

Original Article

The Influence of Self-Control on Phubbing Behavior among Vocational High School Students in West Jakarta

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Abstract. Technological developments and the increasing use of smartphones have influenced adolescents' social interaction patterns, including the emergence of phubbing behavior, which is the tendency to ignore others because of focusing on mobile phones. Low self-control is suspected to be a contributing factor to this behavior. This study aims to determine the relationship between self-control and phubbing behavior among students of SMK Tri Arga 2 West Jakarta. The study used a quantitative approach with a simple random sampling technique and involved 200 students as a sample. The instruments used were the Self-Control Scale and the Phubbing Behavior Scale with a 4-point Likert model. All items were declared valid and reliable through validity tests and Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70. Data analysis used the Pearson Correlation test via SPSS version 26. The results showed a significance value of 0.000 (<0.05) and a correlation value of -0.570, indicating a significant and negative relationship between self-control and phubbing behavior. The higher the student's self-control, the lower the phubbing behavior they exhibit. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of guidance and counseling services, particularly in strengthening self-control as a preventive effort to reduce phubbing behavior in the school environment.

Keywords: Phubbing, Self-Control, Addiction

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Introduction

Smartphones are used as a way to unwind by playing games or listening to music (Meganingrum et al., 2021). Indonesians spent an average of 5.7 hours per day on cellular networks throughout 2022. This figure has increased sharply from the average daily mobile phone usage of 5.4 hours in 2021. Indonesians' smartphone addiction has increased sharply since the pandemic in 2020. A 2023 study by the University of Canada published a list of more than 20 countries with smartphone addiction. The results showed that China ranked first for smartphone addiction, as reported by GizChina (Olson et al., 2022).

Social media applications are a feature on smartphones, serving as a platform for users to publish their activities and opinions, and to solicit public feedback on these publications (Nasrullah, 2017). Individual social media usage can be measured by the frequency, intensity, and duration of access to websites and media content. The presence of smartphones in the social relationships of teenagers in high school/vocational school has positive and negative impacts. One of the negative aspects is the strong attachment to their smartphones, leading to neglect or indifference to their surroundings (Hura et al., 2021). Teenagers' dependence on smartphones can be seen when they are together in a place, where their conversational intensity tends to be

very low due to the smartphone in their hands (Saputra et al., 2025). The most significant effect is the behavioral effect, which results in individuals always being focused on their smartphones and engaging in neglectful behavior, leading others who are neglected to use their smartphones as well (Hura et al., 2021).

The current widespread phenomenon of phubbing in society is slowly diminishing the sense of caring for those around us (Ridho, 2019). This kind of behavior indirectly encourages children to imitate and become indifferent to their surroundings (Kurnia, 2024). According to Thaeras (2017) there were 143 respondents and the results obtained were that 70% of the respondents were unable to separate from their smartphones and tended to be phubbers.

Phubbing behavior can be considered low if an individual is willing to listen to what the other person is saying and provide feedback, while maintaining eye contact during the conversation. Meanwhile, phubbing behavior is considered high if an individual cannot be separated from their smartphone and two-way communication is very limited, resulting in no feedback from the listener (Kurnia, 2024). The phubbing phenomenon, currently rampant in society, is slowly diminishing the sense of caring for those around us (Ridho, 2019). This behavior often makes people feel neglected, leading those ignored to choose to play with their phones. Phubbing is a combination of phone and snubbing, and this word means showing an attitude of hurting others through excessive cell phone use (Karadağ et al., 2015)

According to Putri et al (2024) phubbing behavior can be analyzed using media dependency theory. This theory suggests that individuals are increasingly dependent on media to meet their needs, thus making media play a significant role in everyday life. For example, when someone is too busy with their cellphone while talking to someone else, this can result in an inability to absorb information from the other person optimally. Along with the development of the times and continuous development of cellphones, they have now become a very important communication medium for society, especially students (Isrofin & Munawaroh, 2024). Smartphones have an important role in communication technology, because they make human life easier, more comfortable and faster. Cellphones that are increasingly developing are equipped with various internet access functions and are easy to carry anywhere (Youarti & Hidayah, 2018).

Despite the convenience of mobile phone use, people often overlook its negative effects. One such negative effect is phubbing. Phubbing describes people who constantly look at their phones when talking to others in social settings, preoccupied with their phones, and unable to communicate with others. The phenomenon of phubbing can be seen everywhere in social activities, including school, from changing class times and mobile phone conversations, to breaks, and even gatherings with friends. Phubbers often overlook the negative impact of phubbing on nonverbal behavior (Thseen, 2020).

Reza (2018) explains that phubbing consists of three dimensions. First, a person tends to ignore others during interactions. Second, individuals often find it difficult to stop playing with their smartphones, leading to frequent phone checks, which can lead to dependency. Third, individuals find it difficult to adjust, so they choose to remain silent and focus on their smartphones, without interacting with those around them. Good social interactions can be seen from acceptance of teacher authority, interest and participation in school activities, willingness to accept responsibility, and closeness with friends and teachers (Syam, 2017).

Kurnia dan Sitasari (2020) found a significant negative relationship between self-control and phubbing behavior among adolescents in Jakarta. The results showed that individuals exhibiting low levels of phubbing behavior tended to stop accessing the internet while talking to others, maintain eye contact, consider information from the other person valuable, remain focused on the conversation, and avoid being distracted by phone notifications during the interaction. This suggests that adolescents with high self-control are better able to understand and adapt to their environment. This research is also supported by Aviyah & Farid (2014) who demonstrated that self-control helps individuals consider social norms and the risks that may arise when internal drives reach maximum levels.

Self-control is a crucial factor in predicting phubbing behavior because it is linked to addictive behaviors, such as problematic smartphone use. Individuals who are able to control their impulses tend to avoid excessive smartphone use (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016). This aligns with the findings of Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas (2016) who stated that smartphone use for short-term activities such as online shopping, searching for information, browsing social media, and communicating does not disrupt social interaction. Research by Alhady et al (2018) shows that individuals tend to be able to manage smartphone use for educational purposes, cope with busy schedules such as extracurricular activities, and remain calm even when facing internet connection problems, without using smartphones as an escape during times of stress or distress. Factors such as the purpose of smartphone use for educational purposes can reduce the likelihood of excessive smartphone use, even for long periods (Mulyati & Frieda, 2019)

Research by Kurnia and Sitasari (2020) shows that phubbing behavior is closely related to self-control. Individuals with high self-control are able to manage and regulate their online behavior (Ningtyas, 2012). This aligns with Agusta's (2016) opinion, which states that behavioral regulation in smartphone use helps individuals avoid deviant behavior and comply with societal norms. However, several gaps in the research remain that must be addressed. Most studies have been conducted in the context of general adolescents or college students, so research on phubbing among vocational high school students, who are characterized by more intensive technology use, is still very limited. Furthermore, previous research has shown inconsistent findings. Finally, previous research has not considered changes in smartphone usage behavior post-pandemic, which have significantly increased and potentially influenced phubbing. Therefore, this study is important to address these gaps and to determine the relationship between self-control and phubbing behavior among students at SMK Tri Arga 2 Jakarta.

Method

This research was conducted using a descriptive quantitative research method. According to Sugiyono (2020) a descriptive quantitative method is a method used to describe data numerically with the aim of providing an overview of the phenomena of a research object. This descriptive quantitative research was conducted to describe the self-control and phubbing behavior of vocational high school students.

Participants

The population in this study was all students of SMK Tri Arga 2, West Jakarta. A total of 400 students from four study programs: TKRO, TJK, AKL, and OTKP. According to Sugiyono (2020) a population is the entire research object that has certain characteristics and becomes the focus of the research. Therefore, the population in this study was all students of SMK Tri Arga 2, West Jakarta.

Sampling Procedures

The sample for this study was determined using a random sampling technique. According to Sugiyono (2020) random sampling is a sampling technique that allows each member of the population an equal chance of being selected. The results of the analysis using the Solvin formula indicate that 200 students of SMK Tri Arga 2, West Jakarta, were selected as the sample in this study.

Materials and Apparatus

This study used two scales: a phubbing scale and a Likert-style self-control scale. The phubbing scale, developed by the authors, is based on the theory of Roberts & David (2016) with aspects of phone obsession and phone interference. It consists of 32 items. Reliability tests showed a Cochran's alpha of 0.80, indicating reliability. Validity tests indicated that two items were dropped from the phubbing scale.

Meanwhile, the self-control scale, developed by the authors, is based on the theory of Tangney et al (2004) with aspects of self-discipline, non-impulsivity, healthy habits, work ethic, and reliability. It consists of 32 items. Reliability tests showed a Cochran's alpha of 0.78, indicating reliability. Validity tests indicated that two items were dropped from the self-control scale.

Therefore, this study used two main scales: a phubbing scale consisting of 30 items, and a self-control scale consisting of 30 items. Both have been tested for validity and reliability so it can be said that both scales are suitable for use.

Procedures

This research was conducted at SMK Tri Arga 2 with the assistance of guidance and counseling teachers in coordinating the distribution of questionnaires via Google Forms. The Likert scale model had four alternative answers: very appropriate, appropriate, inappropriate, and very inappropriate. At the beginning of the form, there was a consent statement that respondents had to check to indicate their willingness to provide data voluntarily after reading the explanation of the research objectives and data confidentiality. After data collection, the data was analyzed to determine whether there was a relationship between self-control and phubbing behavior in vocational high school students.

Design or Data Analysis

The data analysis technique in this study used the Pearson product-moment correlation test. This technique was chosen because the study aimed to determine whether there was a relationship between self-control and phubbing behavior in vocational high school students. The software applications used were SPSS version 26 and JASP version 0.95.

Results and Discussions

Results

The following are the results of the distribution analysis generated by the JAPS software in the form of x and y.

Table 1. Categorization of Self-Control score distribution

Interval	Categorization	F	%
91 – 120	High	33	17
61 – 90	Medium	167	84
30 – 60	Low	0	0
Total		200	100

Table 1 shows that the self-control level of Tri Arga 2 Vocational School students is in the moderate category. A total of 167 students, or 84%, have a moderate level of self-control within the 61–90 range. Meanwhile, 33 students, or 17%, have a high level of self-control within

the 91–120 range. Therefore, overall, Tri Arga 2 Vocational School students are in the moderate category in terms of self-control.

Table 2. Categorization of Phubbing score distribution

Interval	Categorization	F	%
91 – 120	High	39	20
61 – 90	Medium	158	79
30 – 60	Low	3	2
Total		200	100

Table 2 shows that the level of phubbing behavior among SMK Tri Arga 2 students is in the moderate category. A total of 158 students, or 79%, fell within the 61-90 range, having a moderate level of phubbing behavior. Meanwhile, 39 students, or 17%, fell within the 91-120 range, having a high level of phubbing behavior. Therefore, overall, SMK Tri Arga 2 students fall within the moderate category in terms of phubbing behavior.

Tabel 3. Pearson Correlation Test Results

Variabel	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Self Control	1		200
Phubbing	-0.570	0.000	200

Table 3 shows that the Pearson correlation results obtained a correlation coefficient value of $r = -0.570$ with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate that there is a significant relationship between Self-Control (X) and Phubbing (Y) in students. A negative correlation coefficient indicates that the relationship between the two variables is in the opposite direction, that is, the higher the student's self-control, the lower the phubbing behavior displayed.

Discussions

The analysis revealed a significant negative correlation. This suggests that higher self-control leads to lower levels of phubbing. This finding is consistent with the characteristics of vocational high school adolescents, who are in a developmental phase where self-control is still being formed and tested through various academic and social demands (Setiawan et al., 2022). When students' self-control is low, they are more easily distracted by their smartphones, especially in class or when interacting with peers.

This aligns with Tangney et al (2004) statement that self-control is an individual's ability to resist momentary urges or desires and consider long-term consequences before acting. In the context of vocational high school students, this ability to resist urges is directly related to the tendency to check their smartphones when notifications appear, when boredom arises, or when seeking instant entertainment. This aligns with Cullen & Wilcox (2012) statement that low self-control is associated with various maladaptive behaviors, such as dependency, difficulty prioritizing tasks, and behaviors that are detrimental to themselves and the environment. This suggests that self-control plays a crucial role in determining how individuals manage their smartphone dependency.

In line with research by Kurnia et al. (2020), it was found that there is a negative relationship between self-control and phubbing behavior, where self-control contributes 74.2% to phubbing behavior. Adolescents with high self-control can manage their smartphone use well, while adolescents with low self-control tend to have difficulty in controlling themselves. This is also reflected in students at SMK Tri Arga 2 West Jakarta, where observations show that students with low self-control scores are more often using smartphones during the learning process, even when the teacher is explaining the material.

Research by Goldfried & Merbaum (1973) also indicates that individuals with low self-control tend to be impulsive in the situations they face. Similarly, a study by Xiang et al. (2020) showed that individuals with high self-control scores were able to limit their smartphone use. Conversely, research by Yovita (2018) showed that individuals who lack self-control are often unable to make the right decisions to suppress impulsive behavior. Furthermore, research by Meganingrum et al (2021) also found a significant negative relationship between phubbing behavior and self-control in adolescents, confirming that self-control influences phubbing behavior. This research presentation indicates that low self-control is a dominant factor that strengthens students' tendency to phub.

With the rapid development of technology, especially smartphones, individuals now enjoy various conveniences such as long-distance communication and access to information that simplify daily life (Sumiyana et al., 2010). However, this convenience can also lead to smartphone dependence, which makes individuals less aware of their surroundings (Syahputra et al., 2022). Research by Syifa (2020) revealed that excessive smartphone use can have a negative impact on users. Furthermore, advances in smartphone features also affect individuals' social relationships with their environment. Research by Raharjo (2021) showed a significant relationship between the intensity of internet access and phubbing behavior among students. The more important the role of the smartphone in an individual's life, the greater the perceived influence, especially in terms of phubbing behavior. This is in line with the findings of Syifa (2020) which showed that excessive smartphone use influences phubbing behavior.

The findings of this study confirm that vocational high school students with high smartphone usage are more susceptible to phubbing, especially in group learning situations, interactions with teachers, and informal school activities. Furthermore, students' tendency to prefer digital interactions over in-person interactions also suggests that self-control plays a significant role in shaping phubbing behavior patterns. It is clear that phubbing behavior among Tri Arga 2 Vocational High School students is influenced not only by adolescent developmental factors and technological demands, but also by their level of self-control. Good self-control is a protective factor that enables students to regulate smartphone use and maintain the quality of in-person social interactions.

The results of this study indicate a significant negative relationship between self-control and phubbing behavior in vocational high school students. These findings have implications for several parties, including schools, as they emphasize the importance of developing self-control in students. Developing development programs such as time management training, digital literacy, education on smartphone ethics, and character development activities can help students control the urge to use smartphones excessively. Teachers can also implement learning strategies that increase student focus and engagement, thereby minimizing the opportunity for students to phub in class. Furthermore, future research should consider other variables that may play a role in phubbing behavior, such as self-esteem, smartphone addiction, FOMO, emotional regulation, or the quality of social interactions. This will allow for a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of students' psychological states.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate a negative relationship between self-control and phubbing behavior among students at SMK Tri Arga 2, West Jakarta. This means that the better a student's self-control, the lower their tendency to phub. This finding confirms that self-control plays a crucial role in shaping healthy smartphone use behavior in the school environment. Based on these findings, the implication for Guidance and Counseling is the need for guidance and counseling teachers to develop services that focus on improving student self-control. Services such as personal guidance, individual counseling, and self-management training can help students regulate smartphone use so that it does not interfere with social interactions or the

learning process. For further research, it is recommended that researchers expand other variables that could potentially influence phubbing behavior, such as emotional regulation, internet addiction, or social environmental factors. Future research could also use different methods or involve a wider sample to further comprehensive the results.

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