

Smartphone use and likelihood of addiction

A study findings unveil the prevalence of smartphone addiction among college students.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Many of us are guilty of rolling over in the morning and grabbing our smartphones to check email, headlines and [social media](#) before our feet even hit the floor. Our reliance on Internet-ready devices is one of the reasons why Isaac Vaghefi started studying technology use among college-aged students and looking at how excessive usage can lead to negative consequences.

“Our smartphones especially have turned into a tool that provides short, quick, immediate satisfaction, which is very triggering,” says the assistant professor of management information systems in the School of Management at Binghamton University-State University of New York. “Our neurons get fired and dopamine is being released and over time this makes us acquire a desire for quick feedback. This process also has contributed to developing shorter attention spans and being more and more prone to boredom.”

“Technology addiction” is not an official mental disorder in DSM-V, but the umbrella term refers to addictive behavior related to social media, excessive texting, information overload, online shopping, gambling, video gaming, online pornography and overall smartphone usage.

Vaghefi and his colleagues recently surveyed 182 college students and asked them to report their daily routine of smartphone usage. Based on the analysis of the responses, they classified the user as one of the following types: Thoughtful, Regular, Highly Engaged, Fanatic and Addict.



Assistant Professor of Management Information Systems Isaac Vaghefi studies the dark side of IT and technology addiction. Photography: Jonathan Cohen.



Smartphone is becoming one of the most prevalent technologies in our society and its usage is on the rise.

Seven percent identified as “addicts” and 12 percent identified as “fanatics.” Both groups experience personal, social and workplace problems due to a compulsive need to be on their smartphones. Overall, these users exhibited signs that could indicate depression, social isolation, social anxiety, shyness, impulsivity and low self-esteem. Females were most likely to exhibit susceptibility to addiction.

While self-identified “addict” users were in the minority, Vaghefi predicts technology addiction will increase as technology continues to advance and application, game and gadget developers find new ways to ensure users’ long term engagement with technology.

If you recognize any of these signs, you may want to consult professional help:

- You use technology as a way of escaping problems or relieving feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety or depression.
- You ignore what’s happening in real time in favor of what’s happening virtually.
- You constantly check your smartphone, even when it doesn’t ring or vibrate.
- You get paranoid when you do not have your smartphone with you.

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