
From Phones to Phobia: A Global Scientometric Exploration of Nomophobia Research (2010–2024)

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Abstract

"No-Mobile-Phone-Phobia" (NOMOPHOBIA) is considered a modern-day phobia, used to describe a psychological condition in which a person experiences a fear of being out of mobile phone contact or being unable to use one. There has been an exponential upward trend in research on Nomophobia over the last decade. This paper presents an analysis of *From Phones to Phobia: A Global Scientometric Exploration of Nomophobia Research*. A total of 481 records are visible over the last fifteen years (2010-2024) and downloaded from the Scopus database. The data were exported into Microsoft Excel and analyzed using statistical and bibliometric methods. The study found that 22.0% of the most productive records were recorded in 2024 (106 records), followed by 2023 (87 records, 18.1%) and 2022 (81 records, 16.8%). Among the top 15 researchers, Griffiths, M.D., has the most publications (14 papers, 11.5%) and is ranked 1st. The study found that Nottingham Trent University had 16 (11.5%) publications and ranked first among the top 15 institutions.

Keywords

Internet addiction disorder, Nomophobia, Smart Phone, Research Visibility, Citation databases

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Introduction

The explosive growth and global adoption of mobile devices have been accelerating, and this trend is expected to continue as smartphones become an increasingly integral part of everyday life. Over 5.75 billion individuals are estimated to own mobile devices worldwide, according to the results of the Comprehensive Modular Survey: Telecom (CMS: T), approximately 85.5% of households possess at least one smartphone, and 86.3% households have access to the internet within the household premises in India (MSPI, 2025). Although smartphones have a high utility value, and the ubiquity of smartphones and their users' close relationships, they also have the potential for addiction and affect the psychological conditions of the individual.

No-Mobile-Phone-Phobia (Nomophobia) describes a psychological condition where individuals experience intense anxiety when disconnected from mobile phone connectivity (King et.al, 2013). While termed a "phobia," it is more accurately viewed as an anxiety disorder (LeBeau et.al, 2010). The Nomophobia term was first coined in 2008 in a study on "assessing the risk of stress disorders due to the excess use of smartphones" by an international research and analytics group organization founded in the United Kingdom.

The increasing utilization of technological devices and virtual communication is causing changes in individuals' daily habits and behaviour's. Various psychological factors are involved when a person overuses their mobile phone, such as low self-esteem and an extroverted personality. The burden of this problem is now increasing globally (Bhattacharya et.al, 2019). According to Shambare et al. (2012), cell phones are "possibly the biggest non-drug addiction of the 21st century". The term Nomophobia is not a recognized disorder in Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, a publication by the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-IV) and but the term is used to describe the fear of being without a mobile phone, the experts categorize it based on established anxiety and phobia definitions from the DSM-IV, it has been labelled as a "phobia for a particular/specific thing", currently these diagnostic criteria are under review, and new recommendations to ameliorate the definition have been put forward by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders DSM-V Anxiety Work Group (Bragazzi & Del Puente, 2014).

Review of Literature

King (2014) showed that people with panic disorder showed significant increases in anxiety, fear, and depression related issues with the lack of mobile phones compared to the control group. Farooqui (2018) was found mild Nomophobia in 17.9% students, whereas 60% had moderate and 22.1% had severe Nomophobia, Nomophobia is found to be prevalent in medical students. Tuco et.al, (2023) found a high prevalence of moderate and severe nomophobia in university students and suggest that interventions are needed to prevent and treat this problem in educational institutions. Hessari et.al, (2024) given the theoretical understanding of nomophobia explained the practical insights for future research under organizational practice and highlighted the urgent need for interventions and organizational strategies to mitigate the negative effects of nomophobia and foster healthier digital habits at work.

Since 2014, nomophobia publications have consistently risen, peaking at 487 in 2023. Medicine (28%) and Psychology (21.2%) are the leading fields. A total of 7,665 authors contributed, with Griffiths, M.D., Elhai, J.D., and Montag, C. leading at 10% of publications. Nottingham Trent University is the top institution, while China, the U.S., the U.K., and Turkey are the most active countries. The top ten journals, including “International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health” and “Frontiers in Psychiatry,” account for one-third of studies. Co-citation analysis identifies “Computers in Human Behavior” as a key journal. China’s National Natural Science Foundation leads in funding, and co-authorship networks show national collaboration trends.

Objective of the Study

This study focuses on the following objectives.

1. To know the year wise growth of nomophobia literature.
2. To identify the forms of documents in nomophobia
3. To know the most profile authors ranking on the total number of publications.
4. To identified the ranking of most profile Universities/Institutions.

The hypotheses of the study

The following hypothesis is formulated:

H1. The numbers of research articles on nomophobia have been in research from 2010 to 2024.

Scope and Methodology

The data was collected from the Scopus database using the keyword “nomophobia”. The number of records found against the word “nomophobia” in the Scopus database during the last 15 years (2010-2024). A total of 481 records have been downloaded and recorded in the MS Excel spread sheets for further analysis and VOSviewer software tools were used to create data visualization and networking. Specific research questions guided the analysis of nomophobia research data from the Scopus database, including metadata such as the year-wise growth of nomophobia literature, types of documents on nomophobia, authors, affiliations, most productive countries, most cited articles, research areas, most productive journals, and languages.

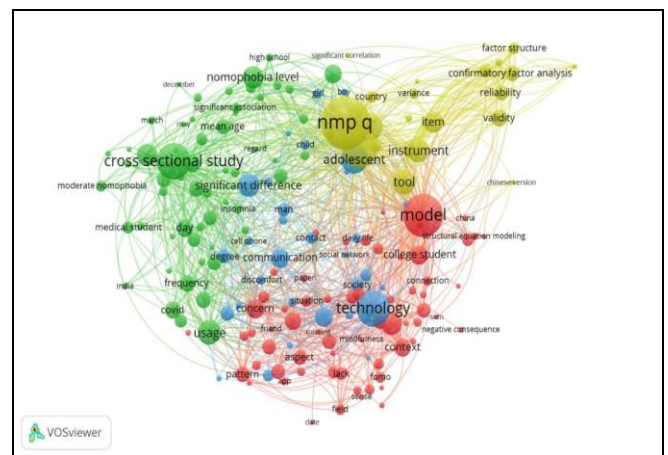


Figure-1: Network visualization for the nomophobia literature

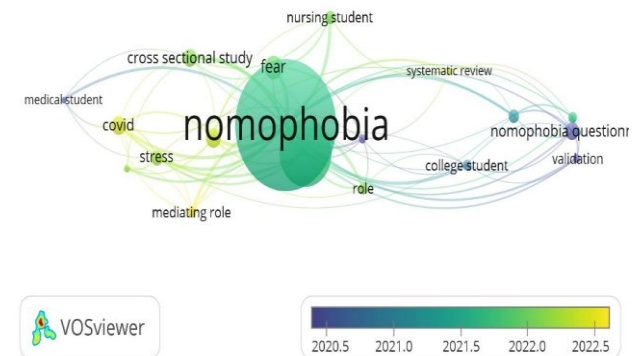


Figure-2: Overly visualization for the nomophobia literature.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table-1: Year-wise growth of nomophobia literature

Year	Visibility of Records	Percentage of Visibility of Records	Cumulative Records Received	Percentage of Cumulative Records
2010	1	0.2	1	0.2
2011	0	0.0	1	0.2
2012	1	0.2	2	0.4
2013	2	0.4	4	0.8
2014	3	0.6	7	1.5
2015	2	0.4	9	1.9
2016	4	0.8	13	2.7
2017	21	4.4	34	7.1
2018	23	4.8	57	11.9
2019	34	7.1	91	18.9
2020	54	11.2	145	30.1
2021	62	12.9	207	43.0
2022	81	16.8	288	59.9
2023	87	18.1	375	78.0
2024	106	22.0	481	100.0
Total	481	100.0		

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). .928 .000

Table-1 presents the year-wise growth rate of nomophobia literature. The number of articles related to Nomophobia research has steadily increased over the past 15 years, but with some fluctuations. The study found that 22.0% of the most productive records occurred in 2024 (106 records), followed by 2023 (87 records, 18.1%) and 2022 (81 records, 16.8%). Pearson's correlation has been used to determine the relationship between the year and the quantity of articles published over the last 15 years. The study's findings indicate that the year and record visibility have a significant positive association (r=.928**, p=.000).

Details on the distribution of document types in nomophobia research are presented in Table 2. The table displays the most visible documents from the Scopus database over the last 15 years. The notable findings of the study are research articles (414 records, 86.1%), followed by conference papers (20 records, 4.2%) and book chapters (15 records, 3.1%). Furthermore, very few records visible in the Scopus database are from data papers, editorials, letters, conference reviews, erratum's and notes, etc.

Table-2 Types of documents

Document types	Records	Percentage of Visibility of Records
Articles	414	86.1
Conference Papers	20	4.2
Book Chapters	15	3.1
Reviews	15	3.1
Data Papers	4	0.8
Editorials	4	0.8
Letters	3	0.6
Conference Reviews	2	0.4
Erratum's	2	0.4
Notes	2	0.4
Total	481	100.0

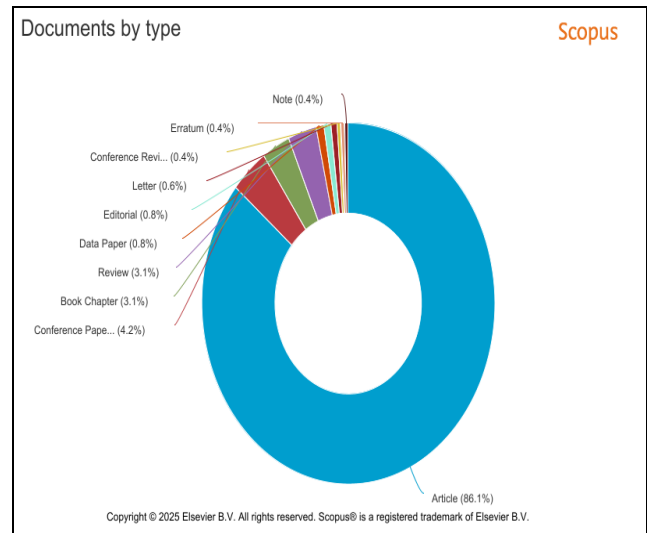


Figure-3: Documents by types of nomophobia literature

Table-3 Most Prolific Authors (Top-15)

Name of the authors	Country	No. of Articles	Percentage	Rank
Griffiths, M.D.	United Kingdom	14	11.5	1
Bragazzi, N.L.	Finland	10	8.2	2
González-Cabrera, J.	Ireland	10	8.2	3
Jahrami, H.	United	10	8.2	4

Lin, C.Y.	States	10	8.2	5
	United States			
Liu, T.	United States	9	7.4	6
Gnardellis, C.	United States	7	5.7	7
Lagiou, A.	United Kingdom	7	5.7	8
Machimbarrena, J.M.	Italy	7	5.7	9
Notara, V.	Italy	7	5.7	10
Pakpour, A.H.	United States	7	5.7	11
Vagka, E.	United States	7	5.7	12
Lin, Y.	Switzerland	6	4.9	13
Vitiello, M.V.	Germany	6	4.9	14
Aguilera-Manrique, G.	Germany	5	4.1	15
Total		122	100.0	

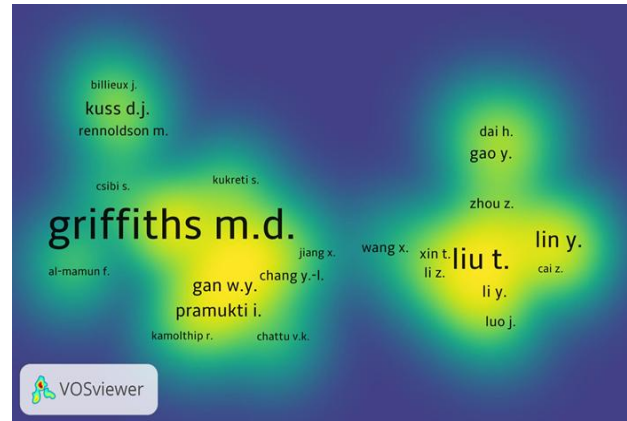


Figure 4: Density visualisation for the nomophobia literature.

Results on the visibility of the most productive authors, as reflected in the Scopus database, are shown in Table 3. The study found that Griffiths, M.D. from the United Kingdom, has the most publications (14 records, 11.5%) and is ranked first among the top 15 researchers, followed by Bragazzi, N.L., González-Cabrera, J., Jahrami, H., and Lin, C.Y., who are Bax, J.J. similarly published 10 records (8.2%) records equally and ranked second, third, fourth and fifth respectively.

Table-4: Most Profile Universities/Institutions (Top-15)

Name of the Universities/Institutions	Country	No. of Articles	Percentage	Rank
Nottingham Trent University	United Kingdom	16	11.5	1
Arabian Gulf University	Bahrain	13	9.4	2
International University of La Rioja	Spain	11	7.9	3
Universidad de Granada	Spain	10	7.2	4
National Cheng Kung University College of Medicine	Taiwan	9	6.5	5
National Cheng Kung University	Taiwan	9	6.5	6
Tianjin Normal University	China	9	6.5	7
Universidad del Pais Vasco	Spain	9	6.5	8
University of Health Sciences	Turkey	9	6.5	9
Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China	China	8	5.8	10
National Cheng Kung University Hospital	Taiwan	8	5.8	11
School of Health and Welfare	Sweden	7	5.0	12
Jönköping University	Sweden	7	5.0	13
University of Patras	Greece	7	5.0	14
University of West Attica	Greece	7	5.0	15
Total		139	100.0	100.0

The top 15 most productive profiles from universities/institutions are presented in Table 4. The notable findings of the study found that Nottingham

Trent University, UK had 16 (11.5%) publications and ranked first among the top 15 institutions, followed by Arabian Gulf University, Bahrain (13 records, 9.4%), International University of La Rioja,

Spain (11 records, 7.9%), and the Universidad de Granada, Spain (10 records, 7.2%), which ranked second, third, and fourth, respectively.

Table-5: Top-15 Most Productive Countries on Nomophobia Literature

Countries/Regions	Records	Percentage	Rank
Turkey	87	19.1	1
Spain	49	10.8	2
India	47	10.3	3
United States	43	9.5	4
China	35	7.7	5
United Kingdom	32	7.0	6
Italy	25	5.5	7
Indonesia	24	5.3	8
Canada	20	4.4	9
Australia	18	4.0	10
Saudi Arabia	18	4.0	11
Malaysia	16	3.5	12
Iran	15	3.3	13
Bahrain	13	2.9	14
Taiwan	13	2.9	15
Total	455	100.0	

Most productive countries among the research on Nomophobia is listed in the table-5, the study found that Turkey leads the global rankings with 87 (19.1%) records, securing the top position among the 15 leading countries, followed by Spain (49 records, 10.8%) and India (47 records, 10.3%), which ranked second and third, respectively. Further, among the top 15 countries, the United States (43 records, 9.5%) and China (35 records, 7.7%) are similarly ranked in fourth and fifth place. The subject-wise distribution of studies on Nomophobia is presented in Table 6, showing the top 15 research areas. The study found that, overall, 201 (24.9%) publications were recorded in the medicine subject, securing most studies, followed by psychology (141 publications, 17.5%); social sciences (139 publications, 17.2%); and also computer science (86 publications, 10.7%), which secured 2nd, 3rd, and 4th ranks, respectively.

The visibility of nomophobia research records in the Scopus database published in different languages is presented in Table 7. The study found that, among the top 12 languages, most of the records were published in the English language (90.7%), followed by Spanish (4.6%) and Portuguese (1.4%), which secured 2nd and 3rd ranks, respectively.

Table-6: Research Areas (Top-15)

Research Areas	Records	Percentage	Rank
Medicine	201	24.9	1
Psychology	141	17.5	2
Social Sciences	139	17.2	3
Computer Science	86	10.7	4
Nursing	47	5.8	5
Arts and Humanities	29	3.6	6
Environmental Science	27	3.3	7
Neuroscience	25	3.1	8
Multidisciplinary	24	3.0	9
Engineering	23	2.9	10
Health Professions	20	2.5	11
Business, Management and Accounting	16	2.0	12
Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology	12	1.5	13
Mathematics	10	1.2	14
Energy	7	0.9	15
Total	807	100.0	

****Since the articles are published in multiple research areas, the number of documents exceeds 481.**

Table-7: Top-12 Languages

Languages	Number of Records	Percentage	Rank
English	450	90.7	1
Spanish	23	4.6	2
Portuguese	7	1.4	3
Turkish	3	0.6	4
Persian	3	0.6	5
Russian	2	0.4	6
Italian	2	0.4	7
Chinese	2	0.4	8
German	1	0.2	9
Czech	1	0.2	10
Croatian	1	0.2	11
Bosnian	1	0.2	12
Total	496	100.0	

****Since the articles are published in more than the languages, the number of records is more than 481.**

Table-8: Top-15 Journals

Name of the Journals	Number of Records	Percentage	Rank
International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	16	13.9	1
Computers in Human Behavior	15	13.0	2
Heliyon	10	8.7	3
Current Psychology	9	7.8	4
International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction	9	7.8	5
Perspectives in Psychiatric Care	8	7.0	6
Addicta the Turkish Journal on Addictions	7	6.1	7
Healthcare Switzerland	7	6.1	8
Nurse Education in Practice	6	5.2	9
Plos One	6	5.2	10
Computers in Human Behavior Reports	5	4.3	11
Psychology Research and Behavior Management	5	4.3	12
CIN Computers	4	3.5	13

Informatics Nursing			
Data in Brief	4	3.5	14
European Journal of Investigation in Health Psychology and Education	4	3.5	15
Total	115	100.0	

The visibility of the top 15 journals reflected in the Scopus database is presented in table 8. The study found that, among the top 15 journals, most of the records were published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health (13.9%), followed by Computers in Human Behavior (13.0%), Heliyon (8.7%), Current Psychology (7.8%), and the International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction (7.8%).

The top 10 most cited articles reflected in the Scopus database are presented in table 9. The article “Social networking sites and addiction: Ten lessons learned,” by Kuss and Griffiths, published in 2017, has received 821 citations. Further, another highly cited article, “Exploring the dimensions of nomophobia: Development and validation of a self-reported questionnaire” by Yildirim and Correia, published in 2015, received 546 citations.

Table-9: Top-10 Most Cited Articles

Authors	Article Title	Name of Journals	Publication Year	Citations	Rank
Kuss D.J.; Griffiths M.D.	Social networking sites and addiction: Ten lessons learned	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	2017	821	1
Yildirim C.; Correia A.P.	Exploring the dimensions of nomophobia: Development and validation of a self-reported questionnaire	Computers in Human Behavior	2015	546	2
Busch P.A.; McCarthy S.	Antecedents and consequences of problematic smartphone use: A systematic literature review of an emerging research area	Computers in Human Behavior	2021	431	3
King A.L.S et.al.	Nomophobia: Dependency on virtual environments or social phobia?	Computers in Human Behavior	2013	307	4
Bragazzi N.L.; Del Puente G.	A proposal for including nomophobia in the new DSM-V	Psychology Research and Behavior Management	2014	275	5
Yildirim C et.al.	A growing fear: Prevalence of nomophobia among Turkish college students	Information Development	2016	189	6
Mendoza J.S et.al.	The effect of cellphones on attention and learning: The influences of time, distraction, and nomophobia	Computers in Human Behavior	2018	184	7
Throuvala M.A et.al.	Motivational processes and dysfunctional mechanisms of social media use among adolescents: A qualitative focus group study	Computers in Human Behavior	2019	179	8
King A.L.S et.al	"Nomophobia": Impact of cell phone use interfering with symptoms and emotions of individuals with panic disorder compared with a control group	Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health	2014	179	9
Rodriguez-Garcia A. et.al.	Nomophobia: An individual's growing fear of being without a smartphone—a systematic literature review	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	2020	173	10

Discussion and Conclusion

The researcher aimed to gain a clear understanding and take the necessary steps to improve research performance on Nomophobia. The study reveals that studies on Nomophobia and academic paper publications have a significant impact on global research production. The current study established the research trend on Nomophobia, and numerous elements of smartphone use and Nomophobia have been studied from 2014 to 2025. The findings reveal a significant growth trend in publications over 15 years, with a range of 0.2% to 22% of visibility records, and visibility showing a strong positive association ($r = .928^{**}$, $p = .000$). The research output is mainly available in articles, Griffiths, M.D, UK contributed more with 14 publications compared to Bragazzi, N.L., Finland, González-Cabrera, J., Ireland, Jahrami, United States and Lin, C.Y., United States. Among the universities/ institutions, Nottingham Trent University, UK, ranked first among the top 15 institutions, followed by Arabian Gulf University, Bahrain.

Since nomophobia is a relatively new concept, there are a limited number of empirically supported and scholarly-accepted treatment methods for it. The proposed treatments primarily consist of a combination of psychotherapy and some pharmacological interventions. However, cognitive-behavioural psychotherapy has been suggested as an effective treatment for nomophobia, even though randomised trials are currently lacking^[6]. The study found that research on nomophobia has grown substantially over the last fifteen years, with numerous cross-sectional studies, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses. The phenomenon has become mainstream in research, reflecting how deeply mobile connectivity is integrated into modern life and affecting the psychological factors. To accelerate and evaluate research, Scientometrics analysis is crucial for developing the most effective strategies to enhance further research activity.

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