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Research Article

A Descriptive Study to Assess the Prevalence of Nomophobia among School going Children in Selected Districts of Gujarat

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I N F O

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A B S T R A C T

Introduction: Mobile phones have nowadays become a part and parcel of our life. We are not able to live without mobile technology. Mobiles have become an important part of our techno culture. Adolescents are very used to mobile phones and they are not able to live without them. Smartphones are the basic necessity of an adolescent's life.

Method: A descriptive study was conducted to assess the prevalence of nomophobia among school-going children from Rajkot and Surendranagar districts of Gujarat.

Result: The present study reveals that 52.58% of the participants had a moderate level of nomophobia, 32.58% had a mild level of nomophobia, 14.40% had a severe level of nomophobia, and only 0.44% had no signs of nomophobia.

Conclusion: In the present scenario, due to online classes, students are more and more involved with smartphone technologies for online classes. Nomophobia is very prevalent among school-going children and it's affecting their health.

Keywords: Prevalence, Descriptive Study, Nomophobia, School Going Children

Introduction

Nomophobia is a new medical term that is defined as the fear of being without a mobile phone. Nomophobia is very common, especially among teenagers. Anxious of losing their mobile phones, mobile phones running out of battery, mobile phones without any network coverage are the fears common among teenagers. Nomophobic people never switch off their mobile phones. They use their mobile phones in bed and are never separated from their phones. Students suffering from nomophobia may carry an extra phone with them. They don't allow their mobile phones to be used by another person and never allow anyone to see their mobile phones. Nomophobic persons are not able to concentrate on academics and their regular works. They have disturbed family relationships.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the prevalence of nomophobia among school-going children
- To find the association between the prevalence of nomophobia among school-going children with the selected demographic variables

Review of Literature

The use of smartphones and mobiles is ever-increasing

and is taking a toll especially on the health of teenagers. Social and psychological problems are also very common among adolescents. The term nomophobia is defined as the "No Mobile Phone Phobia". This is also known as the fear of being out of mobile phone contact. There are various studies that mainly focus on the students' populations since the younger generation is more dependent on technology and they are very technology savvy. Mobile phones have led to a decrease in the quality and quantity of time spent by the family members with each other. The adolescent generation is more dependent on mobile phone technology. This structured questionnaire-based study is mainly aimed to know the prevalence rate of nomophobia among adolescents groups. This study especially focuses on adolescents as they are more prone to nomophobia among the general group of population.

Nomophobia is especially rising during this current COVID-19 pandemic. Online classes are very common during this pandemic, and this is a major cause of the increasing cases of nomophobia.

Research Methodology

A descriptive research approach was used to find the prevalence of nomophobia among school-going children in the selected districts of Gujarat from August 2020 to September 2020. A structured nomophobia questionnaire was used to assess the prevalence of nomophobia among school-going children. Total 1145 school going children were selected from five different schools of Rajkot and Surendranagar district of Gujarat through convenience sampling technique. The responses were tabulated and analysed.

Research Setting

The study was carried out in the five different schools of Rajkot and Surendranagar district of Gujarat. 1145 participants were selected by convenience sampling technique. The study participants were selected based on the following criteria.

Inclusion Criteria

- Adolescents of standards 9th to 12th of selected schools
- Adolescents who were present at the time of data collection

Exclusion Criteria

- Adolescents not willing to participate in the study
- Adolescents who had some diseases and were not present during the period of data collection

Tools Used for the Study

Structured Demographic Performa: it consisted of age, gender, year of study, type of family, religion, number of mobile phones being used, duration of using mobile phones, frequency of using mobile phones, money spent on mobile phones every month, family monthly income, awareness of the term nomophobia.

Structured Nomophobia Questionnaire (NMP-Q): Structured Nomophobia questionnaire was prepared by Yildrim, which consists of standard 20 questionnaire items. These 20 items were used in the study to measure the degree of mobile dependence among] adolescents. The tool was structured based on Likert scale pattern. Seven point Likert scales was used for the present study. The total score on the NMP-Q is 20 at its lowest (20*1) or 140 (20*7) at its highest. The adolescents have to mark from 1 to 7 in the various items. Score 1 strongly disagree, followed by disagree, somewhat disagree, neutral, somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree being the highest with a score of seven. The interpretation of the tool was done as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.Score and Interpretation of Structured Nomophobia Questionnaire

Score	Interpretation
20	Absence of nomophobia
21-59	Mild level of nomophobia
60-99	Moderate level of nomophobia
100-140	Severe nomophobia

The main study was carried out from 01/09/2020 to 08/09/2020. Prior permission and ethical clearance were taken from the institution and study participants.

Result

Table 2.Distribution of Demographic Characteristics

(n = 1145)

Demographic Characteristics	Number	Percentage
Age (in years)		
13-15	663	57.90
16-18	482	42.10
Gender		
Male	581	50.74
Female	564	49.26
Standard		
9th	317	27.69
10th	495	43.23
11th	181	15.81
12th	152	13.27
Type of family		
Nuclear	688	60.09
Joint	457	39.91

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Religion		
Hindu	988	86.29
Christian	80	6.99
Muslim	48	4.19
Others	29	2.53
Number of mobile phones being used per person		
1	899	78.52
2	161	14.06
3 and above	85	7.42
Duration of mobile phone usage (in years)		
1	1034	90.31
2-3	74	6.46
4-5	11	0.96
More than 6	26	2.27
Frequency of checking mobile phone in a day		
Once	93	8.12
2-5 times	655	57.21
More than 6 times	397	34.67
Money spent per month on mobile recharge (in INR)		
Less than 200	496	43.32
200-400	513	44.80
More than 400	136	11.88
Duration of using mobile phone per day		
Less than 30 minutes	1103	96.33
30 minutes to 1 hour	26	2.27
More than 1 hour	16	1.40
Family monthly income (in INR)		
Below 10000	83	7.25
10000-15 000	262	22.88
15001-20000	142	12.40
Above 20000	658	57.47
Awareness of the term nomophobia		
Yes	1056	92.23
No	89	7.77

Majority (57.90%) of the school-going children were in the age group of 13 to 15 years. 50.74% of the participants were males. Maximum (43.23%) participants were studying in the 10th standard. Most (60.9%) of the school-going children belonged to nuclear families. 86.29% of the participants belonged to the Hindu religion. 78.52% were using one mobile phone. Most of them (90.31%) were using mobile phones for the last one year. 57.21% used to check their mobile phones 2 to 5 times a day. Approximately, the same number of children, 44.80% and 43.32%, used to spend 200 to 400 INR every month on mobile recharge and less than 200 INR respectively. Maximum (96.33%) participants used to speak for less than 30 minutes over the mobile phone. 57.47% of the participant's monthly family income was above 20000 INR per month. Most (92.23%) of the participants had some knowledge related to nomophobia.

Prevalence of nomophobia measured as per the standard nomophobia questionnaire revealed that only 0.44% of the participants had no nomophobia. 52.58% of the school-going children had a moderate level of nomophobia. 32.58% had a mild level of nomophobia, followed by 14.40% of the school-going children who had a severe level of nomophobia.

Table 3.Prevalence of Nomophobia among Adolescents

(n = 1145)

Prevalence of Nomophobia	Number	Percentage
Absence (0-20)	5	0.44
Mild level (21-59)	373	32.58
Moderate level (60-99)	602	52.58
Severe (100-140)	165	14.40

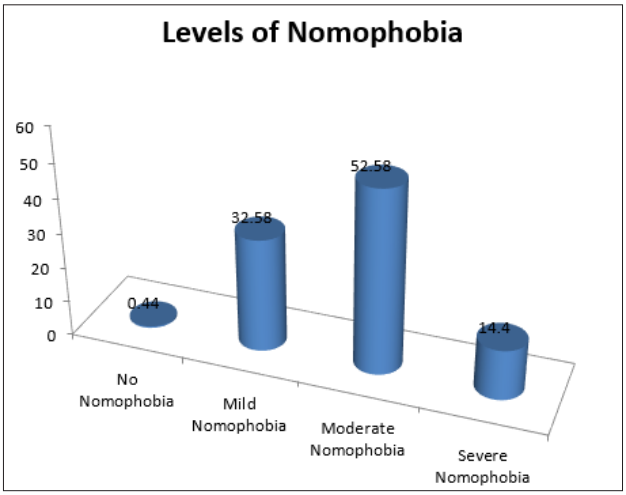

Figure 1.Prevalence of Nomophobia among School-going Children

The analysis of association between the prevalence of nomophobia among adolescents with the selected demographic variables revealed that there was a significant association when compared with age, year of study, and amount of money spent every month on mobile recharge. There was no association found between nomophobia prevalence and the rest of the selected demographic variables.

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Table 4.Association between Post-test Knowledge Score on Nomophobia and its Prevention with the Selected Demographic Variables

(n = 1145)

Demographic Characteristics	Chi-square Value	P-value
Age	18.8 S	P < 0.05 df = 3
Gender	3.31 NS	P > 0.05, df = 3
Year of study	75.9 S	P < 0.05, df = 9
Type of family	3.68 NS	P > 0.05, df = 3
Religion	16.7 NS	P > 0.05, df = 9
Number of mobile phones being used	2.04 NS	P > 0.05, df = 6
Duration of mobile phone usage	14.3 NS	P > 0.05, df = 9
Frequency of checking mobile phones	1.27 NS	P > 0.05, df = 6
Amount of money spent every month on mobile recharge	13.7 S	P < 0.05, df = 6
Duration of conversation over mobile phones per day	7.06 NS	P > 0.05, df = 6
Family monthly income	9.13 NS	P > 0.05, df = 6
Awareness of the term nomophobia	1.88 NS	P > 0.05, df = 3

*Significant at 5% Level, NS: Non-significant.

Discussion

The findings of the study clearly reveal that nomophobia is highly prevalent among school-going children. 52.58% of the participants had a moderate level of nomophobia. 32.58% had a mild level of nomophobia, 14.40% had a severe level of nomophobia, and only 0.44% had no signs of nomophobia. There was also a significant association between the prevalence of nomophobia and demographic variables of age, year of study, and amount of money spent every month on mobile phone recharge.

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Conflict of Interest: None

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