



Mini Review

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Is Addictive Behaviour Being Minimised Beyond Mindfulness?



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It is not an exaggeration to claim that most people are constantly concerned with their phones. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, people have spent more time on electronic devices. Smartphones are already a part of their daily life. According to Global Wendex [1], 76% of smartphone or mobile phone users in select countries worldwide are between the ages of 16 and 64. According to OECD data [2], internet users as young as 10 spend more than two hours online after school every weekday and more than three hours on weekends. This is a serious issue as our youngsters become increasingly reliant on their smartphones. Aside from family members, peer relationships influence whether people converse face to face or spend time on their smartphones when friends congregate. This demonstrates that if a person becomes hooked to Smartphone use, their conduct will deteriorate. According to one report, 75% of women believe that smartphone devices are destroying their relationships, whether they are doing it, or their partner is answering to their text message in front of them (by Sarah Griffiths, dailymail.co.uk, 2014). The poll was delivered to 143 women by two researchers, Brandon McDaniel of The Pennsylvania State University and Sarah Coyne of Brigham Young University in Utah.

Parents, schools, governments, and public are concerned that digital technologies and social media are increasing feelings of worry and despair, disrupting sleep cycles, leading to cyberbullying, and altering body image. Some countries are acting in response to these and other issues. Legislation in far-east countries such as China and Korea prohibit children from playing online games that need parental supervision; meanwhile, the UK government is researching how social media impacts children's well-being and assessing how much screen time is reasonable. Smartphone use has been connected to a variety of possible risks. According to Fatma, Ummuhan and Ramazan [3] conducted a study to 843 university students aged 17-54 years who are addicted to their phones are more prone to experience loneliness or aggressiveness. Wacks and Weinstein [4] explored

the association of loneliness with mental health issues, they found that excessive smartphone use is connected to anxiety, depression, and related disorders such as shyness and low self-esteem.

The concerns are primarily about societal well-being. The effects of digital technology, such as smart phones and other gadgets, have revolutionised societal well-being. Addiction is one of the primary consequences of this phenomena. Addictions to mobile devices such as smartphones and other gadgets are prevalent, as are internet addiction, social media addiction, game addiction, and so on. There is, however, no agreement on the diagnostic criteria for internet addiction. According to Poli [5], criteria of internet addiction also usually associated with co-occurring psychiatric disorders such as depression, anxiety, ADHD, obsessive-compulsive symptoms, and hostility/aggression. This type of addiction has become new addictive behaviour comparing to the ordinary addiction to drug, alcohol, and gambling. Many years ago, as addiction is defined by Bratter and Forest (1985) as compulsive drug-using behaviour pattern characterised by overwhelming engagement. The use of a drug and the obtaining of a supply, as well as an inclination to relapse after withdrawal". While one of the pioneers of internet addiction research Kimberly Young [6] described that the criteria of the addiction includes compulsively checking email, excessively anticipating something from internet, and receiving complaints about spending too much time and money online.

Based on behavioural perspective, addictive behaviour as mentioned is more likely to be reactive and learnt. Then it becomes automated once it has been conditioned. Most of the time, we do not know the effects of having such a addiction as the integral part of our daily life. It can be detrimental when the dependence of the objects (internet, smartphone, social media etc) affects the functional of an individual. It is obvious that the withdrawal of the objects of addiction even cause physical and psychological reactivity such as emotionally disturbed, physically restless and even affecting the functionality performing certain

routine. According to Buddy [7] from a *very well mind* article, withdrawal is the combination of physical and psychological consequences that a person feels after discontinuing or reducing their use of a substance such as alcohol or prescription or recreational medications. Some psychological symptoms occurred to non-substance dependence like internet addiction, gambling as stated by Wheatman [4] in which dopamine can be released because of gambling, gaming, utilising social media, or indulging in other online activities.

As a result, addressing the source of the addictive behaviour is critical in resolving addictive behaviours. It is thought that regaining awareness of such a behaviour and tracing its behaviour pattern will be beneficial. Mindfulness training based on formal research first appeared in the Western world in 1979, when John Kabat-Zinn developed the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction programme (MBSR). Much evidence-based findings support mindfulness training in enhancing physical and psychological well-being. According to research findings, mindfulness practise appears to be effective in raising awareness of behaviour. When mindfulness activates the consciousness, it tends to perceive the conditioned and routine behaviour. Individuals were able to get insightful thoughts when considering the implications of an addictive behaviour [8,9].

It makes sense when we notice that certain of our behaviours are automated without knowing how the behaviours are learned and executed easily. That became more apparent when certain behaviours become habits and, in some cases, completely depended on them. As a result, it is worthwhile to consider that mindfulness practise is an alternative to returning to the fundamentals of very

momentous life by knowing with awareness. However, the term “mindfulness” is often associated with meditation and religious notions. Mindfulness, on the other hand, is just bringing back and maintaining our consciousness from moment to moment about what body sensations, thoughts, and emotions are arriving in our mind, which cover the habits and novel behaviours that govern our functioning living.

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