Smartphone Addiction and Phubbing Behavior: Risks of Technology for Social Media Users

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ABSTRACT: The rapid development of technology, especially smartphones, has brought significant changes to the daily lives of students, both positively and negatively. One of the emerging negative impacts is the phenomenon of phubbing, which refers to the act of ignoring others in favor of engaging with a smartphone. The purpose of this study is to describe the contribution of smartphone addiction on phubbing behavior in students. The sample of this study was 225 grade VII students. Data on smartphone addiction and phubbing behavior were collected through two questionnaires, including the smartphone addiction instrument which amounted of 16 items and the phubbing behavior instrument which amounted of 15 items. Data were analyzed using SPSS software with linear regression techniques. The findings in this study are the significant contribution given by smartphone addiction to phubbing behavior, seen from the contribution given by smartphone addiction of 66% to phubbing behavior. In addition, the regression coefficient is positive, so it can be stated that an increase in smartphone addiction causes an increase in phubbing behavior.

INTRODUCTION

The development of technology in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 is marked by advances in internet technology. Computers whose capabilities continue to develop to be more powerful because they are connected to a large network called the internet (Putri et al., 2025). The advancement of internet technology is in line with the development of communication technology. One of the rapidly developing communication technologies is mobile phones. This can be seen from the many changes that have occurred. Mobile phones have now undergone many changes both in terms of shape from thick and large to thinner and easier to carry, from a non-touch screen to a touchscreen, from a keyboard separate from the screen to a keyboard that is integrated with the screen and so on. Not only in terms of form, mobile phones have also experienced an increase in quality in terms of their facilities. Technology in the form of gadgets can be owned by anyone including young children so that, in using gadgets they are no less intelligent than teenagers and adults (Afdal et al., 2019; Magfiroh et al., 2024). Gadgets are electronic devices or instruments that have practical purposes and functions, especially to help humans (Salis Hijriyani & Astuti, 2020).

New technologies and approaches that combine the physical, digital and biological worlds will fundamentally change patterns of living and interaction humans (Ghufron, 2018). Individuals who join social media engage in various forms of entertainment and social activities including playing, socializing, spending time, communicating and posting photos (Cecilie Schou Andreassen, Pallesen, & Griffiths in Luvy & Rachmah, 2019). This has an impact on internet users that are increasing every year.

In addition, according to research by Akbar et al. (2018), the average Indonesian spends 5.5 hours per day in using a smartphone, of which 96% are internet users. The desire to always be connected with smartphones that are very high, this makes it beat all existing activities, especially when communicating with other people face to face. The theory expressed by Kwon et al. (2013) which states that the term addiction smartphone as a behavior of attachment or addiction to smartphones that become social problems such as withdrawal, and difficulty in performing daily activities or as a disorder of impulse control towards a person.

Humans as social beings need communication in order to fulfill their needs in interacting with others. Communication is carried out in order to fulfill human needs to interact with others related to human functions as social beings (Widiantari & Herdiyanto, 2013). The nature of communication in two types, namely direct and indirect communication. Direct communication is a communication activity that is carried out face to face without using media intermediaries. While, indirect communication is a communication activity that is carried out without face to face and using social media intermediaries (Widiantari & Herdiyanto, 2013; Hafni et al., 2024).

According to Nasrullah (in Safitri et al., 2021) social media is an arena for displaying photos of oneself and users get feedback from the publication. One form of development of social media is the existence of various applications that offer unique features. Thus, attracting someone to use the application (Safitri et al., 2021). In addition, social media can be interpreted as an online platform that people use to build social networks or social relationships with others who have similar interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections (Akram & Kumar, 2017). There are several applications that are widely used, namely YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Tiktok, and Video Streaming such as Netflix, Viu and others are also increasing in use (Muhamad Ayub & Sofia Farzanah Sulaeman, 2022). However, currently the Instagram and Tiktok applications are the most popular among Generation Z teenagers, Generation Z is a generation defined as people born in the birth year range of 1995 to 2000 (Safitri et al., 2021). This is in line with research conducted by Mumtaz (2019) regarding habits resulting from smartphone use in society in America, the results of which stated that as many as 68% of respondents did not want to be ignored by someone who shifted their focus to smartphones at company dinners. In line with the development of smartphone technology, a new term has emerged resulting from the behavior of individuals who only care about their smartphones, while the individual is interacting with other individuals. The new term in question is phubbing or an abbreviation of phone and snubbing. Phubbing behavior in society tends to cause the communication and interaction process not to run well because the communication process actually requires a response and empathy between communication actors.

Karadağ et al. (2015) who argue that phubbing behavior is the behavior of individuals who look at their cell phones while having a conversation with other people, dealing with cell phones, and running away from interpersonal communication. Teenagers are addicted and can cause non-instructiveness when communicating with their conversation partners, events like this can also be called phubbing behavior. Phubbing behavior has an influence on a person because it makes a person less face-to-face interaction with other people and seems to respect people in the surrounding environment, so that it can have a negative impact on the person's social life (Akbar et al., 2018). A reciprocal relationship in social psychology is interpreted as one way to play a role with the main key being able to understand human interaction and the exchange of social relationships.

This is in line with the opinion of Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas (2018) namely that for someone who usually does phubbing, this behavior is considered normal, but on the contrary, this is considered abnormal behavior because it has a very negative effect on a person.

METHODS
Design

This research is a quantitative descriptive study with a correlational approach. Correlational research (relationship research) is research conducted by researchers to determine the level of relationship between two or more variables, without making changes, additions or manipulations to existing data (Arikunto, 2013). Population is a generalization area consisting of objects/subjects that have certain quantities and characteristics determined by researchers to be studied and then conclusions drawn (Sugiyono, 2022). The population in this study were 310 students in grade VII at SMPN 9 Tambun Selatan.

Participants

Ethical clearance for this study was granted by the Educational Assessment Association, an official professional organization in Serang City, Indonesia, with approval number 00168/EC/AAP/X/2024. This ethical clearance ensures that all research procedures adhere to the strictest ethical criteria, protecting the rights and welfare of participants. Potential participants were provided with comprehensive information about the nature and purpose of the study prior to their involvement. Participants also gave their full informed consent to participate.

The sample is part of the number and characteristics of the population (Sugiyono, 2022). Sampling techniques in this study uses the Probability sampling technique with a simple random sampling type. Simple random sampling is the taking of sample members from a population randomly without considering the strata in the population (Sugiyono, 2022). So, the sample in this study amounted to 225 grade VII students.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through two questionnaires, including a smartphone addiction instrument developed from the theory of Kwon et al. (2013) which consists of 16 items and a phubbing behavior instrument developed from the theory of Karadağ et al. (2015) which consists of 15 items. Furthermore, the answers to each instrument item using a Likert scale have a gradation from very positive to negative (Sugiyono, 2022). This questionnaire is given a maximum score or value of 4 with answer choices consisting of always, often, sometimes and never.

The instrument has been validated using the Pearson product moment correlation technique formula. The results of the validity test of the smartphone addiction questionnaire show wed that all 16 statement items were known to be valid, meaning that all statement items in the smartphone addiction variable questionnaire can be used to measure smartphone addiction. And the results of the validity test of the phubbing behavior questionnaire showed that all 15 statement items were known to be valid, meaning that all statement items in the phubbing behavior variable questionnaire can be used to measure phubbing behavior. The reliability test showed that the smartphone addiction instrument had a Cronbach alpha value of 0.909 and the phubbing instrument had a Cronbach alpha value of 0.921. So, it can be said that both variables are reliable with perfect reliability criteria because they are in the range of more than 0.9. So, it can be said that both variables are reliable with perfect reliability criteria because they are in the range of more than 0.9. Furthermore, the data was analyzed using SPSS software analysis with linear regression techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results
The results of the analysis of the influence of smartphone addiction on phubbing behavior will be tested using linear regression analysis. Based on the results of distributing questionnaires regarding the variables of smartphone addiction and phubbing behavior to 225 students, a picture of smartphone addiction and phubbing results of the study is obtained in the following table.

Table 1. Description of smartphone addiction and phubbing (n = 225)

Categories	Smartphone Addiction			Phubbing		
	Intervals	Frequency	%	Intervals	Frequency	%
Very High	≥ 46	40	17,8%	≥ 43	43	19,1%
High	36 – 45	51	22,2%	34 – 42	55	24,4%
Moderate	26 – 35	99	44%	25 – 33	88	39,1%
Low	17 - 25	35	15,6%	16 – 24	39	17,3%
Very Low	≤ 16	0	0%	≤ 15	0	0%

Table 1. Illustrates the distribution of smartphone addiction levels in 225 seventh grade students. Most students (44%) are in the moderate smartphone addiction category, followed by 22.2% of students with high addiction, and 17.8% with very high addiction. As many as 15.6% of students are in the low addiction category, while no students are included in the very low addiction category. This indicates that most students have moderate to high levels of smartphone addiction, which has the potential to affect their behavior, including phubbing.

This table 1. Shows the distribution of phubbing behavior levels in 225 students. Most students (39.1%) are in the moderate phubbing behavior category, followed by 24.4% of students in the high category, and 19.1% in the very high category. As many as 17.3% of students are in the low category, while no students are in the very low category. These data indicate that most students have moderate to high phubbing tendencies, reflecting the potential impact of excessive smartphone use on their social interactions. To further explore the relationship between smartphone addiction and phubbing behaviour, it is important to examine additional factors such as the duration of internet use among respondents.

Discussion
A fundamental concern regarding the extent to which education influences happiness or life satisfaction is raised when examining the relationship between education level and happiness in Indonesia. Nevertheless, the 2021 Happiness Level Measurement Survey, which was administered by the Central Statistics Agency, assesses life satisfaction as only one of three dimensions (Haryati, 2023). The central statistics agency investigates the meaning of life (eudaimonia) and familial harmony as the other two dimensions. These two dimensions are intriguing to investigate through quantitative methods that involve a substantial number of observations, as they are typically examined from a psychological perspective (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Szentagotai & David, 2013). According to (Ryff, 1989), self-acceptance is the primary factor that encapsulates an individual's interpretation of the purpose of existence, out of the six dimensions of eudaimonia. Furthermore, family harmony is one of the components of subjective well-being that is designed to achieve a subjective level of pleasure that is contingent upon family satisfaction (BPS, 2022). Based on the data from the research conducted at Universitas Medan Area with 470 respondents. This study aims to determine the relationship between family harmony and self-acceptance in students of Universitas Medan Area. Family harmony is a condition in which all family members feel happy, this

can be marked by satisfaction with the situation and closeness in the family, reduced tension and disappointment.
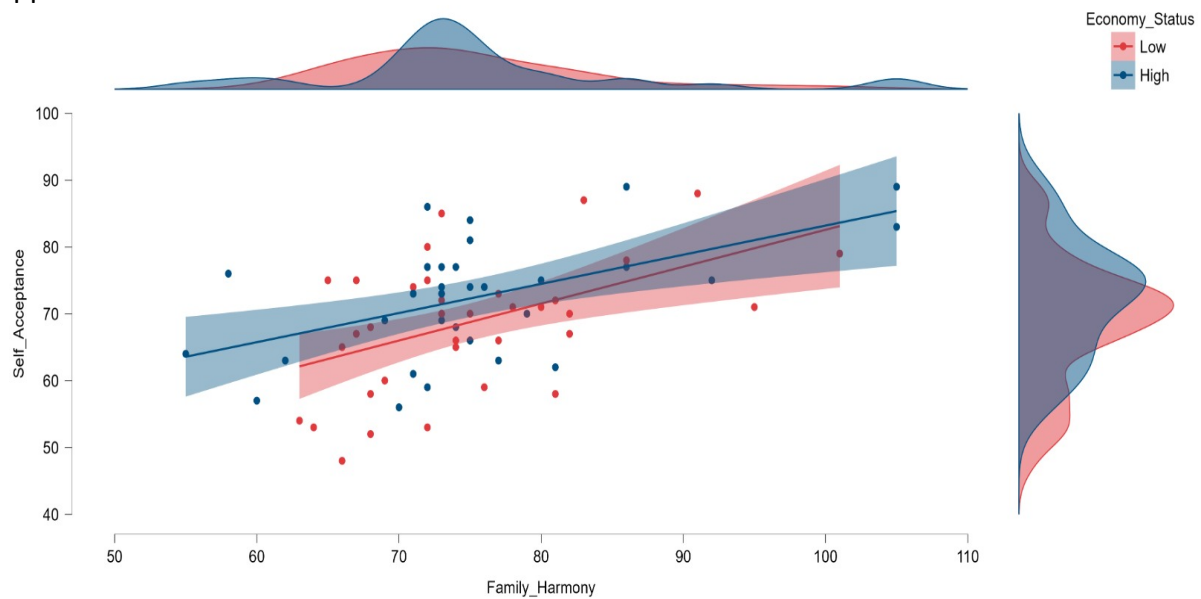

Figure 1. Relational Family Harmony and Self-Acceptance Viewed
from Economic Status

Figure 1 provides a detailed view of how family harmony and self-acceptance relate to students' economic status at Universitas Medan Area. The significant positive correlation depicted in the figure suggests that improvements in family harmony led to enhanced self-acceptance among students. This relationship is further amplified by economic status: higher family economic status not only boosts family harmony but also contributes to greater self-acceptance. In the context of Universitas Medan Area, where students face a rigorous and demanding educational environment, family support becomes crucial for their psychological well-being. The findings imply that students from higher economic backgrounds may benefit from more stable and supportive family environments, which in turn positively impacts their self-acceptance. Having a higher income would result in greater subjective well-being or contentment, as education is inextricably linked to determining personal income. Education may not only modify economic indicators but also increase life satisfaction (Cuñado & de Gracia, 2012; Powdthavee et al., 2015). Education has a more profound impact on contentment by influencing a variety of life domains. For instance, numerous prior studies have categorised certain factors that influence happiness into various life domains, including income, health, children, marital status, leisure time, and neighbourhood (Kristoffersen, 2018; Nikolaev, 2018).

Students from higher economic backgrounds likely experience fewer financial stressors, which can facilitate a more harmonious family life and greater emotional stability. This stability can help them develop stronger self-acceptance, which is essential for managing the stress and demands of their academic and professional pursuits. Conversely, students from lower economic backgrounds might face additional stressors that can affect both family harmony and their self-acceptance. For Universitas Medan Area, this analysis highlights the importance of addressing economic disparities and their impact on family dynamics and student well-being. Implementing support programs that consider these factors, such as counseling services or financial assistance (Syahputra, 2024), could help enhance family harmony and self-acceptance, ultimately contributing to better academic and personal outcomes for all students.

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted on the relationship between family harmony and self-acceptance, it shows that the relationship between family harmony and

self-acceptance obtained a value of rxy = 0.497 with a significance level of 0.00 <0.05. The results of the data analysis show that there is a significant positive relationship between family harmony and self-acceptance, which means that the higher the level of family harmony, the higher the level of self-acceptance in students, and vice versa. The magnitude of the role of family harmony in increasing the level of self-acceptance in students is 0.435. This shows that family harmony affects self-acceptance by 43.5% while the other 56.5% comes from other variables that can affect self-acceptance. This is reinforced by the results of the descriptive analysis of the relationship between family harmony and self-acceptance in students with a picture of family harmony having a high category level of 30%, a medium category of 61% and a low category of 9% and a picture of self-acceptance having a high category level of 19%, a medium category of 56% and a low category of 26%. Meanwhile, self-acceptance is in the medium category with a value of 19%.

Based on research data on the relationship between family harmony and self-acceptance in students, it was found that there is a relationship between family harmony and self-acceptance. Based on the results of the correlation calculation test, both have a value of r = 0.497 with a significance value of 0.000 <0.05, which means that the two variables of family harmony and self-acceptance have a positive relationship where the higher the level of family harmony, the higher the self-acceptance and vice versa. Thus, it is stated that Ha is accepted and H0 is rejected, where Ha is the relationship between family harmony and Self-Acceptance students of Universitas Medan Area.

Implications

The implications of these discoveries indicate that Universitas Medan Area should contemplate the implementation of targeted support programmes to cater to the diverse requirements of students, with a particular emphasis on those from lesser economic backgrounds. The institution can contribute to the improvement of self-acceptance among students by providing counselling services, family engagement initiatives, or financial assistance programmes that enhance family harmony. This could result in improved academic performance and overall well-being, as students who exhibit higher levels of self-acceptance are more likely to effectively manage academic stress and achieve better outcomes. Addressing these factors in a comprehensive manner will foster a more supportive educational environment and enhance the psychological resilience of all students.

Limitations and Further Research

The limitations of this study lie in the distribution of respondents from three different campuses, which may cause variations in academic, social, and cultural environmental conditions. In addition, limited access and coordination between campuses may be a challenge in ensuring uniformity of data collection procedures. The findings of this study may serve as a foundation for implementing counseling strategies that actively involve family engagement in fostering self-acceptance. By integrating family members into the counseling process, interventions can be more holistic, addressing both individual and relational dynamics that influence self-perception. Family support can reinforce positive self-views, provide emotional security, and create a nurturing environment that encourages personal growth. Additionally, these strategies can help bridge communication gaps, enhance empathy, and strengthen familial bonds, ultimately contributing to the long-term well-being of individuals struggling with self-acceptance.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study showed a significant relationship between family harmony and student self-acceptance, with a Pearson correlation value of 0.497 at a significance of 0.000. This

finding confirms that the more harmonious the family, the higher the level of student self-acceptance. In addition, economic status plays a role in strengthening this relationship, where students from more prosperous families tend to have higher family harmony and self-acceptance. However, there are still other factors that influence self-acceptance, so additional efforts are needed to support student development holistically.

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