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Relationship Between Nomophobia and Social Media Addiction in High School Students: A Study on 12th Graders[1]

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Abstract
The widespread use of smartphones worldwide facilitates daily life; however, it also gives rise to various fears, sources of anxiety, and health-related problems. This study aimed to investigate two of these issues: nomophobia (the fear of being without a mobile phone) and social media addiction. The research was conducted using a quantitative research method within the framework of a relational survey model. The sample group consisted of 12th grade students. Data were collected from a total of 541 students through convenience sampling. A personal information form, the Nomophobia Scale, and the Social Media Addiction Scale were utilized as data collection instruments. In the dataset exhibiting normal distribution, parametric tests such as the independent samples t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Pearson correlation analysis were conducted using SPSS software. According to the main findings, the students' overall levels of nomophobia were found to be moderate. It was observed that as the time spent on smartphones and social media increased, levels of nomophobia also rose. Moreover, a statistically significant positive correlation was identified between students' nomophobia levels and their social media addiction. Parents of students with high levels of nomophobia and social media addiction can be informed and encouraged to limit screen time at home during certain hours, to practice digital detox as a family, and to serve as role models in this regard.

Keywords: smartphone, addiction, nomophobia, social media

INTRODUCTION

Rapid changes in information technologies have begun to change our daily habits and lifestyles. The boundaries of what humans can do with technology and the virtual world have expanded greatly. Individuals are increasingly connected to this evolving and changing virtual network and are facilitating their work through an invisible hand (Sarıbay and Durgun, 2019). Smartphones make access to this virtual world much easier and more widespread (Sadan and Ayas, 2021). The intensity of use of information technologies is also reflected in research reports. According to the We Are Social (2025) digital report, the number of people with mobile connections in Turkey corresponds to 92.1% of the total population. 88.3% of the total population in Turkey are internet users, and 75.6% of the total internet users and 85.5% of the population aged 18 and over use at least one social media platform. According to the August 2024 data of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), the rate of individuals using the internet in the 16-74 age group is 88.8%. The internet usage rate of children between the ages of 6-15 was 91.3%. The smartphone usage rate in the 11-15 age group was 76.1% and the social media usage rate was 79.0%.

The increasing features of smartphones and the ease of access to the internet have made them an indispensable part of our daily lives (Adnan and Gezgin, 2016). It is seen as a key that opens the door to different worlds, especially for young people (Yılmaz et al., 2018). Many studies have also shown that the internet and social media are increasingly used by the young population (Alptekin et al., 2021; Özdemir, 2021; Uslu, 2021). Young people, who spend most of their time on smartphones, which are a very popular tool, have difficulty continuing their daily lives without

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using their smartphones (Buctot et al., 2020; Vagka et al., 2023). Some young people tend to meet their socialization needs from smartphones, which are an inevitable part of modern life, instead of their peers (Aydın and Kuş, 2023). It is an undeniable fact that smartphones make people's lives easier, but due to their problematic use, they also cause newly defined phobias and psychological disorders to emerge every day. In daily life, it is possible to see people who do not leave home without their smartphones, who feel uneasy when they are not with them (Göktaş and Demirer, 2022), and who have a second indispensable life in their smartphones (Sarıbay and Durgun, 2019). In addition to physical problems such as dry eyes, visual impairments and neck pain related to mobile phones, ranging from excessive use to addiction, some psychological problems also occur (Gürol et al., 2020; Yalçın et al., 2022; Yıldırım and Kişioğlu, 2018). One of the most important psychological problems caused by these technologies is the concept of "nomophobia", which is expressed as the fear of being deprived of a mobile phone or being disconnected from communication via mobile phones (King et al., 2010).

The concept of nomophobia comes from the English word nomophobia (No Mobile Phone Phobia). Nomophobia is a psychological condition that expresses negative emotions such as anxiety, restlessness and stress experienced by an individual when they are away from their mobile phone (King et al., 2010; King et al., 2013). It is stated that nomophobic individuals use their mobile phones regularly and intensively, always carry their chargers with them, and feel anxious and tense when their mobile phone batteries run out or when they cannot find their mobile phone nearby (Bragazzi and Del-Puente, 2014; Dixit et al., 2010). Yıldırım and Correira (2015) address nomophobia in a four-dimensional structure as not being able to access information, giving up convenience, not being able to communicate and losing connectedness. The dimension of not being able to access information reflects the discomfort of losing access to information through smartphones. The dimension of giving up convenience reflects the emotions felt as a result of giving up the convenience provided by smartphones. The dimension of not being able to communicate refers to the feelings felt when losing instant communication with people and not being able to use services that allow instant communication. The dimension of losing connectedness is related to the feelings of the individual when losing the communication opportunities provided by smartphones anytime, anywhere.

It is stated that individuals with nomophobia see their phones as a part of themselves, constantly look at their phones in social environments, and avoid places where device use is prohibited, which negatively affects their social lives (Güllüce et al., 2019; Köyönü et al., 2022; Yalçın et al., 2022). However, it has been revealed that nomophobia also causes problems such as academic procrastination (Fettahoğlu et al., 2019), low academic success (Akman, 2019; Özsavran and Ayyıldız, 2022), smartphone addiction (Buctot et al., 2020; Göktaş and Demirer, 2022; Kaviani et al., 2020), aggression and anger (Babayiğit et al., 2019), loneliness (Nelliyil and Anil, 2020; Santl et al., 2022; Şengör, 2020), problematic internet use (Mahgoub et al., 2019) and attention deficit (Kıraç, 2019).

Another psychological problem that affects the intensity of smartphone use and is thought to be related to nomophobia is social media addiction. Kuss and Griffiths (2017) defined social media addiction as compromising other activities and neglecting personal, academic and social responsibilities as a result of spending excessive and uncontrolled time on social media platforms. Individuals with social media addiction are usually overly preoccupied with their social media posts and act with the urge to log in and use social media in an uncontrollable way (Andreassen and Pallesen, 2014). The sense of freedom provided by social media, the possibility of surveillance (stalking), and the likes received control individuals with a contagious energy effect and strengthen their attachment to the social network (Sarıbay and Durgun, 2019). The increase in social media addiction can also be a triggering factor in the formation of nomophobia by preventing the addicted person from staying away from their mobile phone, which is a means of using social media (Babayiğit et al., 2019). This relationship between social media use and nomophobia was also a starting point for the current study.

When the literature is examined, it is seen that the studies focusing on nomophobia are largely focused on university students (Adnan and Gezgin, 2016; Al-Mamun et al., 2023; Essel et al., 2022; Kaur et al., 2021; Köyönü et al., 2022; Tuco et al., 2023; Yalçın et al., 2022). However, the attitudes and behaviors of adolescents towards digital devices play a critical role in shaping the risk of addiction. Observations made at the high school where the researcher worked revealed that smartphone ownership and frequency of use were significantly more common in the 12th grade compared to other grade levels. Accordingly, in the current study, 12th grade students in the adolescent age group were determined as the sample group. The fact that the group that uses the internet and smartphones the most in Turkey is young individuals makes this age group a segment at high risk for both internet and smartphone addiction (Göktaş and Demirer, 2022). This generation, called digital natives, can be more easily exposed to the types of addictions brought about by the digital age, along with the opportunities offered by technology (Yıldız et al., 2020). Adolescence is considered a critical period in the development of technological addictions in terms of internet, social media, digital games and smartphone use (Ektiricioğlu et al., 2022). For this reason, determining the nomophobia levels of young people who grow up in a digital culture and spend more time in the virtual world is of great importance in terms of revealing the current situation, determining possible risks and planning preventive interventions. On the other hand, the fact that nomophobia, a current problem that is widespread among young people, has an increasing effect especially on Generation Z has caused research and studies on the subject to gain momentum in recent years (Sadan and Ayas, 2021). Another factor that increases the importance of this study is the limited number of studies in the literature that examine the variables of nomophobia and social media addiction together. However, it is thought that these two phenomena are closely related to each other and that social media use reinforces smartphone addiction. In particular, the motivating effect of social networking sites on smartphone use is seen as an important factor in the development of nomophobia. In this context, examining the levels of nomophobia and social media addiction of 12th grade students in terms of various variables and revealing the relationship between them is considered important in terms of both contributing to the literature and shedding light on preventive guidance studies. In line with this purpose, answers were sought for the following sub-problems:

For 12th grade high school students:

- What are their levels of nomophobia?
- What are their levels of social media addiction?
- Do their levels of nomophobia differ significantly according to gender, school type, and the amount of time spent daily on smartphones and social media?
- Is there a significant relationship between nomophobia and social media addiction?

METHOD

The data used in the study was collected with the application permit of the Van Directorate of National Education, numbered E-89601435-20-99608950, dated 26.03.2024.

Research Design

This study is quantitative and uses both descriptive and relational survey models. The descriptive survey model aims to describe the current situation and usually involves collecting data from a large group of participants (Fraenkel et al., 2012). The relational survey model goes beyond description by examining possible relationships between variables, helping to better understand and predict phenomena, especially in educational research (Büyüköztürk et al., 2013). In this study, the descriptive survey was used to determine the levels of nomophobia and social media addiction, while the relational survey was applied to investigate how these levels differ according to variables such as gender, school type, and daily time spent on smartphones and social media.

Sampling

In this study, data were collected through face-to-face surveys from 572 12th grade students attending five different high schools in the central district of Van province, using a convenience

sampling method. In quantitative research, a sample size obtained by multiplying the number of scale items by the Likert-type response options is generally considered sufficient. Due to various reasons (e.g., incomplete or blank responses), the questionnaires of 31 students were excluded from the analysis, resulting in a final sample of 541 students whose data were included in the analyses. The demographic characteristics of the sample group are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample Group

	f	%		f	%
Gender			**Smartphone daily usage time**		
Female	363	67.1	0-2 hours	175	32.3
Male	178	32.9	2-4 hours	203	37.5
School type			4-6 hours	89	16.5
Science High School	83	15.3	6 hours or more	74	13.7
Anatolian High School	263	48.6	**Social media daily usage time**		
Vocational High School	126	23.3	0-2 hours	322	59.5
Imam Hatip High School	69	12.8	2-4 hours	134	24.8
Track			4-6 hours	53	9.8
Quantitative track	259	47.9	6 hours or more	32	5.9
Equal Weight track	203	37.5			
Social Sciences track	75	13.9	**Purpose of using a smartphone**		
Possession of a phone			Social media	274	50.6
Smart phone	430	79.5	Playing games	106	19.6
Push button phone	47	8.7	Listen to music	253	46.8
No phone	64	11.8	Study	300	55.5
			News tracking	114	21.1
			Research	155	28.7
			Other	33	6.1

Looking at the demographic information in Table 1, it is seen that the sample group is predominantly female and nearly 80 percent of them own a smartphone. It is noticeable that the daily time spent on smartphones and social media is concentrated in 0-2 and 2-4 hours. It is seen that social media, listening to music and studying come to the fore among the purposes of using smartphones.

Data Collection Tools

Personal information form, nomophobia scale and social media addiction scale were used as data collection tools.

Personal information form

Demographic information of 12th grade students regarding gender, school type, field, phone ownership, daily time spent with smartphones, daily time spent on social media and purposes of using the phone were obtained with this form.

Nomophobia scale

The Nomophobia Scale (NMP-Q), developed by Yildirim and Correia (2015) and adapted into Turkish by Yildirim et al., (2016), was used as the data collection tool in the study. The relevant scale is itemized according to the 7-point Likert type and consists of a total of 20 items. The scale consists of 4 subscales: not being able to access information (items 1-4), giving up convenience (items 5-9), not being able to communicate (items 10-15) and losing connectedness (items 16-20). The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 20 and the highest score is 140. In the developed scale, 20 points that the participants will receive indicate that they do not have nomophobia, scores between 21-59 indicate that they have a mild level of nomophobia, scores between 60-99 indicate that they have a moderate level of nomophobia, and scores between 100-140 indicate that they have an extreme level of nomophobia. The reliability coefficient of the

original scale calculated using Cronbach's alpha was given as .95, and the reliability coefficient of the scale adapted to Turkish was given as .92. The reliability coefficient was calculated as .89 in the current study.

Social media addiction scale

"The Social Media Addiction Scale for Adolescents" used in the study was developed by Özgenel et al., (2019). The scale is one-dimensional and consists of 9 items. Scale items are 5-point Likert type and are scored as "1 - Strongly disagree", "2- Disagree", "3- Undecided", "4- Agree", and "5- Strongly agree". There are no reverse scored items in the scale. A minimum of 9 points and a maximum of 45 points can be obtained from the scale. A high score from the scale indicates that the individual's social media addiction level is high, and a low score indicates that the individual's social media addiction level is low. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0.904. In the current study, the reliability coefficient was calculated as .863.

Collection and Analysis of Data

In selecting the sample group, attention was paid to including students from different types of schools (such as Science High School, Anatolian High School, Vocational High School, and Imam Hatip High School) and different academic tracks (such as quantitative track, equal weight track and social sciences track). Accordingly, 12th grade students from five different schools were reached by the researcher and completed the scales face-to-face on a voluntary basis. The data obtained from the sample group were transferred to a computer and analyzed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS software packages. First, a normality analysis was conducted to determine whether the data followed a normal distribution. Since the skewness and kurtosis values of the scale scores and subdimensions fell within the acceptable range of -1.5 to +1.5 (Tabachnick et al., 2007), parametric tests were applied. To answer the sub-problems of the study, descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation), independent samples t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), Pearson correlation, and simple linear regression analyses were utilized.

FINDINGS

Participants' Levels of Nomophobia and Social Media Addiction

The analysis results regarding the participants' levels of nomophobia and social media addiction are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Participants' Nomophobia and Social Media Addiction Levels

	N	$\bar{X}$	SS	Situation
Nomophobia scale general	541	71.50	1.22	Moderate
Social media addiction	541	2.38	0.93	Low

According to the descriptive findings presented in Table 2, the students' overall levels of nomophobia were moderate, while their levels of social media addiction were low.

Nomophobia Levels by Gender

The results of the independent samples t-test performed to determine the nomophobia levels of the participants according to the gender variable are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Nomophobia Levels According to Gender Variable

	Gender	N	M	SD	df	t	p	η2
Not Being Able to Access Information	Female	363	3.74	1.56	539	-.657	.511	
	Male	178	3.84	1.69				
Giving up Convenience	Female	363	3.62	1.51	539	.072	.943	
	Male	178	3.61	1.64				
Not Being Able to Communicate	Female	363	4.06	1.60	539	4,774	.000**	.041
	Male	178	3.38	1.48				
Losing Connectedness	Female	363	3.04	1.52	539	-.406	.685	
	Male	178	3.10	1.67				
Nomophobia general	Female	363	3.63	1.18	539	1,547	.122	
	Male	178	3.46	1.29				

***p<.001*

According to Table 3, there was no significant difference in the nomophobia levels of participants based on gender for the subdimensions of not being able to access information, giving up convenience and losing connectedness, as well as for the overall scale ($p > .05$). In the subdimension of inability to communicate, female students' nomophobia levels ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 1.60$) were found to be significantly higher than those of male students ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.48$), $t(539) = 4.774$, $p < .001$, with an effect size of 0.41.

Nomophobia Levels According to School Type

The results of the one-way ANOVA test performed to determine the participants' nomophobia levels according to the school type variable are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Nomophobia Levels According to School Type Variable

	Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean squares	F	p	η2	Significant difference
Not Being Able to Access Information	intergroup	.577	3	.192	0.74	.974		-
	within groups	1396.086	537	2,600				
	Total	1396.663	540					
Giving up Convenience	intergroup	9,794	3	3,265	1,351	.257		-
	within groups	1297.463	537	2,416				
	Total	1307.256	540					
Not Being Able to Communicate	intergroup	75,242	3	25,081	10,364	.000**	.55	SHS<AHS
	within groups	1299.552	537	2,420				SHS <VTAHS
	Total	1374.795	540					AHS < VTAHS
								AIHHS< VTAHS
Losing Connectedness	intergroup	18,713	3	6,238	2,530	.056		-
	within groups	1324.030	537	2,466				
	Total	1342.744	540					
Nomophobia general	intergroup	18,861	3	6,287	4,250	.006*	.23	SHS < VTAHS
	within groups	794,347	537	1,479				AIHHS < VTAHS
	Total	813,208	540					

**p<.05, **p<.001 (SHS:Sscience High School; AHS: Anatolian High School; VTAHS: Vocational Technical Anatolian High School;* AIHHS: Anatolian Imam Hatip High School*)*

According to Table 4, no significant differences were found in participants' nomophobia levels for the subdimensions of not being able to access information, giving up convenience and losing connectedness based on school type ($p > .05$). However, a significant difference was observed in the subdimension of not being able to communicate ($F(3, 537) = 10.364$, $p < .001$) and in the overall nomophobia scale ($F(3, 537) = 4.250$, $p < .05$). The effect sizes for these two dimonsions were .55 and .23, respectively. Post Hoc analysis revealed that vocational high school students had higher nomophobia levels compared to students from other types of high schools.

Nomophobia Levels According to Daily Time Spent on Smartphone

The one-way ANOVA test results performed to determine the participants' nomophobia levels according to the variable of daily time spent on the smartphone are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Nomophobia Levels According to the Variable of Daily Time Spent on the Smartphone

	Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean squares	F	*p*	*η2*	Significant difference
Not Being Able to Access Information	intergroup	114,338	3	38,113	15,961	.000**	.082	0-2 hours<2-4 hours
	within groups	1282.325	537	2,388				0-2 hours<4-6 hours
								0-2 hours<6 hours and above
	Total	1396.663	540					2-4 hours<6 hours above
Giving up Convenience	intergroup	114,275	3	38,092	17,146	.000**		0-2 hours<2-4 hours
	within groups	1192.981	537	2,222			.026	0-2 hours<4-6 hours
								0-2 hours<6 hours and above
	Total	1307.256	540					2-4 hours<6 hours above
Not Being Able to Communicate	intergroup	27,846	3	9,282	3,700	.012*		0-2 hours<6 hours and above
	within groups	1346.949	537	2,508			.020	
	Total	1374.795	540					
Losing Connectedness	intergroup	34,591	3	11,530	4,733	.003*		0-2 hours<6 hours and above
	within groups	1308.152	537	2,436			.087	2-4 hours<6 hours above
	Total	1342.744	540					
Nomophobia general	intergroup	59,186	3	19,729	14,050	.000**		0-2 hours<4-6 hours
	within groups	754,002	537	1,404			.073	0-2 hours<6 hours and above
								2-4 hours<6 hours above
	Total	813,208	540					

**p<.05, **p<.001*

According to Table 5, significant differences were found in participants' nomophobia levels across the subdimensions of not being able to access information ($F(3, 537) = 15.961$, $p < .001$), giving up convenience ($F(3, 537) = 17.146$, $p < .001$), not being able to communicate ($F(3, 537) = 3.700$, $p < .05$), and losing connectedness ($F(3, 537) = 4.733$, $p < .05$), as well as in the overall nomophobia scale ($F(3, 537) = 14.050$, $p < .001$). The effect sizes of these variables were .082, .26, .020, .087, and .073, respectively. A post hoc analysis was conducted to identify between which groups the differences occurred. The findings indicated that as the amount of daily time spent on smartphones increased, nomophobia levels also tended to rise.

Nomophobia Levels According to Daily Time Spent on Social Media

The one-way ANOVA test results performed to determine participants' nomophobia levels according to the variable of daily time spent on social media are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Nomophobia Levels According to the Variable of Daily Time Spent on Social Media

	Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean squares	F	*p*	*η2*	Significant difference
Not Being Able to Access Information	intergroup	106,678	3	35,559	14,803	.000**		0-2 hours<2-4 hours
	within groups	1289.985	537	2,402			.076	0-2 hours<4-6 hours
								0-2 hours<6 hours and above
	Total	1396.663	540					2-4 hours<6 hours above
								4-6 hours<6 hours and above
Giving up Convenience	intergroup	136,863	3	45,621	20,932	.000**		0-2 hours<2-4 hours
	within groups	1170.393	537	2,180			.056	0-2 hours<4-6 hours
								0-2 hours<6 hours and above
	Total	1307.256	540					2-4 hours<6 hours above
Not Being Able to Communicate	intergroup	34,852	3	11,617	4,656	.003*		0-2 hours<2-4 hours
	within groups	1339.943	537	2,495			.025	
	Total	1374.795	540					
Losing Connectedness	intergroup	75,341	3	25,114	10,641	.000**		0-2 hours<2-4 hours
	within groups	1267.402	537	2,360			.105	0-2 hours<4-6 hours
								0-2 hours<6 hours and above
	Total	1342.744	540					
Nomophobia general	intergroup	72,709	3	24,236	17,576	.000**		0-2 hours<2-4 hours
	within groups	740,499	537	1,379			.089	0-2 hours<4-6 hours
								0-2 hours<6 hours and above
	Total	713,208	540					

**p<.05, **p<.001*

According to Table 6, significant differences were found in participants' nomophobia levels across the subdimensions of not being able to access information ($F(3, 537) = 14.803$, $p < .001$), giving up convenience ($F(3, 537) = 20.932$, $p < .001$), not being able to communicate ($F(3, 537) = 4.656$, $p < .05$), and and losing connectedness ($F(3, 537) = 10.641$, $p < .001$), as well as in the overall nomophobia scale ($F(3, 537) = 17.576$, $p < .001$). The effect sizes of these variables were found to be .076, .056, .025, .105, and .089, respectively. A post hoc analysis was conducted to determine between which groups these differences occurred. The results indicated that as the amount of daily time spent on social media increased, nomophobia levels also tended to rise.

The Relationship Between Nomophobia Levels and Social Media Addictions

The results of the Pearson correlation test and simple linear regression analysis conducted to examine the relationship between students' levels of nomophobia and their social media addiction are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Results of Correlation and Regression Analyses Between Nomophobia Levels and Social Media Addiction

Results of the Pearson Correlation Analysis						
	Not Being Able to Access Information	Giving up Convenience	Not Being Able to Communicate	Losing Connectedness	Nomophobia general	Social media addiction
Not Being Able to Access Information	---					
Giving up Convenience	.534**	---				
Not Being Able to Communicate	.386**	.489**	---			
Losing Connectedness	.418**	.488**	.467**	---		
Nomophobia general	.716**	.804**	.796**	.768**	---	
Social media addiction	.364**	.463**	.300**	.442**	.501**	---

Results of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis					
Variables	B	Std. Error	β	t	p
(Constant)	2.002	.126		15.940	.000**
Social Media Addiction	.661	.049	.501	13.451	.000**
Dependent variable: Nomophobia					
R: .501	R^2: .251	F: 180.941	p:.000**		

***p<.001*

To examine the relationship between the overall level of nomophobia and social media addiction in the sample group, a Pearson correlation test was conducted. Additionally, a simple linear regression analysis was performed to determine the extent to which social media addiction predicts overall nomophobia. When the data presented in Table 7 are examined, there is a significant and moderate positive correlation between social media addiction and overall nomophobia ($R = .501$, $R^2 = .251$, $p = .000$). Furthermore, there are high and significant positive correlations among the subdimensions of nomophobia. These high correlations indicate that the subdimensions of nomophobia interact with each other, suggesting that anxiety experienced in one dimension may affect the others as well. Positive and significant correlations were also found between all subdimensions of nomophobia and social media addiction. This finding suggests that as social media addiction increases, anxiety related to all dimensions of nomophobia (namely, not being able to access information, giving up convenience, not being able to communicate, and losing connectedness) also increases. According to the regression analysis results presented in Table 7, social media addiction accounts for 25.1% of the total variance. Based on the standardized regression coefficients (β), a one-unit increase in social media addiction results in a 50.1% increase in nomophobia.

RESULTS, DISCUSSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, the levels of nomophobia and social media addiction among 12th grade high school students were examined in relation to various variables, and the relationship between them was investigated. The students' overall levels of nomophobia were found to be moderate. This result is consistent with some studies in the literature (Asar et al., 2023; Coenen and Görlich, 2022; Essel et al., 2022; Gezgin et al., 2017; Köyönü et al., 2022; Yildirim and Correia, 2015). However, in other studies, participants' nomophobia levels were reported to be above average (Adnan and Gezgin, 2016; Gürol et al., 2020; Hoşgör, 2020). It can be argued that the presence of nomophobia, even at a moderate level, among 12th grade students preparing for the university entrance examination is concerning, as it has the potential to negatively affect their academic performance. Indeed, some studies have shown that nomophobia can lead to negative outcomes such as attention deficit, inability to concentrate on lessons, academic failure, and difficulties with adaptation (Akman, 2019; Erdem et al., 2016; Hoşgör, 2020). Additionally, nomophobia has been reported to contribute to the failure to complete important tasks on time and to academic procrastination behaviors resulting from prioritizing other activities (Fettahlıoğlu et al., 2019).

According to the results of the study, no significant differences were found in overall nomophobia levels in terms of gender. This finding is consistent with the results of other studies (Adnan and Gezgin, 2016; Apak and Yaman, 2019; Hoşgör, 2020). However, there are also studies in the literature reporting differences favoring females (Aksoğan and Atıcı, 2022; Asar et al., 2023; Erdem et al., 2017; Güllüce et al., 2019; Köyönü et al., 2022; Özsavran and Ayyıldız, 2022; Vagka et al., 2023; Yildirim et al., 2016). The gender differences observed across studies may be explained by the different ways in which men and women use their smartphones. For example, men are more likely to use smartphones for work-related purposes, while women tend to use them primarily to communicate with their loved ones (Vagka et al., 2023). In the present study, a significant gender difference favoring females was found only in the "not being able to communicate" subdimension of nomophobia. Similarly, the studies by Coenen and Görlich (2022) and Essel et al. (2022) also reported higher nomophobia levels in the communication-related dimension. Furthermore, it has been suggested that such divergent results may indicate that gender differences are influenced by culture and that cultural context can substantially shape differences in technology-related behaviors (Aksoğan and Atıcı, 2022; Kaviani et al., 2020).

When examined by school type, it was noteworthy that vocational high school students had significantly higher levels of nomophobia, while science high school students exhibited lower levels. From the perspective of student profiles, the finding that science high school students—who typically experience higher levels of academic performance anxiety—had lower nomophobia levels is an expected result. In addition, it is thought that the differences may also be influenced by variations in school policies, as some high schools impose stricter restrictions on smartphone use while others adopt a more flexible approach.

One of the key findings obtained in this study is that as the time spent on smartphones increases, the level of nomophobia also rises. In parallel with this result, the literature has similarly reported higher levels of nomophobia among individuals who spend more time on their phones daily (Al-Mamun et al., 2023; Asar et al., 2023; Bajaj et al., 2020; Erdem et al., 2017; Hoşgör, 2020; Kaur et al., 2021; Yildirim and Correia, 2015; Yin et al., 2019). Indeed, it has been noted that the intensity of smartphone use is an important indicator of nomophobia (Sırakaya, 2018) and that nomophobia levels increase in line with the frequency of checking smartphones, the amount of time spent using mobile internet, and the duration of daily mobile internet use (Gezgin et al., 2017). This situation implies that the more we use our mobile phones, the more we fear being without them (Kaviani et al., 2020). Considering especially the high rate of mobile device use among young people, it has been emphasized that the younger generation is facing a new form of risk (Adnan and Gezgin, 2016).

It was also determined that the nomophobia levels of 12th grade students differed significantly depending on the amount of time they spent daily on social media. Although the students' levels

of social media addiction were found to be low, it was observed that nomophobia levels increased as the time spent on social media rose. Hoşgör's (2020) study similarly confirmed that the daily duration of social media use via smartphones had a positive and significant effect on students' nomophobia levels. In addition, the fear of missing out on developments on social media has been identified as an important predictor of nomophobia (Yıldız et al., 2020). Research indicates that individuals spend a substantial amount of time on social networks via their smartphones. The ease of access to smartphones and social networks, the abundance of visually engaging content, their entertaining nature, their role in passing time, and their widespread use in society all contribute to their impact on nomophobia (Sarıbay and Durgun, 2019). Based on the fact that young people primarily use the internet to access social media, it has been argued that higher levels of daily mobile internet use are associated with higher levels of nomophobia (Gezgin et al., 2017).

A moderate, positive, and statistically significant relationship was found between students' overall nomophobia levels and their levels of social media addiction. In other words, as social media addiction increases, overall nomophobia levels also tend to rise. Social media addiction accounts for approximately 25% of the variance in nomophobia. Studies in the literature also highlight that the fear of missing out on innovations and updates increases smartphone and social network use, thereby enhancing tendencies toward nomophobic behavior (Sarıbay and Durgun, 2019; Uyar and Özen, 2023). Notably, students who carry a phone charger, those who check their smartphones first thing in the morning, and those who check their phones before going to bed show significantly higher nomophobia levels compared to those who do not. This can be explained by their strong desire to stay informed about online updates (Sırakaya, 2018). In the study by Al-Mamun et al. (2023), smartphone addiction was found to significantly mediate the relationship between Facebook addiction and nomophobia. Similarly, Vagka et al. (2023) demonstrated that individuals whose primary use of smartphones is for social networking and messaging are at greater risk of developing nomophobia. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations can be made:

- Group guidance activities and individual support programs may be implemented for students identified as having high levels of nomophobia through assessments conducted by school counseling services.
- Digital detox events such as "social media breaks" or "phone-free days" can be organized on certain days with the voluntary participation of students.
- Since nomophobia tends to increase with longer durations of smartphone and social media use, activities aimed at improving students' time management skills can be planned.
- Parents of students with high levels of nomophobia and social media addiction can be informed and encouraged to limit screen time at home during certain hours, practice digital detox as a family, and serve as role models in this regard.
- Further research can be conducted to examine other potential predictors of nomophobia beyond social media addiction.
- Qualitative studies may be designed to investigate the causal relationship between nomophobia and social media addiction.

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