

## Mobile Phone Addiction and Career Preparation in College Students

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### Abstract

To explore the status and relationship of college students' mobile phone addiction (MPA) and career preparation, 337 Chinese college students were surveyed on mobile phone usage, mobile phone addiction and career preparation through the Internet. The results showed that all college students used mobile phones, 9.76% of them used two mobile phones and the rest used one mobile phone; 10% of college students spent 100 RMB or more per month on mobile phones, 63.31% of them spent 30-100 RMB, 26.63% of them spent 30 RMB or less; 51.48% of college students used mobile phones for more than 5 hours per day, 83.72% of them used it for more than 3 hours per day; 90% of college students used mobile phones before bed and during rest, 67.75% of them used it as soon as they woke up in the morning, 65.38% of them used it when toilets, 64.5% of them used it when eating, 52.66% of them used it when walking. The top five uses of mobile phones for college students from high to low were Wechat, Payment, Shopping, Information Access and Weibo. 36.77% of college students have serious mobile phone addiction and that girls were significantly higher than boys in MPA and out of control of its sub-dimension. The career preparation and its dimensions of college students were at a medium level. There is a significant

negative correlation between college students' MPA and employment preparation. So mobile phone addiction has a certain degree of adverse impact on the career preparation of college students.

**Key words:** Mobile phone usage; Mobile phone addiction; Career experience; College student

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### INTRODUCTION

With the popularization of 4G networks and wireless network and the rapid updating of smart phones, the Internet tariffs and mobile phone prices have further declined, resulting in the phenomenon of almost one or more smart phones per person. With the rapid development of mobile Internet, a large number of high-viscosity mobile phone applications have emerged, rapidly occupying the spare time of College students. It meets the needs of college students for information and social intercourse. Mobile phone can almost meet the needs of most college students' daily life, so college students spend more and more time on mobile phones and mobile phone addiction (MPA) in college students is becoming more and more common.

Mobile phone addiction is becoming a serious public health problem due to its high incidence and increasing trend among all kinds of people, which has a great impact on people's learning and working efficiency and physical and mental health. Liu H. and Wang H. L. (2012) found 29.8% of Chinese college students could be classified as mobile phone addicts. There were no insignificant differences between girls and boys or junior and senior

students. Studies have also demonstrated that 25% of college students had medium and above mobile phone dependence and 94.5% of them mainly used QQ, blog, Wechat and other communication software and traditional mobile communication functions such as telephone calls and receiving and SMS were used by 75.9% of college students (Fu, et al, 2016). Other study has also found that the proportion of problematic mobile phone use among college students was 27.9 % in China (Tao, et al 2017). And one third of young adults evidenced scores indicative of problematic mobile phone use in the United Arab Emirates (Vally, et al, 2019). 30.3% of school students in rural India met the dependence criteria (Jamir, et al, 2019) . Even almost one quarter to one third of driver reported using their phone on a daily basis to write (22.2%) or read (38.2%) text messages while driving in Ukraine (Hill, et al, 2019) . Study showed that 0.2%–12.3% of youth have online gambling problem (Griffiths, et al, 2017).

All in all, mobile phone addiction is becoming more and more serious, and its negative impact is increasing. It is extremely urgent to thoroughly study the negative effects of mobile phone addiction and intervention measures. This article will examine the current situation of college students' mobile addiction and its impact on employment preparation.

### **Mobile Phone Addiction**

Mobile phone addiction is essentially a kind of technology addiction, which is a kind of behavioral addiction including human-computer interaction (Griffiths, 1995). Mobile phone addiction is usually targeted at various network functions on mobile phones, such as social networks, online games, online fiction, online shopping, online sexual behavior, etc. It can be seen that mobile phone addiction and Internet addiction have a high degree of overlap and similarity. The act of using the mobile phone in a situation where it is forbidden to use the mobile phone or when it is possible to realize the potential negative impact of using the mobile phone is called “problematic mobile phone use” (Bianchi, 2005; Phillips, 2005). B. B. Tu, J. L. Zhang and others (2010) suggested that mobile phone addiction is a long-term or cyclical addiction caused by repeated use of mobile phones, including mobile phone addiction, mobile entertainment addiction, and mobile phone information search addiction. D. L. Han and Z. F. Qi (2005) defined mobile phone addiction as a condition in which mobile phone users have physical or psychological discomfort due to excessive abuse of mobile phones for some reason. They suggested that mobile phone addiction is reflected in three aspects. The first is the abuse of mobile phones. The second is that the excessive use of mobile phones affects normal life. Finally, there is a series of adverse reactions in mind and body when learning and working and when the mobile phone cannot be used.

At present, the meaning and characteristics of mobile phone addiction have been basically clear, and there are many measuring tools. However, with the increasing of mobile phone addiction, the meaning and measuring tools of mobile phone addiction need to be updated.

### **Career Preparation of College Students**

Shao H. Y. & Hu F. (2005) suggested that career preparation referred to the preparation of college students' core competitiveness in the job market. It was throughout the university's learning process, including comprehensive employment quality, ability preparation and psychological preparation. And career preparation was not about preparing for job search skills and strategies. Studies have demonstrated psychological preparations for college students' employment included changing roles, knowing one and knowing each other, choosing appropriate employment goals, building confidence, correcting setbacks correctly, and ability to ask for help (Wang, 2003). Wang Q. K. (2010) suggested that career preparation referred to the preparations for college students to obtain higher-satisfaction jobs during their study period, including employment attitude preparation, cognition preparation, and knowledge and skill preparation. In short, career preparation is mainly composed of job capacity preparation, social practice experience preparation, self-awareness preparation, action preparation for job hunting, policy situation preparation, employment goal design, and employment skills preparation. The career preparation of college students is an important factor affecting their job hunting. Therefore, this paper will investigate the career preparation of college students and the impact of mobile phone addiction on them.

### **College Students' Mobile Addiction and Employment Preparation**

The problem of College Students' mobile phone addiction is becoming more and more serious, which has a wide range of adverse effects on College Students' physical and mental health, academic achievements and so on. A research shows that college students' mobile phone addiction scores correlated positively with the average daily duration of mobile phone use and the presence of depression, daytime sleepiness and bodily pain in Hong Kong, China (Ng, et al, 2019) . Another study of German-speaking subjects showed that people with more using mobile phones reported lower well-being, life satisfaction, and mindfulness (Volkmer, et al, 2019). A study in S. Korea showed that mobile phone dependency negatively predicted attention and positively predicted depression, which in turn, affect social relationships with friends and both Korean language arts and mathematics achievement of middle and high school students (Seo, 2016).

However, in the existing studies, no studies have been found on the impact of mobile phone addiction on employment readiness. Therefore, this study will explore this issue in depth. The purpose of this study is to

investigate the specific situation of college students using mobile phones, including the number of mobile phones each college student owns, the time, occasion, use and addiction of college students using mobile phones every day, and to explore the situation of College Students' mobile phone addiction and career preparation and their relationship.

## 1. METHOD

### 1.1 Participants

337 college students were tested. Among them there are 99 males and 238 females and 86.35% had internship or work experience. They come from different grades, majors and types of Universities. The specific conditions of the participants are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Participants**

|                    |               | <i>n</i> | Percentage |
|--------------------|---------------|----------|------------|
| Gender             | Male          | 99       | 29.38%     |
|                    | Female        | 238      | 70.62%     |
|                    | Freshman (1)  | 22       | 6.53%      |
| Grade              | Sophomore (2) | 36       | 10.68%     |
|                    | Junior (3)    | 84       | 24.93%     |
|                    | Senior (4)    | 126      | 37.39%     |
|                    | Graduate (5)  | 69       | 20.47%     |
| Career Experiences | Yes           | 291      | 86.35%     |
|                    | No            | 46       | 13.65%     |

### 1.2 Instruments

Questionnaires were distributed through the platform of questionnaire stars. The questionnaire consists of two parts. Part 1 included demographic variables, mobile phone usage. Demographic variables included gender, grade, and specialty and so on. Mobile phone usage included the number of mobile phones owned by individuals, the cost of mobile phones, the average time of using mobile phones every day, the life scene of using mobile phones (multiple choices), the function of mobile phones (multiple choices), etc. Part 2 is Mobile Phone Addiction Index (MPAI) questionnaire and College Students' Employment Competitiveness Questionnaire.

This study used MPAI questionnaire compiled by Leung (2008). The questionnaire consisted of 17 questions and used a 5- point Likert-type scale, including out of control, abstinence, avoidance and inefficiency. Out of control refers to the use of mobile phones for a long time without self-control. Abstinence refers to the frustration caused by the failure to meet the needs of mobile phones. Avoidance refers to the use of mobile phones to avoid negative emotions or real pressures. Inefficiency refers to the reduction of learning and working efficiency caused by improper use of mobile phones. The higher the score of MPAI, the higher the degree of mobile phone addiction. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire are good (Leung, 2008; Liu

and Zhou, 2017), the alpha coefficient is 0.87.

This work used College Student Career Preparation Questionnaire compiled by W Q. K. (2010). The questionnaire consisted of 38 questions and used a 5- point Likert-type scale, including seven dimensions, namely, job capacity preparation, social practice experience preparation, self-awareness preparation, action preparation for job hunting, policy situation preparation, employment goal design, and employment skills preparation. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire are good, the alpha coefficient is 0.965, the alpha coefficient of each sub-dimension is 0.897; 0.848; 0.815; 0.872; 0.899; 0.832; 0.885. KMO value was 0.953 and Bartlett spherical test was significant ( $p < 0.001$ ).

Statistical software SPSS19.0 was used for statistical analysis.

## 2. RESULTS

### 2.1 The Status of Mobile Phone Used by College Students

The results showed that all college students used mobile phones, 9.76% of them used two mobile phones and the rest used one mobile phone; 10% of college students spent 100 RMB or more per month on mobile phones, 63.31% of them spent 30-100 RMB, 26.63% of them spent 30 RMB or less; 51.48% of college students used mobile phones for more than 5 hours per day, 83.72% of them used mobile phones for more than 3 hours per day.

**Table 2**  
**Time Spent by College Students Using Mobile Phones Very Day**

| Hour (h)/day | <i>n</i> | %     |
|--------------|----------|-------|
| Within 1h    | 6        | 1.78  |
| 1-2h         | 11       | 3.25  |
| 2-3h         | 38       | 11.24 |
| 3-4h         | 57       | 16.86 |
| 4-5h         | 52       | 15.38 |
| More than 5h | 174      | 51.48 |

As can be seen from Table 3, 90% of college students used mobile phones before bed and during rest, 67.75% of them used mobile phones as soon as they wake up in the morning, 65.38% of them used mobile phones when toilets, 64.5% of them used mobile phones when eating, 52.66% of them used mobile phones when walking.

**Table 3**  
**The Scene of College Students Using Mobile Phones.**

| Scene                  | <i>n</i> | %     |
|------------------------|----------|-------|
| Before bed             | 311      | 92.01 |
| Going to toilet        | 221      | 65.38 |
| Resting                | 305      | 90.24 |
| Eating                 | 218      | 64.5  |
| Working                | 147      | 43.49 |
| Wake up in the morning | 229      | 67.75 |
| Walking                | 178      | 52.66 |
| Others                 | 10       | 3.85  |

**Table 4**  
**The Use of Mobile Phone in College Students**

| Usefulness         | n     | %     |
|--------------------|-------|-------|
| phone、SMS          | 185   | 54.73 |
| QQ                 | 83    | 24.56 |
| Wechat             | 323   | 95.56 |
| Weibo              | 200   | 59.17 |
| Reading            | 105   | 31.07 |
| Browse the Web     | 174   | 51.48 |
| Game               | 132   | 39.05 |
| Shopping           | 224   | 66.27 |
| Information Access | 219   | 64.79 |
| Payment            | 243   | 71.89 |
| Others             | 82.37 |       |

Table 4 showed the top five uses of mobile phones for college students from high to low are Wechat, Payment, Shopping, Information Access and Weibo. The highest frequency of College Students' mobile phone use is Wechat related to social interaction, followed by payment and shopping related to online shopping. Traditional mobile communication functions such as telephone calls and receiving and sending short messages is lower frequency

**Table 5**  
**Descriptive Statistics and Gender Differences of Mobile Phone Addiction**

|                        | Total |       | Male  |       | Female |       | t      | p    |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|--------|------|
|                        | M     | SD    | M     | SD    | M      | SD    |        |      |
| Abstinence             | 17.13 | 16.31 | 4.35  | 4.11  | 17.49  | 3.86  | -1.41  | 0.16 |
| Out of control         | 20.38 | 20.10 | 1.95  | 4.43  | 20.5   | 4.31  | -1.84* | 0.04 |
| Inefficiency           | 9.65  | 2.56  | 9.36  | 2.72  | 9.78   | 2.48  | -1.14  | 0.26 |
| Avoidance              | 10.87 | 10.30 | 3.94  | 1.98  | 11.12  | 1.93  | -1.37  | 0.17 |
| Mobile Phone addiction | 46.97 | 44.79 | 10.90 | 11.30 | 47.94  | 10.72 | -1.97* | 0.05 |

\* p < 0.05.

### 2.3 Career Preparations and Its Correlation With Mobile Phone Addiction

**Table 6**  
**Descriptive Statistics of Career Preparation and Its Correlation With MPA**

| Employment Preparation             | M±SD Mobile Phone Addiction |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Job Capacity Preparation           | 3.28±0.90                   |
| Social Practice Experience         | 3.12±0.88                   |
| Self-awareness Preparation         | 3.32±1.01                   |
| Action Preparation for Job Hunting | 3.13±1.12                   |
| Policy Situation Preparation       | 2.95±1.08                   |
| Employment Goal Design             | 3.02±1.02                   |
| Employment skills preparation      | 3.33±1.05                   |
| Total                              | 3.16±1.01 r=-0.20**         |

\*\*p < 0. 01

Table 6 showed that the career preparation and its various dimensions of college students are at a medium level, in which the preparation for employment skills and employability are slightly higher. There is a significant negative correlation between college students' mobile

to be used. With the rapid development of mobile Internet, the traditional functions of mobile phones are gradually weakening, and the emerging functions of social interaction and shopping are constantly strengthening.

### 2.2 Undergraduates' Mobile Phone Addiction and Its Gender And Employment Experience Differences

Descriptive statistics showed that the average score of this survey is 46.97. The total score of MPAI is 75 points. It indicated that college students' mobile phone addiction is at a medium level. The total score of college students were above 51 points, accounting for 36.77%, and the total score was between 30 and 51, accounting for 57.85%. It can be seen that the rate of mobile phone addiction was high, and 36.77% of college students have serious mobile phone addiction.

Independent sample t-test results showed that female students were significantly higher than male students in cell phone addiction and out of control of its sub-dimension.

phone addiction and employment preparation, indicating that the more serious the college students' mobile addiction is, the less they are prepared for employment. It can be seen that mobile phone addiction has a certain degree of adverse impact on the career preparation of college students.

## 3. DISCUSSIONS

### 3.1 MPA of College Students Is Serious and Significantly Negatively Correlated With Their Career Preparation

This study found that 36.77% of college students were seriously addicted to mobile phone. It can be concluded that the mobile phone addiction of Chinese college students is more serious than before, because in the past, the proportion of moderate mobile phone addiction of college students was one third, and now the proportion of serious mobile phone addiction is one third. This result corresponds to other relevant research conclusions. (Tao, et al, 2017; Vally, et al, 2019; Jamir, et al, 2019; & Jamir, 2019).

In addition this work suggested 51.48% of college students used mobile phones more than 5 hours per day, 90% of college students used mobile phones before bed and during rest, and 52.66% of them used mobile phones when walking. College students, who use their mobile phones for too long, watch mobile phones before going to bed and walking will affect their physical, mental health and safety. And existing research has confirmed this conclusion. A study of 461 German speaking subjects showed that the longer you watch a mobile phone, the lower your well-being, life satisfaction, and mindfulness (Volkmer, et al, 2019).

This study also found that college students' mobile phone addiction has a significant negative effect on employment preparation. College students waste too much time due to mobile phone addiction, which leads to inadequate preparation for employment. Lack of adequate career preparation is likely to lead to unsuitable jobs, which will affect future career success. In short, college students' mobile phone addiction has become a global issue.

### **3.2 Gender Differences in College Students' Mobile Addiction**

There is no consistent conclusion about whether there is a gender difference in college students' mobile addiction. Some studies found there were no insignificant differences of mobile phone addiction between girls and boys in college (Liu H. & Wang H.L., 2012; Fu G. F. etc, 2016). However a study identified female students used mobile phones for a longer period of time in the United Arab Emirates (Zahir Vally, 2019). And this work indicated that girls were significantly higher than boys in cell phone addiction and out of control of its sub-dimension, which is consistent with Shi Q., Fu A. (2016). Furthermore, a study showed that the relationships between positive psychology concepts and mobile phone use differ between men and women (Volkmer, et al, 2019). Studies also indicated that female college students' online shopping addiction is significantly higher than boys (Fu, etc, 2019; Wang, 2017). Therefore, it can be inferred that male and female mobile phone addiction has certain commonalities and differences between male and female students in mobile phone addiction. For example, both male and female students are addicted to social networks and online video, while female students are more addicted to mobile shopping, and male students are more addicted to mobile games, especially gadget (Jamir, 2019). Moreover, the situation of mobile phone addiction of men and women of different ages is also different, and further research is needed in the future.

### **3.3 Wechat as a social network in China is the most used by college students on mobile phones**

This present study showed the first use of mobile phones for college students is Wechat and the traditional communication function of mobile phone has been

weakened. It can be seen that college students' addiction to social network is very serious. This result is consistent with Mamun & Griffiths (2019) and they found prevalence of Facebook addiction among the students in the University of Dhaka (Bangladesh) was 39.7% and being single, having less involvement in physical activities, sleep disturbance (more or less than 6 to 7 h of sleep), time spent on Facebook ( $\geq 5$  h per day), and depression symptoms can predict Facebook addiction.

### **3.4 College Students' Career Preparation Is at a Medium Level**

This study found that college students' vocational preparation and its sub-dimensions were at a medium level, which indicated that college students' career preparation is not enough. And in the specific aspects of career preparation, job capacity preparation, social practice experience preparation, self-awareness preparation, action preparation for job hunting, policy situation preparation, employment goal design and employment skills preparation, have great room for improvement. The result of the general level of College Students' career preparation may be due to their middle level of off-campus internship, employment motivation, career efficacy, perceived employability, career identity and career decision-making efficacy etc. Internships are very important for appropriate career preparations, and that career decision self-efficacy have a complete mediating effect between internship efficacy and career preparation (Tsai, 2017). In addition career preparatory activities were associated with higher perceived employability and career distress and Career identity mediated between them (Praskova, 2015).

An important finding of this study is that college students' mobile phone addiction has a significant negative effect on their career preparation. Mobile phone addiction wastes too much time for college students, which leads them not to have enough time to learn professional knowledge and skills and to make career planning, or to have career planning and not to implement it well. Therefore, college students need to strengthen self-control training, reduce the problematic mobile phone use time, return to learning, and improve the level of Vocational preparation.

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## **CONCLUSION**

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In order to explore the status and relationship of college students' mobile phone addiction and career preparation, 338 Chinese college students were surveyed on mobile phone usage, mobile phone addiction and career preparation through the Internet. The results showed that mobile phone addiction of college students is serious and significantly negatively correlated with their career preparation. In addition girls were significantly higher than boys in cell phone addiction and out of control of its sub-dimension. The top five uses of mobile phones for

college students from high to low were Wechat, Payment, Shopping, Information Access and Weibo. Wechat as a social network in China is the most used by college students on mobile phones. The career preparation and its various dimensions of college students were at a medium level.

This research discovers the problems of college students' mobile phone addiction and career preparation in time, which needs to arouse the attention of parents, schools and society. This research has strong social practical significance and theoretical value. Future research should use experimental method to further investigate the psychological mechanism of college students' mobile phone addiction and career preparation, and establish operational procedures for prevention and intervention of mobile phone addiction.

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