



Ignored in the Digital Age: A Review of Phubbing Behaviour

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Abstract

Phubbing, the act of ignoring others in social settings by focusing on digital devices, has emerged as a pervasive social phenomenon in the digital age. This review examines the prevalence, psychological impact, and social consequences of phubbing behaviour. Evidence indicates that phubbing negatively affects interpersonal relationships by reducing communication quality, increasing feelings of social exclusion, and reducing relationship satisfaction. The psychological outcomes associated with phubbing include decreased self-esteem and increased loneliness. The review also explores the demographic and situational factors influencing phubbing, highlighting its complexity. Addressing phubbing is essential for promoting healthier social interactions and mitigating its adverse effects on emotional well-being in contemporary society.

INTRODUCTION

Phubbing is defined as the act of snubbing or ignoring someone in a face-to-face social interaction by focusing attention on one's smartphone or digital device instead of engaging with the people present. The term itself is a blend of "phone" and "snubbing" and has been recognised primarily in recent years as a distinct social phenomenon (Field, 2024). This behaviour has emerged during the digital age, marked by the widespread proliferation of smartphones and digital technologies deeply integrated into daily life. Mobile devices offer constant connectivity and access to social media, messaging, and entertainment, which leads individuals to divert their attention away from in-person interactions, thereby increasing instances of phubbing (Field, 2024; Talan et al., 2023).

Research highlights that phubbing is intricately linked to problematic mobile phone and social media use, often seen as a multidimensional behaviour stemming from smartphone and social media addiction. These forms of digital addiction increase the likelihood of phubbing behaviours, although factors, such as fear of missing out (FoMO), may not always predict phubbing consistently (Talan et al., 2023). Phubbing has been measured using standardised scales that identify underlying factors, such as communication disturbance caused during interactions and phone obsession reflecting compulsive phone use (Błachnio et al., 2021; Blanca & Bendayan, 2018).

The emergence of phubbing coincides with the rise of smartphones as ubiquitous personal technologies, leading to a reconfiguration of social dynamics in which digital engagement competes with face-to-face communication. This

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behaviour is reported to have negative consequences for interpersonal relationships, psychological well-being, and social satisfaction (Çikrikci et al., 2019; Field, 2024). The literature also discusses "digital akrasia," describing how individuals knowingly engage in phubbing despite understanding its harmful effects, driven by habitual and possibly unconscious attentional diversion to digital devices (Aagaard, 2019). In summary, phubbing is a contemporary social behaviour rooted in the digital age, characterised by the prioritisation of smartphones over meaningful interpersonal engagement. Its rise is fuelled by the widespread integration of mobile digital technology into everyday life, accompanied by addiction-related dynamics and habitual use patterns, which significantly impact social relationships and individual well-being (Blanca & Bendayan, 2018; Field, 2024; Talan et al., 2023).

Relevance and Social Impact of Phubbing

Phubbing, defined as snubbing someone in a social setting by focusing on one's smartphone, has significant social relevance because it negatively affects interpersonal communication and relationships. Experimental studies reveal that increased phubbing reduces perceived communication quality and relationship satisfaction by diminishing feelings of belonging and eliciting negative affective responses among those phubbed (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018). This behaviour acts as a form of smartphone-induced social exclusion, which not only affects direct participants but also observers who experience stress, negative emotions, and derogatory attitudes toward those phubbing, further straining social interactions (Nuñez et al., 2020). Phubbing undermines social bonding by fostering feelings of neglect and decreasing empathy. Research has shown that phubbing negatively predicts empathy and prosocial behavioural intentions. These effects may partially mediate the emergence of less prosocial behaviour, implying that frequent phubbing weakens social connectedness and mutual understanding (Schmidt-Barad & Chernyak-Hai, 2024). Within romantic relationships, frequent phubbing correlates with lower relationship satisfaction and worsened psychological well-being, including increased symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress (González-Rivera et al., 2018). In friendship contexts, higher levels of phubbing are linked to decreased friendship satisfaction and are associated with mental health factors, such as social anxiety and depression (Sun & Samp, 2021).

Beyond interpersonal relationship impacts, phubbing contributes to broader societal issues like reduced social cohesion and impaired mental health. It is strongly connected with negative emotional activations, such as heightened negative affect but not positive affect, paralleling emotional patterns seen in social media addiction (Guazzini et al., 2021). Phubbing also mediates the relationship between social media addiction and poor mental health outcomes, including stress and anxiety, suggesting that it exacerbates psychological distress in the digital age (Ergün et al., 2023). Social anxiety further mediates the link between phubbing and problematic social media use, highlighting a complex interplay between digital behaviours and mental health (Oral & Karakurt, 2025). In workplace settings, co-worker phubbing during communal breaks acts as a social barrier that can undermine interpersonal relations and the psychosocial environment at work, depending on norms and individual expectations (Martinsson & Thomée, 2024). Additionally, individual psychological factors, such as fear of missing out and low emotional differentiation, can drive phubbing as a coping mechanism, further complicating relational dynamics around this behaviour (Peleg & Boniel-Nissim, 2024).

Understanding phubbing is crucial for addressing how digital distractions compromise meaningful social interactions and overall mental health in contemporary society. Efforts to mitigate phubbing's detrimental effects may involve raising awareness about its emotional and relational consequences and promoting social norms that prioritise face-to-face engagement over excessive smartphone use. This understanding is critical for fostering healthier interpersonal connections and improving psychological well-being in the digital age (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018; González-Rivera et al., 2018; Guazzini et al., 2021; Nuñez et al., 2020).

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE REVIEW:

Phubbing, a term that blends "phone" and "snubbing," refers to the behaviour in which individuals ignore conversational partners to focus on their smartphones, thus disrupting face-to-face social interactions (Field, 2024). The phenomenon is increasingly prevalent, with studies showing that at least 47% of individuals globally have experienced phubbing (Field, 2024), and research reporting significant occurrence among adolescents and young adults, including approximately half of the school and university students in Spain (Barbed-Castrejón et al., 2024).

Theoretical underpinnings frame phubbing as a form of smartphone-induced social exclusion or ostracism, conceptualised within models such as the temporal need-threat model of ostracism, which accounts for the negative affect and stress experienced not only by targets but also by observers of phubbing (Nuñez et al., 2020). This social exclusion perspective highlights phubbing's impact beyond the immediate interaction, cultivating negative perceptions about those phubbing in terms of warmth and competence (Nuñez et al., 2020).

Prevalence studies have found that phubbing is widespread among young people, with higher scores observed in males and university students, and its presence correlating positively with problematic Internet use and negatively with self-Esteem (Barbed-Castrejón et al., 2024). Personality traits, excessive social media usage (including social media addiction measured by scales like the Social Media Addiction Scale), and fear of missing out (FoMO) significantly predict phubbing behaviour (Arenz & Schnauber-Stockmann, 2023; Chi et al., 2022; Field, 2024; Peleg & Boniel-Nissim, 2024). Specifically, fear of missing out mediates the association between low differentiation of self and phubbing, suggesting it as an anxiety-driven coping mechanism (Peleg & Boniel-Nissim, 2024).

Phubbing stems from causes that include digital akrasia, a state of acting against one's better judgment due to an uncontrollable urge to engage with digital devices despite knowing the negative impact on social partners (Aagaard, 2019). This reflective dissonance illustrates the complex motivations underlying phubbing behaviour.

The consequences of phubbing are multifaceted, detrimentally affecting social interactions by reducing communication quality, relationship satisfaction, feelings of belonging, and affective states (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018). It also undermines empathy and prosocial behavioural intentions via impaired self-control, particularly when phubbing becomes habitual rather than momentary (Schmidt-Barad & Chernyak-Hai, 2024). Among adolescents, phubbing has been linked to depression mediated by poor peer relationship quality and psychological frustration, emphasising its mental health ramifications (Yue et al., 2024). Parents' phubbing similarly affects children, leading to increased screen addiction, peer alienation,

depression, and aggressive youth behaviours (Field, 2024).

Suggested interventions include improving peer relationships and addressing the psychological need for frustrations to combat depressive symptoms related to phubbing among adolescents (Yue et al., 2024). Educational settings provide a crucial point for preventive strategies, given the high prevalence in young individuals (Barbed-Castrejón et al., 2024). However, research highlights a substantial gap in intervention studies and longitudinal work to establish causality and effective coping mechanisms; most current evidence is cross-sectional and reliant on self-reports (Field, 2024). Future research should explore underlying psychosocial mechanisms more deeply and design targeted interventions that address behavioural and technological drivers of phubbing.

In summary, phubbing is a complex phenomenon defined by phone-induced social exclusion with broad psychological, social, and technological implications. It is prevalent among young people, fuelled by personality, addictive technology use, and psychological factors, such as FoMO and digital akrasia. Its consequences include diminished social connection, lowered empathy, mental health problems, and relationship dissatisfaction. Although interventions show promise in improving relational factors, further research is necessary to fill the gaps in theoretical understanding, causal pathways, and effective intervention strategies. This interdisciplinary perspective integrates psychological theories, social dynamics, and technology use to advance comprehensive knowledge of phubbing in modern social interactions (Aagaard, 2019; Arenz & Schnauber-Stockmann, 2023; Barbed-Castrejón et al., 2024; Chi et al., 2022; Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018; Field, 2024; Nuñez et al., 2020; Peleg & Boniel-Nissim, 2024; Schmidt-Barad & Chernyak-Hai, 2024; Yue et al., 2024).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Social interaction theories relevant to phubbing, such as social presence theory and media richness theory, explain how the use of smartphones during face-to-face interactions disrupts the perceived quality of social communication. Social presence theory posits that in-person social interactions require a sense of presence and attention to effectively maintain relational bonds. Phubbing violates these expectations by diverting attention away from the interaction, leading to reduced social presence and perceived

ostracism, which harms the quality of social relationships (Abeele, 2020). Media richness theory, which emphasises the importance of rich, immediate communication channels for effective social interactions, suggests that replacing direct social cues with phone usage diminishes communicative richness, further degrading interaction quality and connection.

Psychological and behavioural frameworks further elucidate the mechanisms underlying phubbing. Attachment theory explains that individuals with insecure attachments may rely more on smartphones to avoid uncomfortable social scenarios or feelings of anxiety, thereby engaging in phubbing behaviours. Addiction models also provide a framework to understand phubbing, as smartphone or Internet addiction, along with related factors such as fear of missing out (FOMO) and low self-control, predicts increased phubbing. These addiction-like symptoms involve compulsive phone checking and multitasking behaviours, which are linked to attentional failures, such as difficulties in shifting attention and increased distractibility, reinforcing phubbing behaviours (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016; Sansevere & Ward, 2021).

Social norms and attitudes play a significant role in the prevalence of phubbing. Individuals' attitudes toward phubbing and subjective norms can influence the frequency of phubbing in dyadic interactions, with people adapting their behaviour based on descriptive norms—perceptions of how common phubbing is—rather than injunctive norms or approvals. This adaptation legitimises phubbing and perpetuates its occurrence during social interactions despite its negative social consequences (Büttner et al., 2021; Leuppert & Geber, 2020).

Phubbing also generates broader relational and emotional consequences, as explained by psychological theories. It functions as a smartphone-induced form of social exclusion, triggering negative affect, stress, and derogatory attitudes among observers, which aligns with the temporal need-threat model of ostracism. This framework explains how being phubbed threatens fundamental social needs, resulting in emotional distress and impaired social functioning (Nuñez et al., 2020). Additionally, phubbing decreases empathy and prosocial behaviour in those who engage in it, potentially mediated by reductions in self-control caused by repeated distractions, thereby impacting both the phubber and their social connections (Schmidt-Barad & Chernyak-Hai, 2024).

In summary, social interaction theories, such as social presence and media richness, explain how phubbing disrupts the quality of interpersonal interactions by undermining attention and communication richness. Psychological frameworks, such as attachment theory and addiction models, clarify individual vulnerabilities and behavioural tendencies contributing to phubbing, whereas theories of social norms and ostracism elucidate its social acceptance and emotional consequences within relationships (Abeele, 2020; Büttner et al., 2021; Nuñez et al., 2020; Sansevere & Ward, 2021).

PREVALENCE AND DEMOGRAPHICS:

Studies have reported that phubbing, defined as ignoring someone in face-to-face interactions by focusing on a phone, has become highly prevalent across various populations. For example, a study in Spain found that phubbing behaviour was present in approximately half of school and university students aged 12 to 21 years, indicating widespread engagement in this behaviour among adolescents and young adults (Barbed-Castrejón et al., 2024). Similarly, a study on 938 undergraduate students showed significant correlations between phubbing and social media addiction and fear of missing out (FoMO), suggesting that phubbing is commonly observed in university populations as part of problematic technology use (Chi et al., 2022). In India, a prevalence of approximately 49.3% was reported among adolescents and youth, highlighting that phubbing behaviour is also prominent in developing countries and linked with Internet and smartphone addiction, FoMO, and lack of self-control (Davey et al., 2018).

Studies on demographic factors influencing phubbing behaviour have also been conducted. Sex differences show that women tend to report higher levels of phubbing behaviour in some studies, such as one in which women scored higher on emotional reactivity and phubbing measures, possibly mediated by FoMO, whereas men scored higher on differentiation of self (Peleg & Boniel-Nissim, 2024). In contrast, in the Spanish student sample, male students showed higher phubbing scores on the Phone Obsession component and overall phubbing scale than females (Barbed-Castrejón et al., 2024). Age-wise, adolescents and young adults are the most studied groups, with a notably high prevalence during teenage to early adult years, potentially reflecting developmental and social media use patterns (Barbed-Castrejón et al., 2024; Davey et al., 2018).

Cultural differences are less extensively documented but are suggested by cross-national comparisons showing phubbing's global spread and variations in prevalence and correlates. For instance, studies from Spain, China, India, Turkey, and Western countries have highlighted common predictors, such as smartphone addiction and FoMO; however, psychosocial impacts and demographic influences may differ due to cultural norms around technology use and social interaction (Barbed-Castrejón et al., 2024; Davey et al., 2018; Lai et al., 2022; Oral & Karakurt, 2025).

In summary, phubbing prevalence is consistently high among adolescents and young adults globally, often exceeding 40–50%. Sex effects are mixed but may depend on specific social and cultural contexts, with some studies reporting higher phubbing in females and others in males. Age generally influences phubbing, with younger populations being more prone. The cultural context likely moderates the expression and impact of phubbing; however, further comparative research is needed to elucidate these differences fully. Factors such as social media addiction, FoMO, and psychological variables mediate and predict phubbing behaviour across demographic groups (Barbed-Castrejón et al., 2024; Chi et al., 2022; Davey et al., 2018; Lai et al., 2022; Peleg & Boniel-Nissim, 2024).

CAUSES AND MOTIVATIONS:

Phubbing behaviour is driven by a complex interplay of psychological motivations, technological factors, and social-environmental triggers. Psychologically, key motivations include boredom, social anxiety, and fear of missing out (FoMO). Studies have shown that fear of missing out is positively correlated with phubbing behaviour and serves as a significant predictor, indicating that individuals may phub to alleviate anxiety related to being excluded or missing social updates (Chi et al., 2022; Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016). Social anxiety also mediates the relationship between phubbing and social media addiction, with increased social anxiety leading to more frequent phubbing, likely as a coping mechanism to avoid direct social interactions (Guazzini et al., 2019; Oral & Karakurt, 2025). Similarly, boredom and loneliness contribute to phubbing, with individuals turning to their phones for stimulation or social connection, exacerbated by traits such as neuroticism and anxiety (Field, 2024).

Technological factors prominently include the ubiquity of smartphones and app designs geared

toward engagement and addiction. Smartphone addiction emerges as the principal factor responsible for phubbing, with addictive features of apps and notifications designed to capture attention and encourage continuous use, fuelling compulsive phone checking at the expense of social interaction (Chatterjee, 2020; Chi et al., 2022). The designs of social media platforms, often engineered to foster fear of missing out and deliver variable reward schedules, exacerbate this behaviour by increasing users' reliance on constant connectivity (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016; Tanhan et al., 2023). Studies have highlighted that problematic smartphone and social media addictions are strong predictors of phubbing (Chi et al., 2022; Talan et al., 2023).

Social and environmental triggers include social norms, attitudes toward phone use during interactions, and the perceived value of social interactions. The frequency of phubbing is influenced by subjective norms and attitudes that may normalise or justify phone use in social settings (Büttner et al., 2021). Individuals who view phubbing positively or perceive high phone use as normative are more likely to engage in it. Environmental contexts, such as mealtimes or social gatherings, where phone use is common, can further propagate phubbing behaviour (Büttner et al., 2021). Additionally, observers of phubbing experience negative affect and stress, indicating that the behaviour creates social exclusion and ostracism effects beyond the immediate interaction (Nuñez et al., 2020).

In summary, psychological motivations, such as boredom, social anxiety, and FoMO, drive phubbing by increasing users' psychological need to connect digitally, whereas technological factors, especially smartphone addiction and app designs geared toward continuous engagement, facilitate and amplify this behaviour. Social norms and environmental contexts can either inhibit or encourage phubbing, thereby shaping how frequently and in what settings it occurs (Büttner et al., 2021; Chatterjee, 2020; Chi et al., 2022; Guazzini et al., 2019).

CONSEQUENCES OF PHUBBING:

Interpersonal relationships are significantly impacted by reduced communication quality and conflict, which are known to affect mental health outcomes. For example, interpersonal ties that involve negativity or difficulty can exacerbate mental health stigma and associated issues (Felix & Lynn, 2021). The quality of social support derived from relationships plays a mediating role in the effect of external

stressors, such as stigma, on mental health, underscoring how interpersonal dynamics influence conditions such as depression or anxiety (Kondrat et al., 2018). Furthermore, intimate marital relationships have been linked to aspects of positive mental health, such as well-being and self-worth, showing the dual impact of genetic and environmental factors within interpersonal contexts (Spotts et al., 2005).

Loneliness, depression, and anxiety are frequently associated with poor-quality interpersonal interactions and social isolation in terms of mental health. Social media, while offering some community and self-expression opportunities, is also a source of increased anxiety and depression due to social comparison, cyberbullying, and distorted realities presented online (Ajewumi et al., 2024). The influence of social media on body image and self-esteem further contributes to mental health challenges through exposure to idealised images, leading to dissatisfaction and disorders such as depression and eating disorders (Merino et al., 2024). Additionally, mental health discourse on social media can both reduce stigma and, paradoxically, contribute to it depending on the nature of the discourse and cultural power mechanisms involved (Pavlova & Berkers, 2020).

Broader social implications include workplace productivity and social cohesion, which are negatively impacted by mental health problems and reduced interpersonal communication quality. Conditions such as depression and anxiety reduce individual productivity and can strain workplace relationships, reducing overall social cohesion. The interaction of socioeconomic and cultural determinants with issues like gender-based violence during crises (e.g., COVID-19) also demonstrates how public health and societal structures contribute to mental health burdens and disrupted social functioning (Opanasenko et al., 2021). The psychosocial impacts of climate change similarly contribute to mental health distress at community and societal levels, potentially affecting social cohesion through increased anxiety and emotional distress (Fritze et al., 2008).

In summary, diminished communication quality and conflict in interpersonal relationships contribute to increased loneliness, depression, and anxiety, mediated by social support dynamics. Mental health challenges stemming from these interpersonal issues affect broader societal domains, including workplace productivity and social cohesion. Social media and societal stressors compound these effects by influencing mental health positively and negatively,

thereby shaping the broader social fabric (Ajewumi et al., 2024; Felix & Lynn, 2021; Kondrat et al., 2018; Merino et al., 2024; Opanasenko et al., 2021; Spotts et al., 2005).

INTERVENTIONS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES:

Behavioural interventions, such as digital detox and mindfulness practices, have shown promise in managing excessive digital device use. Digital detox involves voluntarily reducing or temporarily ceasing device use, which has been linked with alleviating depression and problematic Internet behaviours, especially for individuals with higher baseline symptom severity. These interventions vary in approach from short-term abstinence to sustained moderated use, with outcomes influenced by factors, such as age, mental health status, and environmental support. Tailored digital usage regimens, particularly for adolescents and young adults, demonstrate greater benefits, whereas mindfulness practices encourage regulated social media use that improves self-regulation and emotional well-being (Setia et al., 2025).

Technological solutions include app usage monitoring and notification management, often implemented through mobile devices to encourage healthier behavioural patterns. Persuasive technology strategies embedded in mobile health interventions effectively promote positive lifestyle changes, such as increased physical activity and reduced sedentary behaviour. These technologies employ strategies such as feedback and reminders, which help users monitor and adjust their device interactions in real-time, thus supporting healthier digital habits (Aldenaini et al., 2022). Moreover, digital nudging—subtle technological prompts informed by behavioural science—can guide users toward more sustainable and mindful digital device engagement by leveraging social norm feedback and default settings (Amiri et al., 2024).

Social and educational campaigns play a critical role in influencing public behaviour related to digital device use and health outcomes by disseminating targeted, culturally appropriate information across multiple channels, including mass media, digital platforms, and community outreach. These campaigns, grounded in behavioural theories such as the health belief model and social cognitive theory, use strategic messaging tailored to specific demographic groups to maximise impact and encourage sustained behaviour change. Combining digital and community-based strategies enhances the reach and frequency of health-promoting messages, aiding in issues such as problematic digital use and associated mental health

concerns. Continuous evaluation and adaptive strategies also help address barriers such as misinformation and socioeconomic disparities, thereby strengthening the overall effectiveness of these public health efforts (Evans et al., 2019; Kotler & Roberto, 1990; Odongo, 2024).

In summary, managing digital device use and its related impacts effectively involves a comprehensive approach integrating behavioural interventions (digital detox and mindfulness), technological tools (app usage monitoring and notification control), and strategic social and educational campaigns grounded in behavioural science and tailored communication. Together, these approaches offer scalable and sustainable pathways to foster healthier digital habits and improve mental and physical health outcomes.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND RESEARCH GAPS:

Emerging research on phubbing, which describes the behaviour of snubbing others in face-to-face interactions by focusing on one's phone, reveals rapid growth in scholarly interest because of its widespread negative impact on relationships and social interactions (Arenz & Schnauber-Stockmann, 2023). Current trends emphasise understanding diverse predictors of phubbing behaviour, including sociodemographic factors, personality traits, technology-related norms, and problematic smartphone use patterns—with problematic use patterns identified as the strongest predictors (Arenz & Schnauber-Stockmann, 2023). Specific studies have highlighted risk factors such as smartphone addiction, depression, and social anxiety, as well as protective factors like self-control and interpersonal adaptability, particularly in populations such as college students (Lai et al., 2022). Additionally, social media addiction and fear of missing out (FoMO) have been found to be significant antecedents of phubbing, reinforcing the link between excessive technology use and phubbing behaviour (Chi et al., 2022).

Methodological challenges in phubbing research centre around measurement consistency, sample diversity, and contextual variables. Studies often rely on self-report questionnaires, which may introduce biases in reporting phubbing frequency and motives (Lai et al., 2022). More longitudinal designs are needed to track behavioural changes over time and experimental approaches to establish causal relationships, as most current studies are cross-sectional (Arenz & Schnauber-Stockmann, 2023). Furthermore, workplace-related phubbing research, such as boss phubbing and its effect on employee

outcomes, suggests the importance of situational factors and the mediating psychological processes involved, such as self-esteem threats (Khan et al., 2021). This highlights the need for multi-level and multi-contextual research methodologies. Future studies are encouraged to enhance methodological rigor by integrating behavioural observation, ecological momentary assessment, and wider demographic sampling to reduce generalisability limitations (Arenz & Schnauber-Stockmann, 2023; Chi et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2021).

Regarding policy development and technology design improvements, the evidence underscores the relevance of institutional policies addressing phubbing, particularly in workplaces, to preserve interpersonal respect and communication quality (Khan et al., 2021). Awareness campaigns and such policies can target both the personal and social consequences of phubbing to reduce its prevalence. Technology design may also be enhanced by creating features that limit disruptive notifications or build in “digital etiquette” prompts that encourage users to prioritise face-to-face engagement. Incorporating psychological insights about addictive smartphone use and FoMO into the design could foster healthier interaction patterns with technology (Chi et al., 2022). Integrative approaches between policy-making and human-centred technology design are likely to yield better outcomes in mitigating phubbing's negative effects on social functioning.

In summary, recent research has highlighted an increasing scholarly focus on the predictors and consequences of phubbing, with calls for improved methodological approaches, such as longitudinal and experimental designs, to deepen our understanding. There is also crucial potential for policy intervention and technology redesign to address user behaviour and social norms in order to minimise phubbing's adverse impacts on interpersonal relationships and workplace dynamics (Arenz & Schnauber-Stockmann, 2023; Chi et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2021; Lai et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION:

The analysis highlights the pervasive nature of phubbing and its detrimental effects on interpersonal communication and social relationships. Key findings demonstrate that phubbing contributes to decreased relationship satisfaction, increased feelings of social exclusion, and impaired face-to-face interactions. This behaviour is linked to negative psychological outcomes, such as lowered self-esteem and heightened loneliness. Various demographic factors

and situational contexts influence the prevalence and impact of phubbing, underscoring its complexity as a social phenomenon. Given the widespread use of smartphones and digital devices, phubbing has become a significant barrier to meaningful social engagement. Addressing phubbing is crucial for fostering healthier communication patterns, enhancing social connectedness, and mitigating its adverse psychological effects. Interventions and awareness campaigns targeting phubbing can promote more mindful technology use and encourage prioritising in-person interactions, which are essential for emotional well-being and social cohesion in contemporary society.

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