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Phubbing and Learning Behaviour of Students at Budi Satrya Senior High School Medan

Fachry Fauzy Harahap*, Nuriza Dora
Program Studi Tadris Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Medan, 20353, Indonesia

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* *Corresponding author:*

E-mail: fachry0309212068@uinsu.ac.id

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A B S T R A C T

The phenomenon of phubbing ignoring social interactions by focusing more on smartphone use is increasingly widespread among students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan and has a significant impact on their learning behaviour. This study aims to identify the negative effects of phubbing on students' concentration, motivation, and academic performance, as well as to explore the strategies teachers implement to address this issue. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through observation, in depth interviews, and document analysis. The results indicate that phubbing behaviour causes serious attention diversion, disrupts the learning process, lowers student participation, and weakens social interaction in the classroom. Teachers employ various methods such as restricting smartphone use during lessons, educating students about the negative impacts of phubbing, using face-to-face communication approaches, and assigning group tasks to minimize phubbing effects. This study emphasizes the crucial role of educators in actively raising awareness and creating a conducive learning environment to reduce phubbing behaviour and support optimal academic achievement in the digital era.

1. Introduction

Education is a process of individual development that involves teaching, learning, and guidance across various aspects of life, including knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes (Shavkidinova et al., 2023). According to Suryadi (2024), the primary goal of education is to create individuals who are not only competent in academic fields but also possess good character, the ability to engage in social interaction, and readiness to contribute positively to society. In this context, students' learning behaviour becomes a crucial aspect. The learning process is not merely about understanding material but also involves effective social interaction (Li & Jeong).

The 21st century is marked by rapid developments in the digital era, in which smartphones have become an integral part of daily life, particularly for students

(Webster & Paquette, 2020). Various features are available, both online and offline, including social media, games, search engines, and popular applications such as TikTok. However, alongside these conveniences, negative impacts also arise in the form of the phubbing phenomenon, namely the habit of ignoring people around due to excessive focus on smartphones.

Phubbing behaviour, defined as the act of ignoring others by focusing more on mobile devices, has been increasingly recognized as a concerning social issue. Jintarin Jaidee, a psychiatrist from Bangkok, as cited in Chasombat (2014), explains that phubbing manifested in repeatedly checking smartphones may lead to other forms of addiction, such as addiction to online games, mobile applications, or social media. Phubbing significantly affects social interaction. According to Al Saggaf (2019), phubbing is a behaviour of disregarding others in a social situation by choosing to pay more attention to a smartphone rather than to the ongoing interaction. Lachmann (2018) highlights a strong relationship between smartphone addiction and empathy. Addiction is identified as a major factor contributing to phubbing, including addiction to smartphones, the internet, and games. Furthermore, *fear of missing out* (FoMO) has been recognized as another internal factor influencing phubbing. Research conducted by Chotpitayasunondh (2018) reveals that variables such as FoMO, internet addiction, and self-control have a significant effect on phubbing.

In addition to internal factors, external influences such as conformity also play a role. This aligns with findings from Zhang et al. (2014), who argue that individuals use smartphones to gain identity and to avoid criticism from their peers. This is also connected to empathy, as human social tendencies increasingly shift toward preferring online interactions over face-to-face encounters. Consequently, empathy has been found to influence phubbing behaviour, as individuals become less concerned about those around them (Prasetyo, 2017).

The phenomenon of phubbing has become more prevalent among students and adolescents, particularly in today's digital era. Haigh (2015) describes phubbing as an act of hurting others during social interactions due to excessive focus on smartphones. Phubbing, as a habitual tendency to ignore people nearby in favor of smartphone use, not only affects social interaction but also negatively impacts students' learning behaviour. One of the adverse consequences is attention diversion, which makes it difficult for students to concentrate during learning activities.

Moreover, the multitasking behaviour that often emerges as a result of phubbing prevents learning from being fully absorbed. The quality of interpersonal relationships is also disrupted, as individuals frequently ignore friends or family in favor of their smartphones, leading to feelings of isolation. Such impacts may also contribute to mental health problems. If this habit continues excessively, it has the potential to generate broader social issues. Furthermore, addiction to smartphone features such as popular games like *Mobile Legends*, *Free Fire*, *PUBG*, *eFootball*, as well as live activities on TikTok, further exacerbates the situation, ultimately weakening interpersonal communication. Nevertheless, phubbing is not entirely

detrimental. There are also positive aspects that can be utilized, such as enabling students to expand their knowledge by reading e-books on smartphones. In addition, these devices provide easier access to supplementary learning materials when textbooks are deemed insufficient. Smartphones also help students complete school assignments more efficiently, making them an effective learning tool when used wisely.

Phubbing, therefore, should not be considered a trivial matter but rather a serious issue that needs to be addressed within the educational context. It can damage relationships between students and teachers and affect classroom learning activities when students' focus is diverted. As Vanden Abeele (2019) notes, the extensive use of smartphones has created new behavioural patterns in face-to-face interactions. The phenomenon of phubbing, which frequently occurs in schools, is evident in the lack of social interaction among peers and the reduced attention during classroom instruction when teachers deliver lessons.

Phubbing behaviour can negatively affect learning behaviour, such as reducing students' interest in learning and academic achievement. According to Syifa (2024), phubbing behaviour may lead students to become more prone to procrastination in their studies, which in turn has a detrimental impact on their academic performance. This occurs because students who engage in phubbing tend to spend more of their time and attention on smartphone use. Consequently, such students are more likely to delay academic activities and ignore interlocutors during interactions. This procrastination behaviour ultimately affects their academic achievement.

Previous studies have often focused on the definition of phubbing and its impacts. For example, a study by Daman Huri entitled *"Dampak Perilaku Phubbing Terhadap Perubahan Interaksi Sosial Remaja di Desa Reukih Dayah Kecamatan Indrapuri Kabupaten Aceh Besar"* is one of the most relevant works that emphasizes understanding phubbing and its effects among adolescents. Another prior study by Rahayu Syahfitri, entitled *"Pengaruh Perilaku Phubbing Dan Penggunaan Media Sosial Terhadap Interaksi Sosial,"* examined how social media use contributes to the increase of phubbing behaviour but paid less attention to possible strategies to mitigate its negative effects.

Compared to these previous studies, the present research shows several significant differences in both focus and methodology. While earlier studies emphasized the influence, impacts, and factors of phubbing, this study not only addresses its causes and consequences but also explores strategies to reduce phubbing behaviour. Findings from this research reveal that students experience difficulties in maintaining focus and concentration during classroom learning. This study also provides deeper insights into the negative effects of phubbing on high school students, particularly during adolescence, a stage where their focus is still easily diverted by smartphones. The importance of this study lies in its ability to identify the negative effects of phubbing behaviour on students' learning behaviour, which has the potential to affect their academic performance and social development. Moreover, the results of this study can provide valuable insights for teachers and school administrators in designing effective strategies to address phubbing

behaviour, including the implementation of smartphone use policies in the classroom.

This research also contributes to the existing body of literature on learning behaviour and technology, while offering recommendations for better educational practices. At the same time, it can raise parental awareness of phubbing behaviour and encourage them to be more proactive in supervising their children's smartphone use. Therefore, this study is not only relevant to the academic environment but also to the social and emotional development of students in today's digital era. Based on these issues, this study aims to examine phubbing and learning behaviour of students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan. The purpose of this research is to explore in greater depth the phenomenon of phubbing, its impacts on students, and the efforts that can be undertaken to overcome phubbing behaviour. It is expected that this study will contribute to addressing the phubbing phenomenon in the educational context, as well as provide new insights and references for future research.

2. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design using a descriptive method. According to Prof. Dr. Lexy J. Moleong (2021), qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects such as behaviours, perceptions, motivations, and actions holistically and descriptively in the form of words and language, by utilizing various scientific methods in a natural setting. Qualitative research makes use of data, written texts, and observable behaviours that can be analyzed. To ensure that the phenomenon is studied comprehensively, in depth, and with minimal researcher interference, a descriptive qualitative approach is applied. This involves providing explanations and detailed descriptions of the data obtained through in-depth interviews.

The use of this descriptive qualitative model is expected to help identify social problems within the school environment, particularly at SMAS Budi Satrya. In addition, this research is intended to examine the impact of phubbing in the school context of SMAS Budi Satrya Medan. Through this study, it is anticipated that the phenomenon of phubbing and its effects on students can be described in a detailed and comprehensive manner.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through field observations and in-depth interviews with informants who possess credibility in providing information related to the phenomenon of phubbing within the school environment and its impacts, which have become a significant problem for students. According to Sarmini (2023), interviews are an interactive and communicative process aimed at collecting information through a question-and-answer exchange between the researcher and the informant. Observations were conducted to examine the conditions in the school and classroom in order to identify the main social issues that strongly affect the effectiveness of students' learning. Essentially, observation is an activity that utilizes the human

senses—such as sight, hearing, and smell in order to obtain the necessary information to address the research questions (Sarmini, 2023).

The selection of informants was carried out purposively by considering their direct relevance to the research topic. There are three types of informants in this study: key informants, main informants, and supporting informants. Key informants are those who possess comprehensive information regarding the issues under investigation (Nanda Tri Cahtia, 2022). The informants were divided into three categories: key informants (teachers and students), the main informant (the school principal), and supporting informants (parents and students). In total, this study involved approximately 15 informants, consisting of 11 key informants, 1 main informant, and 3 supporting informants.

Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained through indirect sources, meaning that the researcher did not collect them firsthand. Examples include documents, literature, and other references. Such data can be acquired from various sources such as the internet, websites, and institutional records. The advantage of secondary data lies in its accessibility, availability, and efficiency in terms of time and cost.
The study employed a qualitative descriptive data analysis technique consistent with the research design. The process was conducted by intensively analyzing the data obtained in the field in the form of words, which were collected through interviews and observations (Rehalat, 2023). According to Miles and Huberman, there are three stages of data analysis: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions (Fadli, 2021).

3. Results and Discussion

Budi Satrya Private Senior High School Medan is one of the private schools in Medan City, with a relatively large number of students and diverse socio-economic backgrounds. In general, the school provides adequate facilities such as classrooms, a computer laboratory, a library, and internet access that students can use to support the learning process. However, the availability of technology and extensive internet access also poses certain challenges, particularly with regard to smartphone use among students. Based on preliminary observations, many students bring smartphones to school and use them not only for academic purposes but also for entertainment and social media interaction. This creates a complex dynamic, as smartphones can serve as both a learning resource and a distraction. Teachers at the school also face challenges in managing classrooms, as some students find it difficult to detach from their smartphones even during lessons. Therefore, the phenomenon of phubbing among students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan becomes a relevant issue to be studied, especially in relation to how such behaviour affects concentration, motivation, and academic achievement.

To gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of phubbing and students' learning behaviour at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan, the researcher conducted interviews with a number of informants consisting of both teachers and students. These interviews aimed to explore perspectives, experiences, and the dynamics of

interaction that arise within the school environment concerning smartphone use in the learning process. The data obtained are presented in tabular form to facilitate readers in examining the main findings more concisely and systematically. Table 1, 2 and 3 below presents the questions used during the interviews.

Table 1. Questions for the Principal

Number	Question's
1	How would you describe the use of gadgets or mobile phones by students in the environment of SMAS Budi Satrya Medan?
2	Are you aware of phubbing behaviour among students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan?
3	Have you ever observed phubbing behaviour among students, where they ignore people around them because they are focused on their phones?
4	Based on your observation, in which school environment does phubbing most frequently occur?
5	How do the teachers and school staff respond to the occurrence of phubbing behaviour among students?
6	Does the school have a specific policy regarding the use of mobile phones during class hours or within the school environment? How is it implemented?
7	Has the school ever provided socialization or education related to the ethics of technology use to students?
8	How do you perceive the involvement of parents in controlling or supervising their children's use of mobile phones?
9	What are the main challenges in reducing phubbing behaviour among students?
10	How do you perceive the impacts faced by students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan, both in academic, social, and emotional aspects?
11	Based on your observation, how do students use smartphones during the learning process? During lessons, it depends on the situation, needs, and teaching style of each teacher, as some teachers require the use of gadgets, such as TikTok, for instructional purposes.
12	Have you ever received reports from teachers regarding students who are less focused on learning due to being preoccupied with their phones?
13	How do you perceive the relationship between phubbing and the decline in students' learning interest or concentration?
14	Have there been changes in student behaviour, such as reduced social interaction or a decline in communication etiquette, which you believe are influenced by excessive gadget use?
15	Has the school ever conducted socialization or educational programs for students and parents regarding the negative impacts of phubbing?
16	What steps or policies has the school implemented to assist teachers in addressing these impacts?
17	How do you assess the role of teachers in responding to the issues experienced by students at this school?
18	Does the school provide specific training or guidance to teachers to address certain impacts such as stress, learning difficulties, or deviant behaviour?
19	How is the coordination between teachers, homeroom teachers, and the guidance and counseling (BK) staff in handling affected students?
20	What are the greatest challenges faced by teachers in addressing these impacts, according to your observations?
21	How does the principal support teachers to remain motivated and capable of performing their roles under challenging conditions?
22	Is there a routine evaluation conducted to assess the effectiveness of teachers' efforts in addressing the impacts experienced by students?
23	What are your expectations as the principal regarding the enhancement of teachers' roles in addressing the impacts faced by students in the future?

Table. 2 Questions for Teachers

Number	Questions
1	Are you aware of or familiar with the concept of phubbing behaviour?
2	Based on your observations, do students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan exhibit phubbing behaviour during the teaching and learning process?
3	When and under what circumstances does phubbing behaviour most frequently occur in the classroom?
4	How do students typically react when they are reprimanded for using their phones during lessons?
5	In your opinion, how does phubbing behaviour affect the classroom atmosphere and the effectiveness of learning?
6	How do you usually handle students who engage in phubbing during lessons? Are there any specific approaches you use?
7	Does the school have specific rules regarding phone usage in the classroom? How have these rules been implemented so far?
8	In your view, what are the main causes of students engaging in phubbing? Is it due to gadget addiction, lack of interest in learning, or other factors?
9	Does phubbing behaviour only occur in the classroom, or is it also observed in students' social interactions outside of class?
10	In your opinion, what are the most common impacts experienced by students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan today?
11	How do you identify students who are experiencing these impacts, both academically and non-academically?
12	How does phubbing behaviour affect students' concentration and participation during classroom learning?
13	Does phubbing influence the relationship between teachers and students, or among students and their classmates?
14	How has students' learning behaviour changed since the emergence of phubbing habits?
15	What challenges do you face in managing the classroom when students frequently use gadgets or ignore direct interaction due to phubbing?
16	Does the school provide any support or specific policies to assist teachers in addressing the impacts of phubbing on students?
17	What steps or strategies do you take to reduce phubbing behaviour in the classroom? How effective are these strategies?
18	What concrete actions have you implemented in handling students affected by phubbing?
19	Have you ever collaborated with other teachers, homeroom teachers, or the school counseling (BK) staff in addressing specific student cases? How was this collaboration carried out?
20	How do students respond to the approaches you have applied so far?
21	Are there any obstacles or challenges you face in managing students affected by phubbing? If so, how do you address them?
22	Have you ever participated in training or professional development that helps in handling student issues? If yes, how beneficial was it?
23	In your opinion, what support do teachers need most to be more effective in addressing the impacts on students?
24	What role does the principal or school management play in supporting your efforts to manage the impacts experienced by students?
25	What are your expectations for improving strategies or methods for handling student impacts in the future?

Table 3. Questions for Students

Number	Questions
1	Do you know what phubbing is? Could you explain it according to your understanding?
2	In your opinion, is using a smartphone during learning activities acceptable? Why or why not?
3	Have you ever used a smartphone during learning activities at school? If so, what do you usually do on your phone at that time?
4	How do your teachers react when you use your phone during class activities?
5	How do you feel when your teacher reprimands you for using your phone for non-learning purposes?
6	Do you think phubbing affects your concentration while studying?
7	In what situations do you or your friends most often engage in phubbing? (For example: during breaks, group study, in class)
8	Do you feel that this behaviour has become a habit within the school environment?
9	Can you describe your habits when using a smartphone at school, especially in the classroom?
10	Do you often see your friends using their phones while the teacher is teaching?
11	In your opinion, what is phubbing? Have you ever done it or experienced it?
12	Have you ever felt disturbed when your friends focus more on their phones than listening to the teacher's explanation or participating in discussions?
13	What do you usually do when your friends are busy with their phones during group work?
14	When you use your phone while studying, do you feel that it affects your concentration? Could you explain how?
15	Does excessive phone use make you procrastinate on school assignments?
16	Have you ever missed lesson material because you were too focused on your phone?
17	How does your habit of using a phone affect your discipline in learning?
18	How do you feel if you are talking to a friend, but they are busy with their phone?
19	Does that make you reluctant to discuss or interact during learning activities?
20	In your opinion, can phubbing make the learning environment less conducive? Why?
21	Have teachers ever reprimanded or taken action when they saw students phubbing? What kind of action was taken?
22	In your opinion, were the teachers' actions effective? Why or why not?
23	Have teachers ever given guidance or advice regarding phone use in class or during social interactions?
24	What is the school's policy on phone use in class? Do teachers consistently enforce this policy?
25	Do you feel that teachers care about phubbing behaviour in the school environment?
26	In your opinion, what should teachers do to prevent students from developing a habit of phubbing?
27	What suggestions do you have for teachers to address phubbing behaviour at school?

Phubbing Behaviour Among Students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan

Generation Z, born in the 2000s, is the most vulnerable to the habit of phubbing. Tapscott (as cited in Inta Elok Youarti, 2018) describes Generation Z as the new millennial generation. This deviant behaviour often causes discomfort and, at times, leads to conflict. In the educational context, high school students belong to Generation Z, who tend to engage in phubbing behaviour frequently. They exhibit this behaviour not only outside the classroom but also during lessons. Students often check their smartphones while teachers are explaining the material. Typically, they keep their smartphones in their pockets, making it easier to take them out and secretly check them.

The results of observations at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan reveal that phubbing behaviour is highly prevalent among students. A significant number of students were observed using smartphones during class hours, with many appearing more focused on their devices than on the subject matter being taught. This has led to limited social interaction among peers, as students tend to neglect their classmates and prefer engaging with their phones.

The observations further indicate that many students struggle to concentrate on lessons, as reflected in their tendency to frequently turn away from the teacher's explanation to check their smartphones. When reprimanded for using their devices, some students displayed embarrassment or defensiveness, yet many did not change their behaviour. Phubbing—defined as the act of ignoring others in social interactions by focusing on a mobile phone—has thus become a widespread issue among students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan.

The findings suggest that this behaviour has permeated students' daily routines, particularly during class sessions. Both observations and interviews conducted at the school confirmed the prevalence of phubbing, with most students visibly engaging with their smartphones during instructional time. This condition indicates that smartphones are no longer merely communication tools, but have begun to shape students' behavioural patterns and learning habits. Many students appear unable to detach themselves from their devices, even in formal educational settings such as the classroom. Consequently, teaching and learning processes are hindered, as students' attention is divided between the teacher's instruction and distractions from their smartphones.

This phenomenon also reflects a broader shift in the learning culture of younger generations. Contemporary students often feel more comfortable seeking information through digital media rather than listening directly to teachers. While digital technology offers significant educational benefits, its excessive and uncontrolled use within the school environment can obstruct the attainment of learning objectives and diminish the quality of classroom interactions.

The Impact of Phubbing on Students' Learning Behaviour at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan

a. Concentration on Learning Materials

Learning concentration refers to the mental focus students possess in receiving, understanding, and processing information during the learning process. However, students' concentration is often disrupted by the phenomenon of phubbing, namely the behaviour of ignoring the surrounding environment due to excessive attention to smartphones. The advancement of communication technology, particularly smartphones, has brought both convenience and challenges to the field of education. The impact of phubbing—where students tend to prioritize smartphones over their social environment—significantly affects their learning concentration at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan.

The findings of this study indicate that phubbing has become a common habit among students. Both the principal and teachers confirmed that most students frequently use smartphones, whether during lessons, free periods, or break times. Students' concentration in learning is severely disrupted by phubbing. Teachers reported numerous cases in which students lost focus due to being preoccupied with their smartphones, resulting in difficulty absorbing information and learning materials to the fullest. This condition leads to low learning motivation, reduced participation, difficulties in understanding lessons, and a higher rate of errors in completing assignments and exams.

The disruption of learning concentration caused by phubbing indicates a phenomenon of technological dependency that influences students' cognitive ability to comprehend academic material. Such behaviour has negative implications for students' learning, including distraction and multitasking, which hinder the optimal absorption of knowledge (Huri, 2024). These disruptions not only impede the learning process but also create negative consequences in students' academic, social, and emotional aspects. Therefore, improving a conducive learning environment, strengthening regulations on gadget use, and promoting digital awareness education are essential to restoring students' optimal concentration in learning**.**

b. Limited Social Interaction Among Students

Phubbing behaviour has become a common social phenomenon that is deeply rooted among students. Principal Henny Afriani acknowledged that phubbing is no longer merely an individual act, but has become part of the daily culture of students' lives in the school environment. Students consistently prefer to engage with their smartphones rather than interact with peers, particularly during leisure times such as recess, free periods, or even in class when teacher supervision is minimal. The influence of phubbing extends beyond academic aspects, affecting the formation of students' character and personality. Students who habitually ignore others in favor of their smartphones risk losing essential interpersonal communication skills. This makes them less sensitive to their social environment and more inclined toward individualistic behaviour. If left unaddressed, such tendencies may weaken empathy and diminish the sense of togetherness among students.

A direct consequence of phubbing is the decline in social interaction among students. They tend to isolate themselves, focus on their own virtual worlds through smartphones, and become reluctant to communicate with those around them. This leads to a decrease in social warmth and deterioration of face-to-face communication quality. Teachers have reported that such behaviour strains peer relationships, reduces effective communication, and undermines the overall harmony of the classroom atmosphere. This phenomenon is further exacerbated by the decline in students' communication ethics, as seen in their lack of attentiveness and respect during conversations. Many students openly expressed feelings of annoyance and disappointment when their peers paid more attention to smartphones than to them. This sense of neglect diminishes students' willingness to engage in social interaction and to participate actively in classroom discussions.

The manifestation of phubbing behaviour is highly evident and produces dual impacts, both socially and academically. Socially, such neglect leads to isolation and hinders the development of healthy relationships. Students tend to avoid face-to-face conversations and prefer online interactions, thereby creating significant interpersonal distance. According to Interpersonal Communication Theory (DeVito, 2019), effective interpersonal communication requires close and personal interaction between individuals. However, phubbing disrupts this process, as it involves ignoring others in social situations in favor of focusing on mobile devices. Karadağ (2015) describes phubbing as the act of being preoccupied with a smartphone while conversing with others, pretending to pay attention, but ultimately focusing on the device instead.

Phubbing negatively affects the quality of interaction, as it reduces the depth of communication and fosters perceptions of indifference among interlocutors. When one party is more engaged with their phone, the other may feel undervalued, which can subsequently lead to tension and conflict in relationships. This contributes to a decline in relational satisfaction, as effective communication is essential in building and maintaining healthy social relationships.

c. Decline in Learning Interest and Academic Performance

Phubbing behaviour negatively impacts students' learning behaviour, particularly by reducing learning interest and academic achievement. According to Syifa (2024), phubbing can lead students to procrastinate in their studies, which has adverse effects on their academic performance. This occurs because students engaged in phubbing tend to devote more time and attention to smartphone use. Consequently, such students are more likely to postpone academic activities and neglect interlocutors during interactions. This pattern of procrastination ultimately undermines students' academic achievement.

From an academic perspective, teachers have reported a noticeable decline in students' concentration, reduced active participation, and weakened comprehension of learning materials. Students who are trapped in phubbing behaviours often delay assignments, display passive attitudes, and frequently rely on digital entertainment such as online games or social media rather than engaging with lessons. This condition directly affects academic performance, as reflected in declining grades, diminished motivation to learn, and an overall decrease in achievement. The principal further emphasized that the negative consequences of phubbing far outweigh the potential benefits of smartphone use in the classroom, since students primarily use their devices for non-academic purposes.

In addition to disrupting individual concentration, phubbing also influences the overall classroom atmosphere. Teachers often feel disrespected when students focus more on their smartphones than on the instruction being delivered. This situation creates a less conducive learning environment and delays the delivery of lessons. Teachers frequently have to interrupt the learning process to reprimand students, which reduces instructional time and diminishes teaching effectiveness.

Hence, phubbing generates systemic barriers to the quality of the teaching–learning process.

Moreover, smartphone use is frequently directed toward non-academic activities, such as browsing social media or playing games, particularly when lessons are perceived as monotonous. This highlights a strong connection between low learning interest and the tendency to engage in phubbing. In other words, phubbing not only serves as a cause but also as a reflection of weakened academic motivation. Phubbing therefore has significant implications for the decline in students' learning interest and academic performance. Smartphone addiction, low student awareness, and inadequate supervision from both teachers and parents exacerbate this problem. For this reason, consistent and collaborative strategies involving schools, teachers, and parents are necessary to effectively address this issue.

Table 4. The Impact of Phubbing on Students' Learning Behaviour at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan

Aspect	Result
Learning Concentration	Students often lose focus as they are more interested in smartphones than in lessons.
Academic Performance	A decline in academic achievement due to learning material not being fully absorbed.
Social Interaction	Face-to-face interactions decrease, as students prefer communicating via mobile phones.
Interpersonal Relations	A decline in the quality of peer relationships, leading to feelings of being unappreciated.
Learning Interest	Students' interest in learning decreases as their attention is divided between phones and learning materials.

Teachers' Efforts in Addressing the Impact of Phubbing at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan

a. Emphasizing the Importance of Face-to-Face Communication

Everyone requires interpersonal communication to build positive relationships. At this point, more adolescents are extending their connections through social media rather than through direct encounters. The use of the Internet has made one's presence in the virtual world stronger than in the real world. According to written research (Hojjad, 2017), closeness has a deeper impact when considering face-to-face communication. Meanwhile, communication through media such as graphics, video calls, and voice messages only supports the formation of relationships but does not foster intimacy.

In response to this situation, teachers employ strategies that emphasize limiting smartphone use and reinforcing face-to-face communication. Direct reprimands and the confiscation of smartphones are initial steps taken as a form of discipline to prevent students from using smartphones beyond educational purposes. As a result, students are encouraged to communicate directly with one another, thereby engaging more in face-to-face conversations with peers and teachers. This approach

not only reduces students' tendency toward phubbing but also nurtures interpersonal communication skills that are increasingly eroded by dependency on smartphones.

b. Encouraging Students to Become Productive by Reducing Smartphone-Based Assignments

Teachers' efforts in addressing the impact of phubbing are carried out through strategies that reduce students' dependency on smartphones, particularly in academic tasks. Teachers recognize that excessive smartphone use in the learning process often causes students to lose focus, become more easily distracted by social media, and show lower productivity in developing their potential. Therefore, one of the solutions implemented is reducing smartphone-based assignments and replacing them with tasks that encourage direct student engagement. Teachers provide alternatives in the form of assignments that require face-to-face interaction, small group discussions, and the development of manual and creative skills without relying heavily on digital devices. This approach has proven effective in helping students maintain concentration, as they are no longer tempted to open other applications on their smartphones while working on assignments. As a result, learning becomes more structured and focused on achieving competencies.

In addition, this strategy encourages students to be more productive in utilizing their study time. They become more active in asking questions, sharing ideas, and collaborating with classmates. Students are more motivated to sharpen critical thinking and problem-solving skills through real activities rather than merely seeking instant answers on the Internet. Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating a conducive learning atmosphere by providing guidance and constructive feedback. As a result, this effort not only reduces the negative effects of phubbing but also fosters healthier and more productive learning habits. Students learn to manage their time, develop discipline, and improve face-to-face interaction, which had previously declined due to smartphone dominance. Thus, reducing smartphone-based assignments becomes a concrete and effective step in helping students achieve a balance between technology and learning productivity.

Implementing a CBT Approach

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a suitable intervention for adolescents. This therapy works by transforming one's thought patterns into more rational ways of thinking, with careful attention to students' cognitive aspects. Many adolescents tend to compulsively check their phones even when there is nothing important, reflecting a distorted pattern of thought. Teachers and school counselors play a strategic role in applying CBT to support students who experience emotional difficulties. Through CBT-based counseling sessions, students are guided to recognize and modify negative thought patterns, which helps them cope with feelings of loneliness and improves their social interactions.

The CBT approach emphasizes the role of thoughts or cognitive processes in understanding a person's decision to engage in a particular behaviour. Its goal is to

help students identify and reassess cognitive distortions—irrational or unrealistic thinking patterns such as overgeneralization, black-and-white thinking, or using emotions as proof of truth—that may lead to maladaptive behaviour. Since CBT is supported by strong research evidence and has proven effective in reshaping thoughts and behaviours, teachers and guidance and counseling (GC) practitioners can apply this technique as both a preventive and corrective intervention to help students develop more adaptive and rational thinking patterns.

A supportive environment, both at home and at school, plays an essential role in fostering positive habits. For example, implementing phone-free zones or engaging in quality time without digital distractions can strengthen self-control and promote healthier social interactions. This is particularly important because excessive reliance on smartphones—such as constantly checking the phone without purpose—may cause emotional isolation, anxiety, or loneliness among adolescents. By recognizing individual students' characteristics and needs, teachers and counselors can provide more targeted support: offering moral encouragement, understanding emotional backgrounds, and strengthening interpersonal relationships. This helps prevent "behavioural deviations" that may arise from a lack of awareness or self-control. Overall, early prevention through supportive environments and cognitive interventions is a crucial step in addressing these issues before they escalate.

Table 5. Teachers' Efforts in Addressing the Impact of Phubbing at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan

Aspect	Result
Raising students' awareness	Teachers explain the negative impacts of phubbing on academic performance and social relationships.
Encouraging students to be productive by reducing smartphone-based assignments	Directing students toward positive activities and reducing their dependence on smartphones for completing assignments.
Implementing a CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) approach	Helping students change phubbing habits through cognitive-behavioural therapy
Prioritizing face-to-face interaction	Emphasizing direct communication to foster healthy social relationships.

The phenomenon of phubbing observed among students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan indicates a serious disruption in the process of interpersonal communication. According to DeVito (2019), interpersonal communication is the process of sending and receiving messages between two or more individuals that is direct, reciprocal, and aimed at fostering closeness and understanding. However, the findings of this study reveal that students tend to focus more on their smartphones than on their interlocutors or the learning process. This condition directly reduces the quality of interpersonal communication because messages delivered by teachers or peers are not fully received or optimally responded to.

From DeVito's perspective, interpersonal communication is supported by five main aspects: openness, empathy, supportiveness, positivity, and equality. Phubbing has been shown to disrupt all of these aspects. First, openness diminishes as students are reluctant to engage in face-to-face interaction, preferring instead to hide behind

their smartphone screens. Second, empathy weakens since phubbing behaviour creates feelings of being ignored in the interlocutor. Third, supportiveness and positivity decrease when communication is not carried out sincerely, as students' attention is divided. Fourth, equality in interaction is undermined because those engaging in phubbing display a dominance of attention toward their devices rather than toward interpersonal relationships.

Phubbing also impacts students' learning behaviour. Concentration problems, low motivation, and weakened social interactions found in this study illustrate how disrupted interpersonal communication has direct implications for academic processes. In line with DeVito's theory, quality face-to-face communication can strengthen students' cognitive and affective engagement in learning. However, when such communication is disrupted by phubbing, students not only lose the opportunity to fully comprehend the material but also miss essential social experiences that contribute to character building and interpersonal skills.

Furthermore, the study highlights teachers' efforts to address the impact of phubbing by encouraging face-to-face communication, reducing smartphone-based assignments, and implementing Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) approaches. These efforts align with DeVito's view that interpersonal communication must be maintained through deep interaction, direct involvement, and emotional support. By restricting smartphone use, teachers attempt to refocus students' attention on more authentic face-to-face relationships, thereby improving the quality of interpersonal communication.

In conclusion, phubbing is not merely an individual behaviour but a systematic issue of interpersonal communication. Within DeVito's theoretical framework, phubbing diminishes the quality of interpersonal interactions, undermines classroom social dynamics, and negatively affects students' learning behaviour. Therefore, strategies that strengthen face-to-face communication and limit the use of technology in educational contexts are crucial for restoring healthy interpersonal communication.

4. Conclusion

This study revealed that the phenomenon of phubbing is highly prevalent among students at SMAS Budi Satrya Medan and has significant negative impacts on their learning behaviour. Phubbing diverts students' attention away from the learning process, thereby reducing concentration, motivation, and the quality of social interaction within the classroom. This, in turn, leads to a decline in study discipline and overall academic performance. Moreover, phubbing disrupts the quality of interpersonal communication, which is essential for adolescents' social development. Efforts undertaken by teachers and the school—such as restricting smartphone use, assigning group tasks, and fostering face-to-face interaction—have proven effective in mitigating the negative impacts of phubbing. The study underscores the importance of a holistic approach involving teachers, students, and parents to create a conducive learning environment in the digital era. Future

research could develop more innovative interventions, including the wise integration of technology and the application of psychological methods, to address phubbing habits and enhance students' awareness of its consequences.

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