Unveiling the prevalence of mobile addiction among college students of Ankola

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Abstract

Mobile phones have undergone a remarkable transformation over the years, from being basic communication devices to powerful computing devices that offer a plethora of features and functionalities. Today, as the capability of the mobile phone becomes more and more sophisticated and multifunctional, adolescents and young users are becoming increasingly dependent or "addicted" to this technology not only for interpersonal communication through voice or text (such as Short messaging service -- SMS), but also as a tool for seeking information online, for entertainment, relaxation, passing time, picture and video taking, expression of status and identity, and other yet-to-be invented applications (Leung, 2007). Survey method was used to collect the data. Self-structured questionnaire and Mobilr Phone addiction by Velayudhan and Srividya were used to collect the information from 124 students studying in BSc in Private degree college Ankola. an average spent time on mobile is 5 hours in week days as well as holidays among all students, more time spent on social media & for entertainment purpose compared to study purpose. There is no difference in male & female students. The popular apps among college students are WhatsApp, Telegram, and Instagram, which reflects the current trend among the youth. Other commonly used social media apps include YouTube, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and Share Chat, while Hot star, Sony, and YouTube are popular entertainment apps. Only a few students use Amazon, PUBG, Pinterest, and Google Pay. The study shows an increasing trend in the usage of WhatsApp and Instagram, where people often use different names and identities. This can lead to the rapid spread of fake information as people are in a hurry to forward or share messages without verifying their authenticity. This may result in misunderstandings and even breakups in relationships. The study found that among male students, 43% were low in addiction percentile, 51% were moderately addicted, and only 5.4% were highly addicted. Among female students, 41% were low in addiction percentile, 40% were moderately addicted, and 18% were highly addicted. Although the percentage of highly addicted students is low, there is no significant difference in low

and moderate addiction. Based on the mobile addiction scores and usage patterns observed in the present sample, it is evident that there is a need to create awareness among students about the negative effects of excessive mobile phone usage. This awareness can be positively converted into limited usage and better utilization of study materials, free career training, and online courses that can help them in their future. Life skills training can also be useful in creating awareness among students.

Introduction

Mobile phones have undergone a remarkable transformation over the years, from being basic communication devices to powerful computing devices that offer a plethora of features and functionalities. They have become an integral part of our daily lives and have revolutionized the way we interact with the world around us. With the advent of smartphones, we can now perform a multitude of tasks such as making phone calls, sending text messages, browsing the internet, checking email, using social media, navigating with GPS, and conducting financial transactions, all from the convenience of our handheld device. The impact of mobile phones on society has been immense, and it is hard to imagine life without them.

Nowadays, mobile phones are an essential aspect of our daily routine, offering us numerous advantages and conveniences. Among the most widespread uses of mobile phones is to remain connected with our family and friends, regardless of our location. With mobile phones, we can effortlessly make phone calls, send text messages, and even video chat, ensuring that we can maintain communication with our loved ones even when we are far away. In sum, mobile phones have transformed the way we communicate and have made it much easier to stay in touch with the people who matter most to us.

There are individuals who prefer to carry multiple mobile phones for various reasons, such as keeping their personal and professional lives separate. Additionally, some people use more than one SIM card to take advantage of different calling plans, which helps them save money on their phone bills. Mobile phones have become an integral aspect of contemporary life, presenting us with numerous advantages and possibilities for staying connected and enjoying convenience. Overall, these devices have revolutionized the way we communicate and interact with the world around us, and they continue to play a crucial role in our daily lives.

According to a press release by the Telecom Authority of India on June 20, 2016, India has a high prevalence of mobile phone usage. As of April 30, 2016, there were 1.03425 billion mobile phones in use in India, which is the second-highest in the world after China. This means that there are approximately 81.35 mobile phone connections for every 100 citizens in India. This high prevalence of mobile phone usage in India is a testament to the significant role that mobile phones play in the daily lives of Indian citizens, providing them with a means of communication, access to information, and a range of other conveniences.

Mobile phone overuse (or **problem mobile phone use**)

Bhardwaj and Ashok (2015) suggest that problematic mobile phone use occurs as a result of individuals being unable to regulate their usage. They may become addicted to the constant connectivity and instant gratification that mobile phones provide, leading to negative consequences such as decreased productivity, poor sleep quality, and social withdrawal. In some cases, underlying mental health conditions may also contribute to problematic mobile phone use.

Today, as the capability of the mobile phone becomes more and more sophisticated and multifunctional, adolescents and young users are becoming increasingly dependent or "addicted" to this technology not only for interpersonal communication through voice or text (such as Short messaging service -- SMS), but also as a tool for seeking information online, for entertainment, relaxation, passing time, picture and video taking, expression of status and identity, and other yet-to-be invented applications (Leung, 2007).

Review of literature

Billieux et.al. (2014) presented a case study of a woman who overused her mobile phone, highlighting the limitations of conceptualizing excessive behaviours within the addiction model. They argued that addiction models may oversimplify an individual's psychological functioning and offer limited clinical relevance. This suggests that a more nuanced understanding of the psychology behind problematic mobile phone use is necessary to address the issue effectively.

Overall, there is growing concern about the addictive potential of mobile phones, particularly among young people. It is important to continue researching and understanding the psychological factors that contribute to problematic mobile phone use to develop effective interventions and prevent negative consequences.

A study conducted by Gil et al. (2015) in Barcelona examined the relationship between the fear of missing out (FOMO), indicators of problematic mobile phone use, and indicators of psychological distress. The study found that both problematic mobile phone use and FOMO were significant predictors of psychopathological symptoms, particularly anxiety. The fear of missing out is emerging as a significant factor associated with maladaptive use of smartphones and online social networks.

This study suggests that FOMO may be a contributing factor to problematic mobile phone use and psychological distress. As mobile phones and social networks become more prevalent, individuals may experience anxiety and other negative emotions when they feel they are missing out on social activities or information. This fear of missing out may lead to excessive mobile phone use and contribute to the development of psychological problems.

Overall, this study highlights the importance of understanding the psychological factors that contribute to problematic mobile phone use and the need for interventions to address these issues. It suggests that addressing FOMO and other psychological factors may be an important part of preventing and treating problematic mobile phone use and associated psychological distress.

Ling et.al. (2016) Ling et al. (2016) conducted a study to examine the association between parenting style, virtues (relationship, vitality, and conscientiousness), and smartphone addiction among Chinese college students. The study found that negative parenting style was a significant predictor of smartphone addiction among college students. The study also found that virtues acted as a cognitive mechanism that mediated the association between negative parenting style and smartphone addiction. Additionally, male virtues were found to be more sensitive to negative parenting style than female virtues.

Another study by Fernandez et al. (2017) examined the relationship between smartphone gaming and self-perceived problematic smartphone use among individuals in Belgium and Finland. The study found that downloading apps, using Facebook, and being stressed were significant predictors of problematic smartphone use. Anxiety was also found to be a predictor of dependence. While one-third of the participants used mobile games, the study did not find a significant association between mobile gaming and problematic smartphone use. The study also found very few cross-cultural differences in relation to smartphone gaming.

These studies provide insights into the factors that contribute to problematic mobile phone use. Negative parenting style and stress were found to be significant predictors of problematic mobile phone use in both studies, while other factors such as virtues and specific app usage were also found to be relevant. Understanding these factors can help researchers and practitioners develop effective interventions to prevent and treat problematic mobile phone use.

George et al. (2017) conducted a cross-sectional study among 200 medical students to investigate the patterns of mobile phone usage, common problems encountered, and dependence. The study found that 35% of the students were frequent users, using their mobile phones for more than 30 minutes per day. Mobile phone dependence was found to be increased, as evidenced by ringxiety experienced by 34% of the students and waking up from sleep to check the mobile phone for calls or messages by 31% of the students. Male students were more likely to experience ringxiety than female students. Additionally, 41% of the participants commented that life without mobile phones would be boring, and 25% reported feeling alone or unsafe without their mobile phones.

Kuss et al. (2018) conducted a study on problematic mobile phone use and addiction across generations in a sample of 273 adults. The study found that prohibited use and dependence were predicted by the number of calls per day, time spent on the phone, and use of social media. Stress was found to be a significant predictor of dependent mobile phone use. The study has implications for prevention and awareness-raising efforts regarding potentially problematic mobile phone use, particularly with regard to dependence and prohibited use. These studies highlight the prevalence of problematic mobile phone use and the factors that contribute to it. The studies suggest that certain patterns of mobile phone usage, such as high frequency of calls or social media use, may be predictors of problematic use. Additionally, stress and dependence on mobile phones may also contribute to problematic use. Understanding these factors can help educators, parents, and individuals develop strategies to prevent and manage problematic mobile phone use.

Balta et al. (2018) conducted a study to investigate the associations of neuroticism, trait anxiety, and trait fear of missing out with phubbing (phone snubbing) in adolescents and emerging adults. The study also examined the mediating role of state fear of missing out and problematic Instagram use. A total of 423 participants aged between 14 and 21 years, with 53% female, were included in the study. The findings revealed that female participants had significantly higher scores for phubbing, fear of missing out, problematic Instagram use, trait anxiety, and neuroticism. This study highlights the gender differences in the association between mobile phone use and psychological factors such as neuroticism and anxiety. The findings suggest that females may be

more susceptible to problematic mobile phone use and related psychological factors. Understanding these gender differences can help researchers and practitioners develop targeted interventions to prevent and treat problematic mobile phone use. Additionally, the study sheds light on the mediating factors that contribute to problematic mobile phone use, such as state fear of missing out and problematic Instagram use.

Jahagirdar et al (2021) conducted a study to investigate the mobile phone usage patterns and the potential detrimental effects of excessive mobile use on the health of undergraduate medical students in Hyderabad, India. They collected data from 626 respondents using a pretested questionnaire and found that all participants used mobile phones, with over 83% spending more than 4 hours on them. The researchers concluded that their study highlights an alarming rate of risk of smartphone addiction among medical students, which is a cause for concern.

Methodology

Aim: To study mobile phone usage pattern among college students

To study mobile phone addiction among college students

Objective: 1. To find the mobile phone usage among the sample.

2. To find the mobile phone usage for different purpose among the sample

3. To find addictive behaviour among the sample.

Study design:

Survey method was used to collect the data. Self-structured questionnaire and Mobilr Phone addiction by Velayudhan and Srividya were used to collect the information. Following questions were asked to 124 students studying in BSc in Private degree college Ankola, to know about the mobile phone usage pattern in self-structured questionnaire.

1. The time spent with mobile (in hours) in week days
2. The time spent with mobile (in hours) in holidays
3. The time spent with mobile (in hours) for study purpose
4. The time spent with mobile (in hours) for entertainment purpose

Results and Discussion

Sample Size		
Number of Students		
Total	Male	female
124	37	87

Sample comprises 124 students in which 87 (70%) female students and 37 (30%) male students. 119 students are having Android phone set, 1 student is having all Basic, android & IOS set, 4 are having Basic sets.

Table 1

	The time spent with mobile(in hours) in week days	The time spent with mobile(in hours) in holidays	The time spent with mobile(in hours) for study purpose	The time spent with mobile(in hours) for entertainment purpose	The time spent with mobile(in hours) on social media
Female	5.02 (301 min)	4.81(289 min)	2.13 (128 min)	3.47 (208 min)	3.57(214 min)
Male	5.02 (301 min)	4.81(289 min)	2.13 (128 min)	3.47 (208 min)	3.57(214 min)
All	5.02 (301 min)	4.81(289 min)	2.13 (128 min)	3.47 (208 min)	3.57(214 min)

Table 1 shows on an average spent time on mobile is 5 hours in week days as well as holidays among all students, more time spent on social media & for entertainment purpose compared to study purpose. There is no difference in male & female students. This result is on par with the study conducted by Jahagirdar et.al. (2021) where students reported mobile usage more than four hours.

The overall trend among students indicates that mobile phones are used less for academic purposes and more for entertainment and social media. The popularity of short reels on social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook are increasing, and the highly featured camera options on smartphones enable students to create short videos, mainly containing fun content. The increasing features of smartphones provide many options for students to enter into social media, which creates opportunities for connectivity with people from all over the world. However, the reliance on social media is causing a reduction in personal relationships, and this can lead to a failure of situational awareness. This is because people are busy connecting with unknown individuals, often with fake personal details. This may create a hallucination world where nobody is there to help during difficult times.

The popular apps among college students are WhatsApp, Telegram, and Instagram, which reflects the current trend among the youth. Other commonly used social media apps include YouTube, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and Share Chat, while Hot star, Sony, and YouTube are popular entertainment apps. Only a few students use Amazon, PUBG, Pinterest, and Google Pay. The study shows an increasing trend in the usage of WhatsApp and Instagram, where people often use different names and identities. This can lead to the rapid spread of fake information as people are in a hurry to forward or share messages without verifying their authenticity. This may result in misunderstandings and even breakups in relationships.

Previous studies by Balta et al. (2018) and Kuss et al. (2018) have also observed a similar trend of excessive social media usage among their samples. While the study by Balta et al. (2018) found that females used Instagram more than males, this study shows that both male and female students have similar usage patterns for Instagram.

These findings highlight the need for promoting responsible social media usage among college students to prevent the negative consequences of excessive social media usage.

The study found that among male students, 43% were low in addiction percentile, 51% were moderately addicted, and only 5.4% were highly addicted. Among female students, 41% were low in addiction percentile, 40% were moderately addicted, and 18% were highly addicted. Although the percentage of highly addicted students is low, there is no significant difference in low and moderate addiction.

Other studies have also highlighted the issue of mobile phone addiction among students. Goerge et al. (2017) found that ringxiety, the perception of hearing one's phone ring or vibrate when it has not, is a common problem among medical students. Fernandez et al. (2017) found that downloading, using Facebook, and being stressed contribute to problematic smartphone use. A case study by Billieux et al. (2014) described a woman who overused her mobile phone, highlighting the complexity of excessive behaviours and their relationship with addiction.

Furthermore, Gil et al. (2015) found that both addictive behaviours related to mobile phones and the fear of missing out (FOMO) are predictors of psychopathological symptoms, particularly anxiety. The fear of missing out is becoming a significant factor in maladaptive use of smartphones and online social networks. Therefore, it can be concluded that addictive behaviour may lead to mental health problems such as anxiety and the fear of missing out.

Conclusion

Based on the mobile addiction scores and usage patterns observed in the present sample, it is evident that there is a need to create awareness among students about the negative effects of excessive mobile phone usage. This awareness can be positively converted into limited usage and better utilization of study materials, free career training, and online courses that can help them in their future. Life skills training can also be useful in creating awareness among students.

Jahagirdar et al. (2021) suggest that students should be encouraged to assess their mobile addiction status and become aware of the issue. More research can be conducted to develop standardized tools for early identification of mobile addiction and appropriate therapies for its rectification. This can be considered for the betterment of the student community. There is a lot of scope for further research in this area, and it is crucial to develop strategies to promote healthy mobile phone usage habits among students to prevent negative consequences on their academic performance and overall well-being.

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