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A Study on Mobile Addiction among College Students

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Abstract: Mobile phones have become an essential part of students' daily lives and academic routines. While smartphones provide benefits such as online learning, communication, and access to information, their excessive use has created a growing concern of mobile addiction among youth. This research paper examines the extent, causes, and impact of mobile addiction among college students. The study uses a descriptive research design and primary data collected through a structured Google Form questionnaire from 120 college students. Data was analyzed using frequency tables, charts, and percentage analysis. The findings reveal that a majority of the students use mobile phones for 5–7 hours a day, primarily for social media apps like Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, OTT platforms, and online gaming. The study highlights several negative effects of mobile addiction such as disturbed sleep patterns, reduced concentration, lower productivity, procrastination, and a decline in academic performance. Students who spend more hours on mobile phones tend to score fewer marks due to lack of focus and increased distractions. The study concludes that mobile addiction is a serious behavioural issue among college students, affecting both their academic and personal lives. The research recommends awareness programs, digital detox habits, time-management techniques, and controlled usage to manage mobile addiction effectively.

Keywords: Mobile Addiction, College Students, Screen Time, Social Media Dependency, Academic Impact

I. INTRODUCTION

Mobile phones have transformed from simple communication devices to multi-functional tools used for education, entertainment, social networking, financial transactions, and personal management. The increasing affordability of smartphones and the availability of high-speed internet have significantly increased the usage of mobile phones among youth. College students, in particular, rely heavily on mobile phones for academic and non-academic purposes. However, this rising dependence has led to mobile addiction, which refers to the excessive, uncontrolled, and compulsive use of mobile phones that negatively affects an individual's daily functioning. The addiction is often driven by social media notifications, the fear of missing out (FOMO), online gaming, and continuous entertainment content. College students are more vulnerable to mobile addiction due to multiple factors such as academic stress, peer influence, online classes, entertainment consumption, and digital lifestyle. They frequently use phones late at night, during lectures, while studying, and even during meals. Studies across the world show that mobile addiction is linked to decreased concentration, increased anxiety, physical health problems, and poor academic outcomes. In India, digital access has increased at a massive scale, further accelerating mobile dependency. Students spend long hours browsing social media, texting, online gaming, and watching videos, which minimizes their time for academic work, physical activities, hobbies, and family interactions.

This research aims to analyze the levels of mobile addiction, its causes, and its effects on academic performance among college students. Understanding this issue is essential to develop strategies to promote healthy mobile usage and prevent long-term negative consequences.

II. NEED OF THE STUDY

Mobile phones have become an important part of students' daily routine, but excessive use has created growing concerns about mobile addiction. This addiction can harm academic performance, concentration, mental health, sleep quality, and social relationships. College students, who are in a crucial stage of building their future, are especially vulnerable to distractions and dependency on mobile devices. The study is needed to understand how much students use their phones, how addicted they are, and how this behaviour affects their academic and personal life. The findings will help teachers, parents, and policymakers develop better awareness and strategies to promote healthy and responsible mobile usage among students.

III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on understanding the extent of mobile addiction among college students and its impact on their academic and personal lives. The research is limited to students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate programs within selected colleges. It examines patterns of mobile usage, such as time spent, purpose of use, and behavioural indicators of addiction. The study covers key dimensions including academic performance, sleep habits, social interactions, mental well-being, and daily routine. Primary data will be collected through a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms. The findings will be based on students' self-reported experiences and perceptions. The study does not include school students, working professionals, or senior citizens. It also does not evaluate the medical or clinical treatment of addiction. Instead, it aims to provide insights into the level of mobile dependency among college students and to help educational institutions, parents, and policymakers take necessary steps to promote healthy digital habits.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gupta, A. (2020) conducted a detailed study examining the psychological effects of excessive mobile phone use among teenagers. The findings revealed that overuse of mobile devices contributes to declining concentration levels, irritability, and reduced attention span. Teenagers frequently engaged with gaming, social media, and continuous messaging reported experiencing emotional instability and difficulty focusing on academic tasks. Gupta highlighted that the constant need to check phones during study hours or conversations reflects early signs of addictive behaviour. The study indicated that prolonged screen exposure affects cognitive processes, resulting in memory lapses and reduced productivity. Furthermore, excessive mobile usage often replaces meaningful activities such as reading, physical exercise, and social interaction, which negatively affects mental health. Gupta emphasized the urgent need for awareness programmes and parental guidance to help young individuals develop balanced digital habits. The study provides strong evidence that mobile overuse significantly influences the psychological wellbeing of teenagers.

Sharma, N., & Verma, R. (2021) explored how excessive screen time influences sleep quality and stress levels among college students. Their study found that students who spend long hours on mobile devices, especially late at night, experience disrupted sleep patterns, fatigue, and reduced daytime alertness. The research noted that nighttime mobile use, particularly for social media and entertainment, delays sleep onset and lowers overall sleep quality. In addition, the constant flow of notifications creates pressure to stay connected, leading to anxiety, restlessness, and heightened stress. Sharma and Verma observed that prolonged screen exposure also contributes to irritability, mood fluctuations, and decreased motivation to participate in academic activities. The study concluded that heavy mobile usage negatively affects students' mental wellbeing and academic productivity. The authors recommended implementing digital hygiene practices, such as limiting screen time before bed, and encouraging educational institutions to promote balanced and responsible technology usage among students.

Patel, S. (2019) examined the influence of social media notifications and the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) on increasing mobile dependency among young adults. The study demonstrated that continuous notifications encourage compulsive phone checking, reinforcing addictive behaviour. Patel found that students often feel anxious when away from their phones or disconnected from online platforms, illustrating strong emotional dependence. Social media features such as likes, comments, and story updates trigger the desire for constant validation, thereby increasing screen time. The research also highlighted that excessive reliance on mobile devices for social interaction reduces face-to-face communication and contributes to loneliness and isolation. Patel noted that mobile overuse significantly distracts students from academic activities, reducing focus and productivity. The findings suggest that FOMO plays a major role in shaping mobile addiction patterns. Patel recommended developing digital literacy programmes to help students recognise unhealthy usage patterns and adopt more mindful mobile habits.

Mehta, K. (2022) investigated the academic implications of excessive mobile phone usage among college students and found a strong negative relationship between mobile dependence and academic performance. According to the study, students who spent substantial time on entertainment and social media platforms scored lower in examinations and participated less in classroom activities. Mehta explained that frequent interruptions from mobile notifications during study hours disrupt concentration and impede understanding of academic content. The study further revealed that multitasking with mobile phones increases cognitive load, leaving students mentally exhausted and less effective during lectures. Excessive mobile use also delays completion of assignments and reduces overall engagement with academic responsibilities. Mehta concluded that uncontrolled mobile usage leads to poor academic outcomes, reduced classroom involvement, and lower motivation levels. The author suggested promoting digital discipline through awareness campaigns and encouraging students to adopt structured study schedules with limited mobile distractions.

Khan, M. (2023) conducted a survey-based study to analyse mobile usage patterns among college students and assess their risk of addiction. The study found that most students spend 4 to 7 hours daily on mobile devices, engaging primarily in social media browsing, online videos, gaming, and chatting. Khan reported that prolonged screen time significantly increases the likelihood of developing addictive tendencies, as students often experience difficulty limiting their usage. Many participants exhibited behaviours such as frequent phone checking, anxiety when separated from their mobile devices, and declining participation in offline activities. The study also observed that excessive mobile engagement negatively affects academic focus, productivity, and mental wellbeing. Students with higher screen time reported lower interest in studies, irregular sleep patterns, and reduced social interaction. Khan concluded that early intervention is essential to address rising addiction levels and recommended awareness programmes to educate students about responsible digital usage.

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

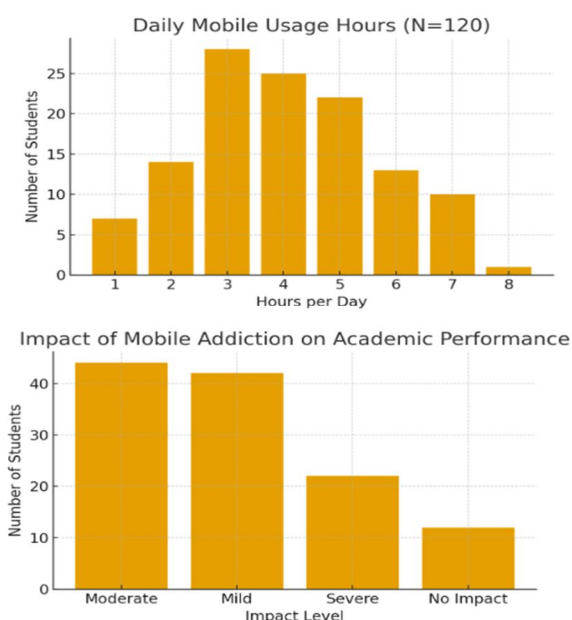
- 1) To study the level and pattern of mobile addiction among college students.
- 2) To analyze the impact of mobile addiction on academic performance and daily lifestyle.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study follows a descriptive research design, which is suitable for understanding and explaining the extent and patterns of mobile addiction among college students without manipulating any variables. Descriptive research helps quantify behaviour, usage frequency, and perceived academic impact in a systematic manner. Primary data was collected through a structured Google Form survey and secondary data was collected from journals, books and website, which included questions on daily mobile usage, purpose of use, dependency indicators, academic effects, concentration levels, and sleep patterns. Google Forms was selected as it provides wide reach, easy accessibility, and automatic data compilation for efficient analysis. A total of 120 students from undergraduate and postgraduate programmes participated in the study. The collected data was analysed using Microsoft Excel, which assisted in data cleaning, frequency calculations, percentage analysis, summarising responses, and preparing tables. Graphical tools such as bar charts and frequency bar graphs were used to visually represent the findings for clearer interpretation. Statistical techniques like frequency distribution helped categorise students based on usage hours and academic impact levels, while graphical analysis provided visual insights into patterns of mobile usage and its consequences on students' academic performance.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis of daily mobile usage based on the survey responses reveals significant variation in screen-time patterns among college students.



Interpretation of Chart 1: Daily Mobile Usage Hours (N = 120)

The first chart shows how many hours students use mobile phones each day.

Most students use their mobile phones for 3 to 5 hours daily, with the highest number (around 28 students) using it for 3 hours per day. This indicates that moderate to high mobile usage is very common among students.

A smaller number of students use their phones for 6 to 7 hours, suggesting that some have very high screen time, which may lead to mobile addiction. Very few students use their phones for 8 hours, meaning only a small percentage show extreme usage levels.

Overall, the pattern highlights that a majority spend significant time on their mobile devices.

Interpretation of Chart 2: Impact of Mobile Addiction on Academic Performance

The second chart presents how mobile use affects students' academic performance.

- The highest number of students reported a Moderate impact, meaning mobile usage is affecting their studies but not severely.
- A large group reported a Mild impact, showing that some students feel distracted but still manage studies fairly well.
- Some students reported a severe impact, indicating that mobile addiction is strongly harming their academic performance.
- Only a few students said that mobile addiction has No Impact on their studies.

This shows that most students feel that mobile usage negatively affects their academic performance, with moderate impact being the most common.

VIII. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- 1) High Mobile Usage: Most students use their mobile phones for 3–5 hours daily, which indicates a potential dependency.
- 2) Academic Distraction: A majority of students reported moderate academic disruption due to excessive mobile usage.
- 3) Behavioral Symptoms: Students frequently engage in compulsive checking, social media scrolling, and late-night usage leading to disturbed sleep.
- 4) Study Time Reduction: Mobile usage has significantly reduced productive study hours among many students.
- 5) Psychological Effects: Some students showed signs of anxiety and stress when separated from their mobile phones.

IX. CONCLUSION

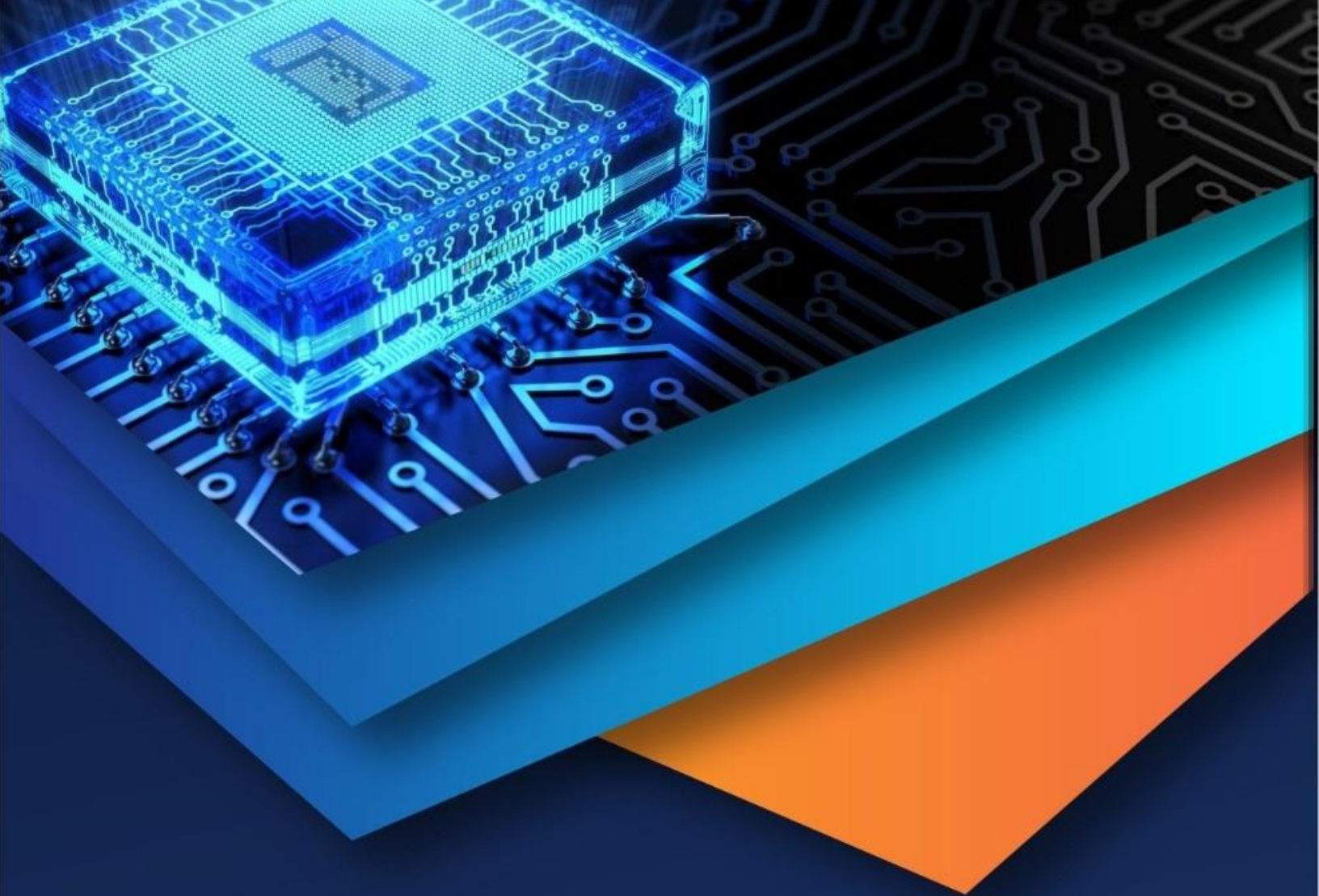
The study concludes that mobile addiction is a significant and growing concern among college students. Most respondents demonstrated high levels of mobile engagement, with a considerable portion experiencing academic, psychological, and behavioural impacts. The findings highlight that mobile addiction is not merely a technological issue but a behavioural challenge that demands immediate attention. Moderate to severe levels of academic impact were observed, reflecting reduced concentration, procrastination, sleep disturbances, and poor academic performance. The study emphasizes the need for digital literacy, healthy usage habits, and institutional interventions to mitigate the adverse effects of mobile addiction. Promoting awareness and responsible use can help students strike a balance between the benefits of mobile technology and the need for academic focus and personal well-being.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

To address mobile addiction among students, colleges should organize digital wellness workshops and promote responsible smartphone use. Students are encouraged to balance study and phone time, using screen-time monitoring apps to control excessive usage. Institutions can enforce classroom regulations to limit phone use during lectures, while parents and teachers provide guidance for healthy digital habits. Additionally, promoting offline activities such as sports, reading, and social interaction can help reduce dependency on mobile device

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