
NEWSLETTER

The Relationship between Peer Attachment and Mobile Phone Addiction of Junior Secondary School Students: An Analysis Based on a Moderated Mediation Model

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PEEER attachment refers to the intimacy between adolescents and their peers, in which they give each other warmth and support. Good peer attachment can reduce emotional and behavioral problems. Peer attachment is also considered as an important factor affecting adolescents' mobile phone addiction. In order to clarify the relationship between peer attachment and mobile phone addiction and its mechanism, this study constructed a moderated mediation model to examine the mediation of negative emotions and the moderating effect of the ability to be alone.

In this study, 782 junior middle school students were surveyed in groups by class-based cluster sampling. The measuring instruments included the Inventory of Peer Attachment, the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale, Mobile Phone Addiction Index, and the Ability to Be Alone Scale.

The research results show that: (i) After controlling for gender, age, grade, being only child or not, and mobile phone use years, peer attachment has a significant negative predictive effect on mobile phone addiction. (ii) Negative emotions exert complete mediation on the relationship between peer attachment and cell phone addiction. (iii) The direct effect of peer attachment on cell phone addiction and the mediating effect of negative emotions are both moderated by the ability to be alone.

The moderated mediation model constructed from the perspective of compensation theory is used to clarify how peer attachment affects mobile phone addiction of junior secondary school students (the mediating effect of negative emotions) and to respond to the question when peer attachment has a more significant impact on mobile phone addiction (the moderating effect of the ability to be alone). The results of the study have theoretical and practical significance for deepening the research on the causes of mobile phone addiction and guiding junior secondary school students to develop good peer attachment to ensure sound psychosocial functioning.

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