They face trouble in controlling these problems among children at home most often. Majority of the parents are having health conscious about the ill – effects that would occur physically, psychologically and socially among children’s due to mobile phone use. They also feel there should be a age limit for every children to own their own

phones. Almost all the parents who participated in the study stated that schools should provide counselling for the children to prevent these problems at earlier stages.

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