



ASSESS THE IMPACT OF SMART PHONE USAGE ON THE HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE OF STUDENTS IN SELECTED COLLEGES AT MANGALURU.

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

Smart phones are becoming increasingly indispensable in everyday life. Smart phone love has swept the world. Studies have enlisted several benefits of smart phones to students. However, the advancement of the technology is not what is alarming, but rather people's misuse and excessive engagement with their devices. Health and life style issues are opposing the idea of using mobile phones as a tool for communication. The study adopted a descriptive survey approach. Purposive sampling technique was adopted. The tools were prepared by the investigators. Results showed that highest percentage of students had unfavourable health as and highest percentage of students had adopted unhealthy lifestyle while using smart phones. Area wise highest mean was in the area of mental health. Findings of the study indicate that mobile phones can have an impact on the health and life style of students. Hence overuse of such devices should be restricted.

KEYWORDS

Impact, smart phones; health; lifestyle; students; Mangaluru

Smart phones are becoming increasingly indispensable in everyday life. Smartphone is a term for distinguishing mobile phones with advanced features from basic feature phones. It is seen as a fashion accessory that satisfies the need for individualization by having choices in mobile wallpaper, ring tones, phone covers, carry bags and other accessories and yet also signifies being part of the peer group.

In the last 20 years, worldwide mobile phone subscriptions have grown from 12.4 million to over 5.6 billion, penetrating about 70% of the global population. Recently in 2013, there were around 51 million smart phone users in Urban India and rate of rise from year 2012 was 90%.¹

Smart phone love has swept the world. Studies have enlisted several benefits of smart phones to students. However, the advancement of the technology is not what is alarming, but rather people's misuse and excessive engagement with their devices. A smart phone also has the possibility of becoming a prevalent social problem. One of the reasons for this unexpected popularity of smart phones is that it makes people's lives more convenient. However, this may also pose many risks. There have been reports of plenty of health hazards, both mental and physical, in people of all age groups.²

The digital activities make the youth strong in technical skills but make them weak in real life practical skills. It takes the young mass away from the reality helping them to live in their imaginary world. Due to the time spent on the devices, the youth are refrained from outdoor activities with friends and family. The indulgence in violent games may create more violence in their mind. The more they use the gadgets, the more they are crazy about it which may distract them from studies. During the time of playing games when they can't achieve the set target, it may raise their anxiety level higher. After all addiction to the devices may develop unhealthy lifestyle, poor time management and poor eating habits among the youth. Hence this study was deemed fit to assess the impact of smart phone usage on the health and lifestyle of students in selected colleges at Mangaluru.

The objectives of the study are

1. To assess the smart phone usage among the students
2. To assess the impact of smart phones on the health of the students
3. To assess the impact of smart phones on the life style of the students
4. To find the association of health and life style of the students with selected demographic variables

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey approach. The study was conducted at Mangaluru among seven Professional colleges where permission was accorded. 300 students between 18 to 24 years were selected through purposive sampling technique. Fifty final year students were selected from each college. The inclusion criteria were

students present at the time of data collection, between 18 to 24 years were selected for the study. Students not possessing smart phones and not willing to participate were excluded. The tools were prepared by the investigators. The Demographic Proforma had five items to collect background information. Information pertaining to smart phone usage had 12 open ended items. A five point Likert scale was developed with 34 items to assess the impact of smart phone on the health of students. There were five options: A- Always, O- Often, S- Sometimes, R- Rarely, N- Never. Impact of smart phone was assessed in three areas: Physical (11 items) mental (17 items) and social (06 items). Arbitrary scoring was considered as good health from 1-85 and poor health from 86-170. A five point Scale to assess impact of smart phones on lifestyle of adolescents had 20 items with A- Always, O- Often, S- Sometimes, R- Rarely, N- Never as the options. The grading of scores by arbitrary method was done with healthy lifestyle 1-50 and Unhealthy lifestyle 51-100. Formal written permission was obtained from the authorities and the students prior to the data collection process. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results

Organisation of study findings

The data is analysed and presented under the following headlines:

Section I: Description of sample characteristics of students

Section II information pertaining to smart phone usage among students

Section III: Assess the impact of smart phones on the health of students

Section IV: Assess the impact of smart phones on the Lifestyle of students

Section V: Association between Health scores with selected demographic variables

Section VI: Association between lifestyle scores with selected demographic variables

Section I: Description of sample characteristics of students

Highest (49.66%) of the college students were between the age group 22-24 years. Equal percentage of students were male and female. With regard to religion, the highest percentage was among Christians (46%). Students staying in hostels (76.34%) were found to have highest rate of smart phone usage compared to other students staying in different residential settings. Based on the income of the family, maximum students (38.67%) belonged to family income of less than Rs. 10,000 per month.

Section II information pertaining to smart phone usage among students

Information with regard to the usage of mobile was collected and analysed from 300 students using descriptive analysis. 54.67% of the students used two mobile SIM. Majority 77.33% of the students did not change their smart phone connection in the last three months and the

reason cited for changing the connection was offers on recharge pack (33.82%). 38.67% of the students spent 1 to 2 hours every day using mobiles. Late night usage (30%) of the smart phone was there till 12 at night. (69%) of the students used the mobiles phones were used for the purpose of communication.49.33% of the students place the smart phone on the table while sleeping. Highest (74.66%) of the students kept the smart phone on silent mode while in class.

Section III: Assess the impact of mobile phones on the health of students

Impact of smart phone on the health of 300 students was assessed by using a five point likert scale and analysed.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of impact of smart phones on the health of the students n=300

Health of adolescents	Impact of mobile phones	
	Frequency	Percentage
Favourable health (1-85)	8	2.66
Unfavourable Health (86-170)	292	97.33

Data presented in Table 1 shows that highest percentage (68.66%) of students had unfavourable health as a result of smart phone usage. The impact of mobile phone scores on the health of the adolescents were in the range of (60-151). The mean, median, standard deviation and the mean% obtained was 117.67, 121, 13.96, 69.22% respectively. This shows that impact of smart phone caused unfavourable health in the students.

Area wise mean and standard deviation of impact of smart phone scores on the health of students

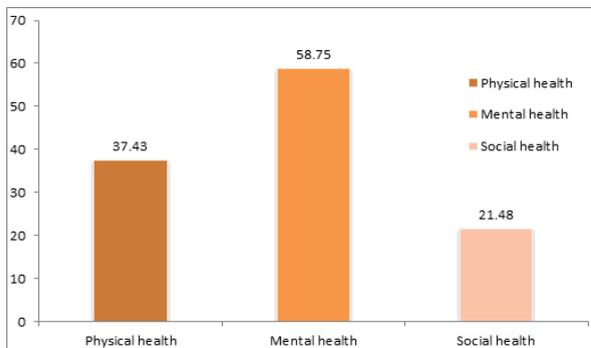


Figure 1: Bar diagram showing the mean scores of impact of smart phones on the different areas of health

The data in figure 1 shows that the area wise mean of the impact of smart phones among students was highest (34.56%) in the area of mental health.

Section IV: Assess the impact of smart phones on the Lifestyle of students

Impact of smart phone on the lifestyle of 300 students was assessed by using a five point Likert scale and analysed using descriptive statistics.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of impact of mobile phones on the lifestyle of the students n=300

Lifestyle of students	Impact of mobile phones	
	Frequency	Percentage
Healthy Lifestyle (1-50)	18	6
Unhealthy Lifestyle (51-100)	282	94

Data presented in Table 2 shows that highest percentage (94%) of students had develop unhealthy lifestyle while using smart phones. The mean, median, standard deviation and the mean% obtained was 75-51, 85, 14.70, 26-50%, respectively. This shows that the students adopted unhealthy lifestyle when smart phones are used.

Section V: Association between Health scores with selected demographic variables

Chi square analysis shows that there was a significant association between the health scores and selected demographic variables like

present place of stay, and income of the family. The calculated χ^2 value for these demographic variables was more than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. So the null hypothesis was rejected for the above mentioned variables and research hypothesis was accepted that there is a significant association between the health scores and place of stay and income of the family.

Section VI: Association between lifestyle scores with selected demographic variables

The association between the lifestyle scores and selected demographic variables was computed. The data shows that there was significant association between the lifestyle scores and selected demographic variables like gender, religion, and present place of stay, whereas the selected demographic variables age were not significant. The calculated χ^2 was greater than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. So the null hypothesis was rejected for the variables and the research hypothesis was accepted.

Discussion Sample characteristics

The findings of the present study reveal that highest (49.66%) of the college students were between the age group 22-24 years. Equal percentage of students were male and female and male. Based on the income of the family maximum students (38.6%) belonged to family income of less than Rs. 10,000 per month. Students staying in hostels (76.34%) were found to have highest rate of smart phone usage compared to other students staying in different residential settings

With regard to Smart phone usage among students, the present study findings revealed 54.67% of the students used two mobile SIM..Late night usage (30%) of the mobiles was there till 12 at night. The students reported the highest percentage (69%) that mobiles phones were used for the purpose of communication.49.33% of the students place the mobile on the table while sleeping. Highest (74.66%) of the students kept the mobile in silent mode while in class.

Similar study findings were reported in a comparative study conducted on mobile phone usage patterns amongst university students: Most common reason for acquiring mobile phones was to stay in touch with family and friends, and the need to use in case of emergency or personal safety. A large percentage of respondents (70% from India and 66% from the United States) keep their phones in mute / vibrate mode while attending classes.³

Health and lifestyle of students

Findings of the present study shows that highest percentage (94%) of students had developed unhealthy lifestyle with the use of smart phones. The highest (36.06%) impact of mobiles was felt by the students in the area of mental health.

A study examined the effect of excess use of cell phone on adolescent's mental health and quality of life. Findings revealed unlimited users of cell phone had poor perceptual and contextual dimension of quality of life compared to limited users. These findings were consistent to the present study findings.⁵⁴ A study was conducted on some psychological health effects of cell-phone usage amongst college going students' revealed headache as the most commonest symptom (51.47%) followed by irritability/anger (50.79%).⁴

The present study findings show that highest percentage (72%) of students had adopted unhealthy lifestyle while using mobile phones. A study titled pattern of leisure-lifestyles among Indian school adolescents: Contextual influences and implications for emerging health concerns findings revealed a greater prevalence of the use of electronic media and telecommunication gadgets, reflecting a larger engagement in sedentary activities.⁵

Limitations

- Samples were selected only from seven selected professional colleges. Hence generalization may not be possible.
- The data was collected only through the questionnaires which restricted the amount of information.
- The data collected was subjective. No other method was undertaken to check health of the students.

Recommendation

- A study can be replicated with larger represented sample.

- A comparative study can be done among urban and rural colleges.
- A comparative study can be conducted with other age groups.
- A prospective study can be undertaken by using a control group to assess the impact over time
- A study can be done to assess impact of usage of not only mobiles but other gadgets like iphone, tablets etc.

Conclusion

The study concludes there is impact of smart phone on the health and lifestyle of students. The study provided the investigator with deep insight into the extent and patterns of usage of smart phones among students, impact of smart phones on the health and lifestyle of students, and future problems that as health personnel we can encounter due to smart phone usage.

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