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A Study to Assess the Prevalence of Nomophobia Among the Bachelor's Degree Engineering Students in a Selected College, Nagapattinam

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ABSTRACT

The introduction of virtual classroom and accessibility of smart phones, internet facility the knowledge sources turn out to be easy accessible for the students. Smart phones become the primary mode for online learning, students become used to mobile phones to such extent that without smart phone they cannot think of learning which is necessary for work. But students are unaware about the disadvantages and its impact on health. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic classroom were closed all over the world and forced 1.5 billion.

Keywords: Virtual Classrooms; Online Learning; Smartphones; Internet Accessibility; Knowledge Resources; Mobile Phone Dependence; Nomophobia; COVID-19 Pandemic; Engineering Students; Digital Learning; Student Health; Smartphone Addiction.

1. Introduction

Smart phones today have become an important part of our techno culture, especially among the students. Discomfort, anxiety low self-esteem, nervousness, extrovert personality by being out of content with a mobile phone. The burden of this problem is now increasing globally.

Mobile phones have become an indispensable part of everyone's lives. In recent times, there seems to have been a transformation of the mobile phone from a status symbol to a necessity because of the countless advantage it provides. Due to multiple advantages, mobile phones now become a common choice for consumers along with the use in business.

Besides providing various advantages, excessive use of mobile phones can lead to many type of problem. It can cause social, physical and psychological pathologies such as damages related to electromagnetic filed radiation, car accidents and distress linked to the fear of not being able to use new technological device. Another downside of using mobile phones is uncontrolled and extreme use or dependence and its associated social and behavioral outcomes. Various studies have shown that excessive and addicting use of mobile phone is related to loneliness, depressive symptoms, interpersonal anxiety, poor self-control, low self-sufficiency and, low self-esteem.

Due to introduction of virtual classroom and accessibility of smart phones, internet facility the knowledge sources turn out to be easy accessible for the students. Smart phones become the primary mode for online learning, students become used to mobile phones to such extent that without smart phone they cannot think of learning perform necessary work. But students are unaware about the disadvantages and its impact on health. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic classroom were closed the entire world and forced 1.5 billion students and 63 million educations to suddenly modify their face-to-face academic practice.

"Nomophobia" is the term used to defined fear of being without a mobile phone, a combination of the word "no-mobile phobia. It refer to discomfort, anxiety, nervousness, or anguish caused by being out of contact with mobile phone or If a person is in the area of no network, has no balance or battery, the person gets anxious, which adversely affects the health and been considered as one among the eight mental illness caused by the internet. There were proponents for the inclusion of Nomophobia in Diagnostic and Statistical manual of mental disorder. With the increasing availability and reduced pricing both smart phone usage and its dependence is bound to increase.

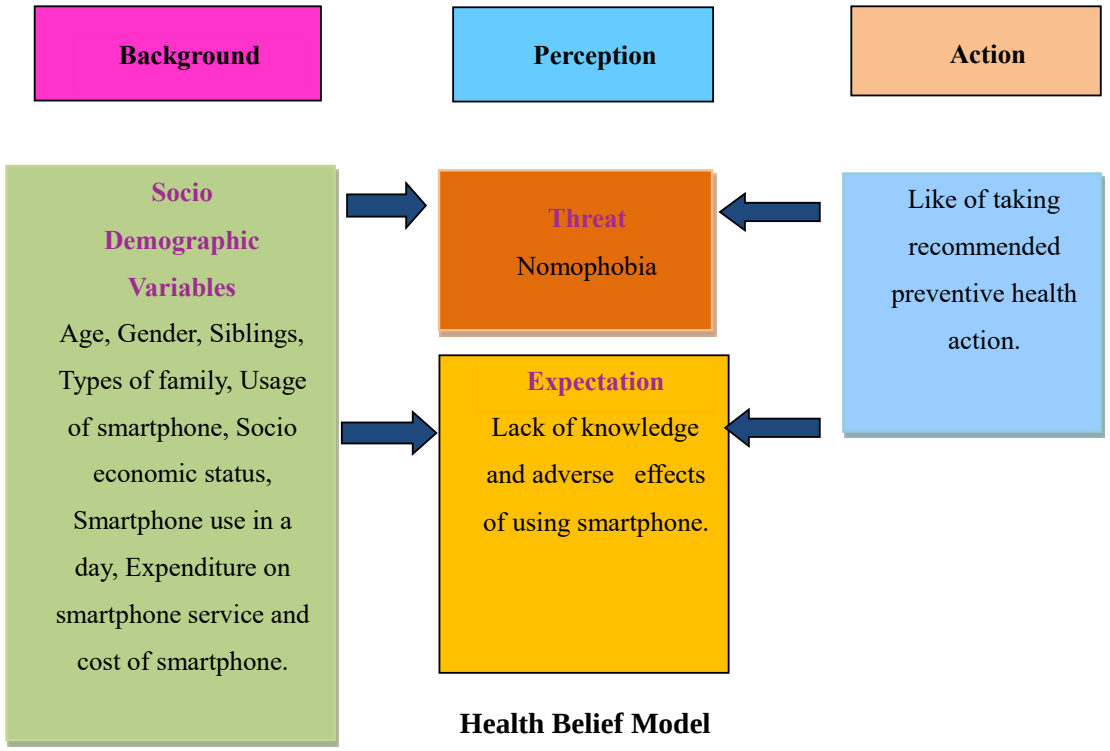

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

A Study to Assess the Prevalence of Nomophobia among the bachelor's degree engineering students in selected College Nagapattinam.

1.2. Objectives

- To assess the prevalence of Nomophobia among the engineering students.
- To find out the association between the prevalence of Nomophobia with selected demographic variables.
- To distribute the information pamphlet to the students regarding Nomophobia and its prevention.

1.3. Methodology

Non-experimental descriptive research design was adopted for this study. The study was conducted at E.G.S Pillay Engineering College, Nagapattinam. The samples were Engineering Ist year students in the age group of 18 to 21 years. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the Engineering College students based on inclusion criteria. Sample size was 60. The tool used for data collection consist of 2 section .Section I consist of structured

questionnaire on demographic variables and Section II consist of Nomophobia scale by Yildirim, C., & Correia, A.P (2015).The investigator assessed the level of Nomophobia among adolescents.

1.4. Scoring Key

The question are closed ended questionnaire consists of 20 questions of Likert scale ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Score	**Nomophobia Level**
NMP-Q Score Less 20	Absent
21< NMP-Q Score<60	Mild
60< NMP-Q Score < 100	Moderate
100<NMP-Q Score< 100	Severe

1.5. Data Collection Procedures

The present study was conducted at E. G. S. Pillay Engineering College at Nagapattinam among the 1st year engineering students who fulfill the inclusion criteria. The data collection was conducted from (05.06.25). The data collection was done between 11 am to 12.30 pm. The procedure was explained in only the topic for 2mins only. During this period, the investigator collected data from 60 students selected by convenient sampling method. The average time taken to complete the questionnaire method was 30 mins. After the data collection the investigators distributed the pamphlet regarding prevention Nomophobia.

2. Results and Discussion

In demographic data majority of the adolescents were in the age group of 18 (63%). Regarding gender majority were male students 58.3%.45% of students use their smart phone when they are bored.53.3% of students were from nuclear family. Majority of students are from socioeconomic class III 33.3%. 58.3% of students use their smart phone for more than 3 hours.47% of students spend more than 3000 for smart phone service per month. 37% of students smart phone cost were between 30,000-50,000 and 43.3% of students have 1 sibling. The findings shows among 60 adolescents majority of the adolescents have severe level of Nomophobia with 58.3%, moderate level of Nomophobia with 23.3.3%, mild of Nomophobia with 23.3% and no level of Nomophobia with 5%.There is a significant association with the smart phone usage in a day and the level of Nomophobia, cost of smart phone and the level of Nomophobia at the p level of 0.05.

Table 1. Distribution of students according to their age in years **[N=60].**

Age in years	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
18	43	72%
19	17	28%
20	-	-
Total	**60**	**100**

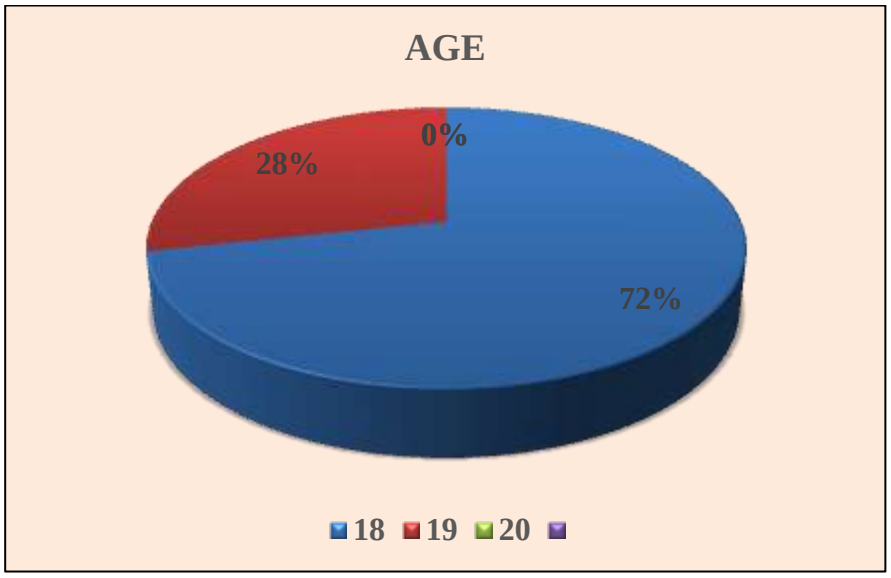

Figure 2. Distribution of students according to their age in year.

The above Table 1 and figure 2 shows that age 72% of 18 years, 28% of 19 years and does not present in 20 and 21 years.

Table 2. Distribution of students according to their gender.

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Male	46	77%
Female	14	23%
Transgender	-	-
Total	**60**	**100**

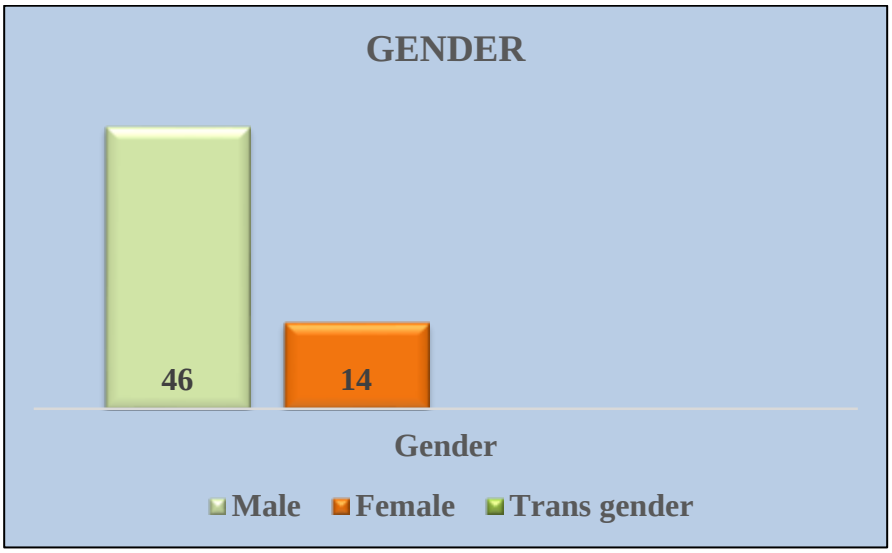

Figure 3. Distribution of students according to their gender.

The above table 2 and figure 3 shows 77% of male, 23% of female and does not present in transgender and others.

Table 3. Distribution of students according to their usage of smart phone.

Usage of smart phone	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
When I'm alone	47	78%
When I'm bored	13	22%
Total	**60**	**100**

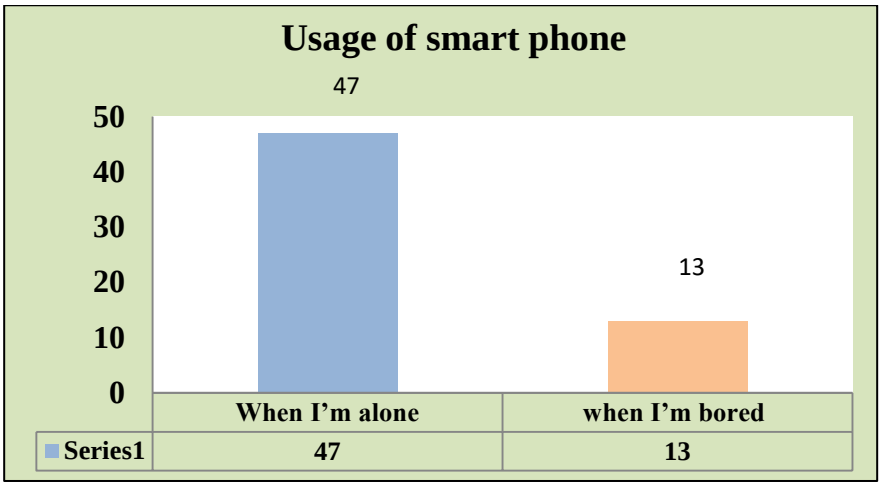

Figure 4. Distribution of students according to their usage of smart phone.

The above table 3 and figure 4 shows usage of smart phone of 78% when I'm alone, 22% when I am bored.

Table 4. Distribution of students according to their type of family.

Type of Family	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Nuclear family	49	82%
Joint family	11	18%
Total	**60**	**100**

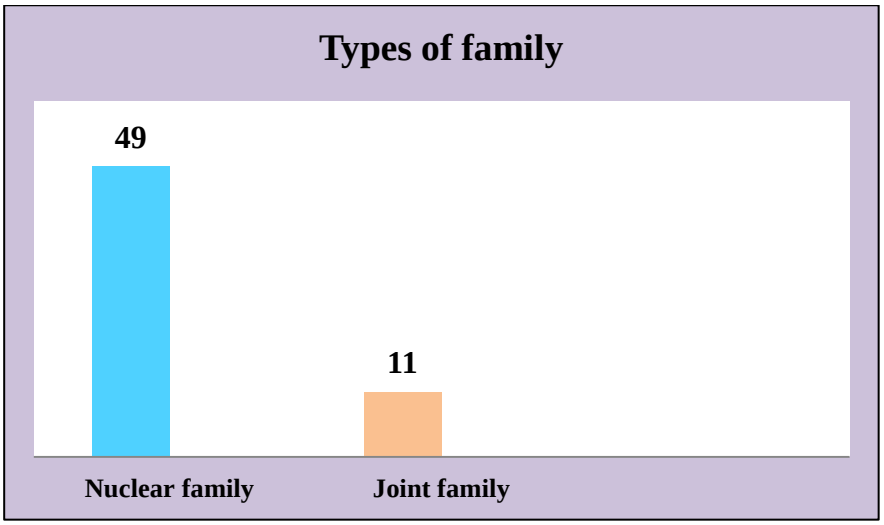

Figure 5. Distribution of students according to their types of family.

Table 5. Distribution of students according to their cost of smart phone.

Cost of smart phone	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 20,000	11	18%
20,000-30,000	12	20%
More than 30,000	37	62%
Total	**60**	**100**

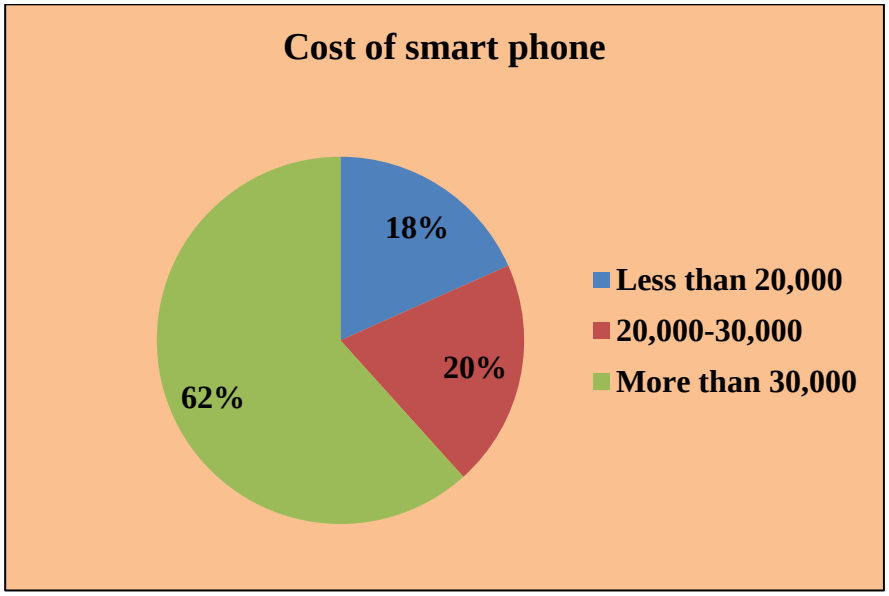

Figure 6. Distribution of students according to their cost of smart phone.

The above table 5 and figure 6 cost of smart phone 18% of less than 20,000, 20% of 20,000-30000, and 62% of more than 30000.

3. Conclusion

The present study revealed that a significant proportion of engineering students experience varying degrees of Nomophobia, with moderate to severe levels being particularly prevalent. The smart phone usage and the cost of smart phone have influence in the level of Nomophobia. The association between Nomophobia levels and selected demographic variables underscores the need for targeted awareness programs. Overall, the results emphasize the importance of early identification, education, and healthy digital habits to reduce the risk and impact of Nomophobia among young adults in academic settings.

Declarations

Source of Funding

This study did not receive any grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not–for–profit sectors.

Competing Interests Statement

The authors have not declared any conflict of interest.

Consent for publication

The authors declare that they consented to the publication of this study.

Authors' contributions

All the authors equally contributed to this study.

Informed Consent

All participants in this study voluntarily gave their informed consent prior to their involvement in the research.

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