Phenomenological Study : No Mobile Phone Phobia (Nomophobia) at Junior High School's Students

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Abstract: *Background: One form of current technological development is the smartphone. Initially,smartphones were only used by adults, but in this modern era, many teenagers use smartphones. One of the positive impacts of smartphones for school-age youth is being able to find learning materials easily and being able to communicate remotely with teachers, while the excessive use of smartphones has a negative impact, both physically and psychologically. Another bad impact is nomophobia. Nomophobia or commonly known by the abbreviation "No Mobile Phone Phobia" or the disease can not be far from a mobile phone. Nomophobia is also defined as a feeling of anxiety when kept away from a sartphone. Objective: To find out the experienceof nomophobia in adolescents at SMP 1 Gebog Kudus. Method: The type of research used is qualitative research using a phenomenological approach. The selection of participants was carried out using a purposive sampling method. The participants in this study were 5 teenagers at SMP N 1 Gebog Kudus. Data collection techniques in this study were observation, interviewsand documentation, with 14 open-ended questions. Data analysis techniques used in this study include: 1)Reading and Re-reading; 2)Initial Notes; 3)Developing Emergent Themes; 4)Searching for Connections a Cross Emergent Themes; 5)Moving the Next Cases; 6)Looking for Patterns Across Cases; and 7)Taking Interpretations to Deeper Levels. Research results: Based on the research analysis, there are 4 main themes, namely: (1)Dominant activities in spare time,(2)The emergence of emotional disturbances, (3)As entertainment when lonely, and (4)Being an important part of life. Conclusion: Smartphone is a very important communication tool for teenagers.*

Keywords: *Teenager, Nomophobia, Smartphone.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Smartphone users in Indonesia are growing at a rapid pace. Indonesia is the country with the fourth largest active *smartphone users in* the world after China, India, andAmerica (Rahmayani, 2022). Globally, the growth of smartphone users in the world asreported by *Stock Apps* reached 5.3 billion in July 2021. This number represents morethan half of the earth's total population of around 7.9 billion with a percentage of 67 percent. Based on a report from research company *Data Reportal* (2022), the number ofconnected mobile devices in Indonesia reached 370.1 million. This number increased by 13 million or 3.6 per cent from the same period in the previous year. (Adisty, 2022; Hindriyastuti & Zuliana, 2018).

Smartphones have positive and negative impacts (Adisty, 2022). One of the positive impacts of *smartphones* for school-age adolescents is that they can find learning materialseasily and can communicate remotely with teachers, while excessive use of *smartphoneshas a* negative impact, both physically and psychologically. Mental impact arise if *smartphones* are used excessively such as *Nomophobia,* which has recently become one of the concerns of the whole world. *Nomophobia* or commonly known by the abbreviation *"No Mobile Phone Phobia"* or thedisease where someone cannot stay away from *mobile phones*. *Nomophobia is*

also defined as a feeling of anxiety due to the unavailability of devices such as computers or virtual communication devices.

This study aims to explore how *Nomophobia* affect students of a Junior High School in Kudus during their school' activities.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The activity of using *smartphones* is a habit that is considered as a normal situation for many people. People do not realising excessive use of them will cause various impacts on them (Fadhilah et al., 2021). Based on the results of previous research conducted by Riyanti *et al.* (2021) shows thatalmost half of adolescents experience severe nomophobia because of this excessive use on them. Some of the opinions described by several experts, concluded that the main causes of *nomophobia* include lack of tolerance, difficulty controlling impulses,escaping from existing problems, and negative consequences for daily life.

According to research Aprilia *et al.* (2022) most adolescents experience severe *nomophobia*. This also agrees with research by Widyastuti and Muyana (2018) who said that most adolescents experience *nomophobia* in the high category. This is the background that *nomophobia is* very dangerous and even occurs in most teenagers today.Researcher Rabathy (2018) suggests that the lifestyle of a *nomophobic* basically leads toconsumptive behaviour in order to satisfy the desire to connect with his social media andthe influence of the immediate environment.

Riyanti *et al.* (2021) suggested that health education interventions be given about theimpact of *nomophopia*, diverting the use of *smartphones* for learning activities. The success of the study Aprilia *et al.* (2022) in an effort to reduce student *nomophobia is* done through a reality approach in group counselling. It is also evidenced that during classtime there are no more students playing *smartphones*, there are no more students playing*smartphones* during empty hours or recess, students who are often late are also gone because they have started to get used to going to bed early, assignments are diligently done, no more skipping class hours.

3. METHODS

This research is a qualitative research. This phenomenon research used a qualitative approach with descriptive research method, which is a method used to describe a situation or certain population area that is factual in a systematic or accurate manner according to Rabathy (2018). This qualitative research was conducted to find out the experience of nomophobia in adolescents at SMP N 1 Gebog Kudus. The selection of participants was carried out using

purposive sampling method. The research subjects in this study were 5 adolescents of SMP N 1 Gebog Kudus. Data collection techniques in this study were observation, interview and documentation. The data sources in this study consisted of primary data and secondary data. Primary data is taken from direct observation and interviews with children who experience *smartphone* addiction, while secondary data is taken from theories derived from journals. The validity of the data used in this study is from the researcher (Smith, 2009): 1) Degree of trust (Conducting discussions (*Peer Debriefing)* and Triangulation (*check-recheck*)); 2) *Transferability*; and 3) *Dependability*. The data analysis techniques used in this research include: 1)*Reading* and *Re-reading*; 2)Initial *Noting*; 3)*Developing Emergent Themes;* 4)*Searching for Connections Across Emergent Themes;* 5)*Moving the Next Cases;* 6)*Looking for* Patterns *Across Cases*; and 7)*Taking Interpretations to Deeper Levels*.

Ethical Clearance

This research has fulfilled the principles stated in the *Standards and Operational Guidance for Ethics Review of Health-Related Research with Human Participants* from WHO 2011 and *Intenational Ethical Guidance for Health-Related Research Involving Humans* from CIOMS and WHO 2016. This research has passed the research ethics test at the Research Ethics Commission at Ngudi Waluyo University with Ethics Number: 25/KEP/EC/UNW/2023.

4. RESULTS

The participants in this study are students of SMP N 1 Gebog who have *nomophobia* characteristics. A total of 5 (five) participants in this study. The complete participant characteristics are presented in the table as follows:

Table 1. Participant Characteristics

Category	Age	Gender	Status
P1	14 th	Women	Students
P2	15 th	Women	Students
P3	15 th	Male	Students
P4	13 th	Women	Students
P5	14 th	Women	Students

Based on the results of the interviews conducted by the researcher about the experience of *nomophobia* in participants, the researcher identified the description of theinterview results in 4 main themes, namely 1) the dominant activity in leisure time; 2) theemergence of emotional disturbances; 3) as entertainment when lonely; and 4) animportant part of life. The themes generated in this study are discussed separately, but they are interconnected with each other to explain the experience of *nomophobia* duringthe participants' lifetime.

a. Theme 1: Dominant Leisure Activities

The high usage of *smartphones* causes some people to focus more on their mobiledevices and ignore others around them when gathering. Playing *smartphones* is a dominant leisure activity for all groups today, especially teenagers. The results showedthat all participants spent a lot of time with *smartphones for* hours and even all day just spending time with their *smartphones,* making their free time the dominant activityof playing *smartphones*.

In their free time at school and at home, participants use their activities to play *smartphones*. Most of all participants use their *smartphones* at night. This is supportedby the statements of the second and fifth participants:

"...At school, usually <u>in between class periods</u>, then during breaks or not afterschool and then in the <u>evening it opens again </u>like that..." (P2)

"...I play my mobile phone <u>in </u>my <u>spare time, </u>like at school during breaks or when the teacher hasn't come yet. If I'm at home, I'm free <u>at home so I have a </u><u>lot of free time</u>..." (P5)

This is reinforced by the statements of the third and fourth participants who tendto actively use *smartphones* at night and study less on holidays:

"...<u>Just free time</u>. If there is no work at home, it's usually <u>late at night</u>. If not,<u>from school until night</u>..." (P3)

"...Yes, sometimes if at school you are told by the teacher or mother to look forwhat is like eeem assignment information, you look for it on your mobile phone,then at home it is for entertainment but that's if you have <u>free time and at nightit's really free</u>..." (P4)

All participants spend a lot of time with *smartphones* for hours and even all day just spending time with *their smartphones*. This was revealed by the first participant who uses a *smartphone* almost every day for hours:

"...Yes, it can be up to <u>5 hours more</u>......................" (P1)

"...I use my mobile phone almost every day for hours and can forget the time when I'm on holiday and when I wake up in the morning I also use it. So whenI start and end my activities, I open my mobile phone..." (P1)

Furthermore, the second, third, fourth and fifth participants also stated the samething:
"...Often, eem I can almost 1 day can be 8 hours especially if the school holidayis up to 10 hours more. The problem is when I'm at school, I don't play mobilephones all the time..." (P2)

"...Mostly around 7 to 6 hours if it's a holiday..." (P3)

"...I use my mobile phone for about 7 hours in my free time and at night in aday if it's a weekday, but if it's a holiday it can be 10/11 hours in a day..." (P4)

"...Emmm quite often, approximately 8 to 10 hours yes, you can hold a mobilephone for up to 2 hours..." (P5)

b. Theme 2: The Emergence of Emotional Disturbance

Nomophobia can bring about emotional disturbances in the form of mixed feelings, anxiety, restlessness, loss, discomfort, or sadness caused by not being in contact with a *smartphone*. Feelings of anxiety will arise when the *smartphone* is not nearby. Even though the *smartphone* does not show any notifications. *Nomophobia* refers to the fear of not having mobile phone connectivity. So that it can cause panic or anxiety for people who experience it It is reinforced by the second participant's statement:
"...I feel really anxious like something is missing. Restlessness, people are usedto holding mobile phones but one day they don't hold it is really strange..." (P2)

Feelings of anxiety and restlessness when not in contact with *smartphones* or awayfrom *smartphones were* also experienced by the first, second and fifth participants whostated:
"...Like people are anxious because they are not used to it..." (P1)

"...Yes, a little anxious, restless, yes..." (P3)

"...Make sure we hold our mobile phones every day. So if you're away from your mobile phone, you feel anxious like something is missing, you've been holding your mobile phone all day, if

*you don't use your mobile phone for a day, it's just like how it **is**..." (P5)*

The quote above describes the participant's negative emotions in the form of feelings of anxiety and restlessness. In addition to the anxiety and restlessness experienced, the first participant also experienced a sense of loneliness and panic when not in contact with a *smartphone* or away from *his smartphone*. This was expressed by him:

"...Just loneliness, then panic confusion..." (P1)

The number of emotional disturbances that arise when not in contact with *smartphones* or kept away from *smartphones* makes participants unaccustomed and feel like they are missing something in their lives, this was expressed by the fourth participant:

"...Yes, sometimes there is a sense of loss, like every day you hold your mobilephone, how come you don't even hold it for a day, sometimes it feels like something, not used to it, like anxiety..." (P4)

c. **Theme 3: As Entertainment when Lonely**

Nomophobia can also arise from the fear of loneliness or the fear of losing othersif not constantly connected. The desire to use *smartphones* as entertainment is a distraction from the loneliness that can trigger *nomophobia*. This was expressed by thefourth and fifth participants:

"...Because I don't like to expose my daily life, but sometimes I feel lonely so ifI want to see entertainment I use social media like watching YouTube, scrollingtik tok, watching Instagram. But I rarely upload myself on social media, if I seesocial media, I often do..." (P4)

"...I can't, because my entertainment is mobile phones, I feel lonely without mymobile phone..." (P5)

Not only for entertainment when feeling bored and lonely, but the desire to immediately open a *smartphone* even though only checking a *smartphone* that has nointerest is also expressed by the fourth and fifth participants:

"...Yes, often too, especially when I have free time, then I feel bored, lonely, well, I often open my mobile phone incoherently..." (P4)

"...I wanted to open my mobile phone quickly because I was lonely..." (P5)

Even the second participant still uses *his smartphone* while it is still *charging* justto see the

entertainment on *his smartphone*, he revealed:

"...No, hehe, if I don't have work, I look at my friend's mobile phone if they arescrolling tik tok, I usually follow them, but if I'm doing assignments, I do it anyway, but sometimes even though I'm doing the answers, I look for them onGoogle, so if I don't have my mobile phone, <u>I'm confused about finding the answers myself, so when I'm on the charger I also still have time to use it to find answers or just open my mobile phone for entertainment</u>..." (P2)

Likewise, in the case of a *smartphone* in bed or must be accessible from the grip during sleep. So that making *smartphones* is entertainment for lullabies for the first and third participants:

"...Yes, it's a <u>lullaby like scrolling tik tok before bed, then when I'm lonely so Idon't get bored</u>, then to see the world, it means I can update the latest things..."(P1)

"...Often, <u>before going to bed I often play games, check WhatsApp, other socialmedia, but most often scroll tik tok </u>anyway..." (P3)

d. Theme 4: Being an Important Part of Life

Keeping a *smartphone* always active within 24 hours is a natural thing for those who have work on the *smartphone*. But it is different for those who do not have an interest in *smartphones* so that making *smartphones* is an important habit in their dailylives and makes half of their soul, as expressed by the second and fifth participants.

"...It'<u>s really important like earlier as if it's half my soul</u>, because it's for communication, if I'<u>m really stressed, it can be used for entertainment, find outnews info, anyway, what we are, I'm really dependent on mobile phones </u>lah..."(P2)

"...I think it's important, it's <u>really important </u>because all information is on smartphones for entertainment, making friends, finding information, and fillingspare time, everything can be on smartphones. It <u>has become what is an</u> <u>important daily life ...</u>" (P5)

This was also expressed by the second participant who made the *smartphone* an important thing in his life that was never far from his hand.

"...Yes, that's why <u>my smartphone is never far from my hand</u>. Even if I don't hold it, I definitely feel that I can hear the incoming notifications clearly, butsometimes I hear it wrong..." (P2)

The second participant also revealed that nowadays everything depends on *smartphones*

and teenagers have a higher desire to find new things on *mobile phones* than parents. This was expressed by her:

"...It can't be sis. The problem is that nowadays, who doesn't use a mobilephone? Nowadays we really depend on mobile phones, it's important. Even old people still have mobile phones and play mobile phones, let alone me who isstill young, there are many new things on mobile phones hehehe..." (P2)

For the fourth participant, the *smartphone* is an important entertainment tool to relieve boredom:

"...Hmm, what is it, it is important for entertainment, it can relieve boredom, right if there is no one at home or no friends, it can help boredom to scroll tiktok, or look at YouTube..." (P4)

Not only for entertainment, *smartphones* provide social media to make it easier for someone to access the latest information and make someone's socialisation increase, making social media an important thing in someone's life. As expressed by the first, second, and third participants:

"...Yes, for news updates, entertainment too, like WA is social media, who doesn't use WA nowadays? For long-distance communication, we need socialmedia. So I think social media is important..." (P1)

"...It's important because what we get information from outside is because of social media. News that is excited from social media, news that is just viral right now, life updates from social media..." (P2)

"...It's not important, but WA is important, right, including social media, yes, all information is from WA, eh not really, there is also from Google. I have social media for entertainment, just scroll and get info like that..." (P3

But with the existence of social media that can spoil someone, social media also makes someone lazy. Making work in the real world not only delayed but can be neglected. Free time is also wasted on entertainment alone. This was felt by the fifth participant who could not control his bad habits:

"...Fifth grade elementary school I think, it's been 5 years. I think the older I get, the more I get older, the more I play mobile phones so the impact is that I'm lazy to do anything, my

parents often scold me, even though I'm scolded I still play mobile phones like I can't let go. So I can't discipline my time but I still know my limits..." (P5).

5. DISCUSSION

This research has identified interview descriptions of the experience of *nomophobia*over the participants' lifetimes in four themes: dominant leisure activity, emergence of emotional disturbance, as entertainment when lonely, being an important part of life, which will be discussed as follows:

a. Theme 1: Dominant Leisure Activities

Playing *smartphones* is a dominant leisure activity for all groups today, especiallyteenagers. Based on the results of the interview, it shows that all participants spend a lot of time with *smartphones for* hours and even all day just spending time with their *smartphones,* making their free time the dominant activity of playing *smartphones*. Asstated by Widyastuti & Muyana (2018) in his research entitled Portrait of *Nomophobia(No Mobile Phone Phobia)* among Teenagers, shows that teenagers also tend to feel like constantly checking their mobile phones regarding the presence or absence of a network, incoming messages, battery availability, and will be anxious if they run out of credit and or internet quota.

The comfortable feeling of all the facilities in *mobile phones* causes teenagers to be reluctant to leave their *mobile phones for* long. These facilities make teenagers liketo spend time with smartphones in their spare time. This is also in line with researchersRamaita (2019) with the title *Smartphone* Dependence Relationship with Anxiety *(Nomophobia)* which says that nomophobia has various characteristics such as, dependence on *smartphones* or spending more time with *smartphones*, and always carrying a *charger* wherever you go.

b. Theme 2: The Emergence of Emotional Disturbance

Based on the results of the interview, it shows that all participants have some emotional disturbances, namely a sense of anxiety, anxiety, unfamiliarity, discomfort,and loss when kept away from *smartphones*. This is in line with researchers Ramaita (2019) with the title *Smartphone* Dependence Relationship with Anxiety (*Nomophobia*) which says that nomophobia is a discomfort, anxiety, fear or sadness caused by not being able to connect with a *smartphone* mobile phone. *Nomophobia* isa condition where feelings of anxiety arise if kept away from a *smartphone*. For example, if someone is in an area without an internet network connection or runs out of battery on a *smartphone*, someone will feel threatened and some even experience anxiety (*phobia*), depression, and even mental disorders, which can affect psychological health.

cameras. In the research results found students who played games until they forgot todo their assignments at night. *Smartphones* as entertainment media should be used as Factors that can influence the occurrence of *nomophobia* can be seen from the level of use, habits, age and extraversion. Excessive use can influence habits and makedependence on *smartphone* use can refer to *nomophobia*. Some of the opinionsoutlined by several experts, conclude that the main causes of *nomophobia* include lackof tolerance, difficulty controlling impulses, escaping from existing problems, and negative consequences for daily life.

c. **Theme 3: As Entertainment when Lonely**

Nomophobia can also arise from the fear of loneliness or the fear of losing othersif not constantly connected. The desire to use *smartphones* as entertainment is a distraction from loneliness that can trigger *nomophobia*. This was revealed when researchers interviewed participants. As in research Lukito (2017) who said *nomophobic* behaviour can reinforce social anxiety tendencies and dependence on theuse of virtual and digital communication as a method to reduce stress resulting from social anxiety and social phobia. In addition, *nomophobia is* also a result of the fear ofloneliness that makes a person use smarphone excessively to communicate and get information as expressed by the researcher Rahayuningrum & Sary (2019) which is entitled Study of Adolescent Anxiety Level Towards *No-Mobile Phone (Nomophobia).*

Likewise, in terms of *smartphones* in bed or must be accessible from the grasp during sleep. So that making *smartphones* is entertainment for lullabies for participants. Research Nur, (2019) with the title Parents' Social Control of *Smartphone*Use in Adolescents (Study in Giring-Giring Village, Bontonmpo District, GowaRegency) also reveals another function of *smartphones* is as an entertainment medium. Applications that are generally accessed as entertainment such as games applications and several *smartphone default* applications such as music players, video players, and activities to minimise boredom, not core activities. The use of entertainment media that consumes time and makes bedtime entertainment routines to neglect obligations tends to have a negative impact on adolescents as users.

d. **Theme 4: Being an Important Part of Life**

Based on the results of the interview, it shows that all participants have made *smartphones the* most important thing in their lives. Keeping the *smartphone* always active within 24 hours is a natural thing for those who have work on the *smartphone*. But it is different for those who have no interest in *smartphones* so that making *smartphones* is an important habit in their daily lives and makes half of their soul. Thisis in accordance with the statement of Saverin and Tankard (in Fitriyani, 2019) explains that when a person is increasingly dependent on a communication medium tofulfil his needs, the media will become increasingly important to

him.

This is also in accordance with the results of research Ramaita (2019) It can be seen that of the 15 students who have a mild level of *smartphone dependence,* only 6.7% experience severe anxiety while of the 5 people who experience heavy *smartphone* dependence, more than half (60%) experience severe anxiety. This is because *smartphones* have an important position in the lives of its users, with its many capabilities, *smartphones* facilitate ease of communication, help a person stay connected anywhere, anytime, and provide a person with easy access to information. Thus, one has become dependent on the mobile phone more than ever, which will eventually worsen the anxiety caused by the *smartphone*.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of the research "Phenomenological Study: *Nomophobia "No Mobile Phone Phobia"* in Adolescents of SMP N 1 Gebog Kudus", which has involved five participants, can be concluded into 4 themes, namely (1) The dominant activity in spare time, (2) The emergence of emotional disorders, (3) As entertainment when lonely, and (4) Become an important part of life.

The existenceof *smartphones* habit is difficult for a person to be kept away from his habit, with it comes emotional disturbances such as, discomfort, anxiety, and anxiety if kept away from a *smartphone*. *Smartphones* are a means of entertainment for someone in times of loneliness and the emergence of these feelings, this makes someone experience *nomophobic* behaviour. *Smartphone* is a very crucial communication tool for teenagers.

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