

Relationship Between Nomophobia, Depression, and Anxiety in Adolescents

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the paragraph defining nomophobia as “the discomfort, anxiety, or distress individuals experience when they are unable to communicate through their smartphones,” the authors should provide greater conceptual differentiation between nomophobia and related constructs such as smartphone addiction, problematic smartphone use, and internet addiction. At present, the manuscript appears to use these concepts interchangeably, which weakens construct validity. A more precise delineation of nomophobia as a distinct anxiety-related construct would improve conceptual clarity and scholarly rigor.

The literature review section heavily relies on reporting associations from previous studies without critically synthesizing inconsistencies or methodological limitations in prior research. For example, the paragraph beginning with “Recent empirical evidence suggests that nomophobia is not merely a technological dependency” cites multiple studies supporting significant relationships but does not address contradictory findings, cultural variability, or differences in measurement approaches. A high-quality review should include analytical integration rather than a sequential listing of supportive studies.

The manuscript states that the study is “fundamental research” in the abstract but later describes it as “applied” in the Methods section. This inconsistency in research classification should be corrected because it creates confusion regarding the

epistemological orientation of the study. The authors should clarify whether the study is exploratory, applied, or basic correlational research and maintain terminological consistency throughout the manuscript.

The description of the Nomophobia Questionnaire lacks sufficient justification for using the four-dimensional structure in this adolescent Iranian sample. The authors should report whether confirmatory factor analysis or exploratory factor analysis was conducted to verify the dimensionality of the instrument within this population. Reliance solely on prior validation studies may not adequately establish construct validity in the current context.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The sampling procedure described as “non-probability convenience sampling based on the Morgan table” raises important concerns regarding representativeness and external validity. The authors should explain how participants were recruited, from how many schools, whether schools differed socioeconomically, and whether any attempt was made to minimize sampling bias. Without such details, the generalizability of the findings to the broader adolescent population of Sabzevar County remains questionable.

The description of ethical procedures is insufficient for publication in a high-quality scientific journal. Although the authors mention informed consent and adherence to the Helsinki Declaration, there is no mention of ethics committee approval number, institutional review board authorization, parental consent procedures for minors, or confidentiality safeguards. Since the participants were adolescents aged 12–18 years, parental or guardian consent is ethically mandatory and should be explicitly documented.

The measurement section describing the Beck Depression Inventory contains excessive historical and psychometric detail that is not directly relevant to the current study. For instance, the paragraph includes extensive discussions of validation studies dating back several decades, which unnecessarily lengthens the manuscript. Instead, the authors should prioritize reporting psychometric properties specifically relevant to the present sample, including Cronbach’s alpha values obtained in this study.

The manuscript does not report reliability coefficients for the current sample for any of the instruments used. Although prior validation studies are extensively discussed, internal consistency values such as Cronbach’s alpha or McDonald’s omega for the present data are essential to establish measurement reliability in this population. This omission represents a major methodological weakness.

In the paragraph introducing the Beck Anxiety Inventory, the sentence “Five forms of validity, including content, concurrent, construct, diagnostic, and factorial validity, have been examined for this instrument” is too vague and unsupported. The authors should provide citations immediately after such claims and report more precise validity indices rather than generalized statements regarding “high efficiency.”

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.