

# The Effect of Cell Phone Addiction on Interpersonal Relationship Distress Among College Students—the Moderating Effect of Personality Traits

Liming He

Guangzhou Huali College, Guangzhou 513000, China.

**Abstract:** From the perspective of the moderating effect of personality traits, this study researched the influence of college students' mobile phone addiction on their intercourse vexations. The primary purpose is to further leverage the role of universities in cultivating and guiding the personality of college students based on their status quo of mobile phone addiction and poor interpersonal relationships. A variety of means can be adopted to guide college students to form a sound personality, so as to bring into play the regulating role of personality traits and gradually alleviate the college student's cell phone addiction, thus reducing the negative influence of cell phone addiction on their intercourse vexations. This paper first carried out a series of studies on the moderating effect of personality traits, then based on the research results, it comprehensively analyzed the current situation of college students' mobile phone addiction and the development of their interpersonal relationships, summarized the research findings, and proposed relevant strategies to bring into play the moderating effects of personality traits.

**Keywords:** Cell Phone Addiction; Intercourse Vexations; Moderating Effect of Personality Traits; College Education

## Introduction

College students are in a critical period of physical and mental development, and every student must have the ability to properly handle interpersonal relationships and reasonably allocate time. However, nowadays, smartphones are widely popular and more and more new media platforms, games and social software appear in the lives of college students, trying to attract their attention. As a result, many students begin to be addicted to mobile phones and indulge in the virtual world, which has a negative impact on both their academic life and interpersonal relationships<sup>[1]</sup>.

### 1. A Study on the Moderating Effect of Personality Traits

This study aimed to understand the relationship among college students' mobile phone addiction, interpersonal troubles and the moderating effect of personality traits, and to focus on solving the impact of mobile phone addiction on their interpersonal troubles. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and questionnaires were used to obtain data, which further presented the values related to college students' mobile phone addiction, basic psychology, conversation problems, interpersonal communication troubles, dealing with people, heterosexual communication, etc. (as shown in Table 1). It can be found that, among the 1737 college students investigated, 67.76% of them were addicted to mobile phones, and only 13.667% of them were not obviously addicted to mobile phones. The total score of their interpersonal relationship was 8.37, and the average score was 7.122, which is enough to prove that college students' mobile phone addiction has negatively affected their interpersonal communication.

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Dev.	N
Cell Phone Addiction	67.76	13.667	1737
Basic Psychology	9.89	1.271	1737
Conversation Problems	2.16	2.054	1737
Communication Troubles	2.80	2.317	1737
Dealing With People	1.30	1.706	1737
Heterosexual Communication	2.10	2.063	1737
Total Interpersonal Score	8.37	7.122	1737

Table 1 Overall statistics of studies on the moderating effects of personality traits

According to the correlation analysis data among college students' mobile phone addiction, interpersonal troubles, and personality traits (Table 2), it can be found that students who suffer from mobile phone addiction share a range of problems to varying degrees, which include basic psychological problems, conversation troubles, communication problems, difficulty in dealing with people, and problems with heterosexual interactions.

Correlations								
		Cell Phone Addiction	Basic Psychology	Conversation Problems	Communicatio n Troubles	Dealing With People	Heterosexual Communication	Total Interpersonal Score
Cell Phone Addiction	Pearson Correlation	1	-.299**	.196**	.163**	.175**	.124**	.187**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737
Basic Psychology	Pearson Correlation	-.299**	1	-.428**	-.385**	-.346**	-.382**	-.442**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737
Conversation Problems	Pearson Correlation	.196**	-.428**	1	.766**	.694**	.681**	.901**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737
Communicati on Troubles	Pearson Correlation	.163**	-.385**	.766**	1	.614**	.717**	.901**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737
Dealing with People	Pearson Correlation	.175**	-.346**	.694**	.614**	1	.615**	.818**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737
Heterosexual Communicati on	Pearson Correlation	.124**	-.382**	.681**	.717**	.615**	1	.867**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737
Total Interpersonal Score	Pearson Correlation	.187**	-.442**	.901**	.901**	.818**	.867**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737	1737

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 Correlation analysis among cell phone addiction, intercourse vexation and personality traits

In addition, the correlation analysis of the moderating effect of personality traits such as extroversion was also conducted in the survey study, and after analysis, it was found that the interaction term between cell phone addiction and personality traits such as extroversion did not show significance among different personality traits ( $t=0.513$ ,  $p=0.608 > 0.05$ ), but when mobile phone addiction affects the total score of interpersonal problem, the magnitude of the influence of personality traits such as extroversion is consistent with the former[2]. This shows that personality traits, such as extroversion, can play a moderating role in alleviating the interpersonal problems of college students when they are affected by interpersonal problems due to cell phone addiction.

## 2. Related strategies for mobile phone addiction and interpersonal problems of college students based on the moderating effect of personality traits

According to the above findings, it can be basically determined that there is a pairwise positive correlation among the moderating effect of personality traits, interpersonal troubles, and mobile phone addiction, i.e., cell phone addiction and interpersonal troubles are positively correlated, and interpersonal troubles and the moderating role of personality traits are positively correlated<sup>[3]</sup>. Therefore, it can be deduced that the personality traits of college students can have a positive impact on the severity of their mobile phone addiction and interpersonal troubles, i.e., (1) The lower the level of personality development, the more likely students are to have mobile phone addiction, thus affecting their interpersonal relationships; (2) The more sound the personality development of college students, the more they can resist the attraction of mobile phones, and the more they can handle interpersonal problems independently, thus they are less likely to develop mobile phone addiction or interpersonal troubles<sup>[4]</sup>.

In this case, it is recommended that colleges and universities should strengthen the cultivation of sound personalities of college students. The suggested methods include: (1) construct a campus culture with contemporary characteristics, enrich the life of college students on campus, help them develop ability in cooperative communication, interpersonal communication, and heterosexual communication, and enhance the moderating effect of their personality traits such as openness, extroversion, and agreeableness<sup>[5]</sup>. (2) Carry out home-school cooperation, give full play to the positive role of family education, give college students warmth and care, guide them to face interpersonal problems correctly and establish healthy interpersonal relationships. Discover their mobile phone addiction timely, and promote home-school cooperation to guide students out of the predicament. (3) Strengthen psychological education and counselling in colleges and universities, strengthen the ideals and beliefs of college students, and encourage them to consciously resist mobile phone addiction<sup>[6]</sup>.

### Conclusion

To sum up, how to alleviate the negative impact of mobile phone addiction on the interpersonal relationship of college students is the main issue that should be considered at present. According to the above research and analysis, it can be found that personality traits have a moderating effect. Different personality traits can play distinct roles in alleviating mobile phone addiction and interpersonal troubles of college students. As far as colleges and universities are concerned, they should help college students learn to manage their time and guide them to allocate their time reasonably, so that they can use their cell phones flexibly, manage their lives consciously with self-discipline, and devote more energy to enhancing their self-worth and improving their interpersonal difficulties, instead of being obsessed with their cell phones. Therefore, it is advisable for colleges and universities to make use of the moderating effect of personality traits to allow college students to develop healthy and positive interpersonal communication skills from the three overall perspectives of mobile phone addiction, interpersonal troubles and personality traits and by adopting various methods such as community assistance, guiding education, and psychological counselling, thereby guaranteeing their healthy physical and mental growth.

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