

Smartphone Addiction among Greek University Students

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Introduction

Increased smartphone usage is often associated with negative impacts on the psychological and social well-being of young individuals (Studer et al., 2022). Excessive smartphone use can lead to detachment from the environment and social relationships, reinforcing dependency on technology rather than real human interaction (Alotaibi et al., 2022). Moreover, smartphone usage may impact students' attention spans, sleep patterns, and overall well-being (Gupta et al., 2015).

While the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) and International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) do not formally acknowledge excessive smartphone use as a clinical disorder, various elements of this behavior seem to exhibit parallels with established behavioral addictions. This research explores the impact of increased smartphone usage on personal and social aspects of students' lives.

Methods

The research was conducted between March and June 2023, via questionnaires distributed to 1,744 students from various departments of the University of Piraeus in Greece. The questionnaire included social-demographic questions, health behavior questions, questions about smartphone use habits, as well as the Short Version of Smartphone Addiction Scale (SAS-SV).

The Spearman's correlation coefficients were calculated to explore the association between the SAS-SV score and the other aforementioned variables. We assumed that two data sets are correlated when p value is <0.05. The reliability of SAS-SV answers was confirmed by calculating Cronbach's alpha correlation coefficient, which was indeed over 0.7 (0.815).

Results

Items	Spearsman's Correlation coefficient (rho)	p-value	conclusion
Smartphone screen use	0,153	0,000	correlated
sex	0,121	0,000	correlated
age	-0,064	0,008	correlated
household members	0,038	0,116	uncorrelated
number of kids in the household	0,004	0,858	uncorrelated
diploma grade (so far)	-0,014	0,573	uncorrelated
smoking	0,046	0,055	uncorrelated
drinking alcohol	0,162	0,000	correlated
exercising	-0,096	0,000	correlated
BMI	-0,065	0,007	correlated
feeling anxious or depressed	0,098	0,000	correlated
how healthy participant feels	-0,054	0,024	correlated

Table 1. Correlation of SAS-SV Score with personal data and personal habits

Conclusions

Over the last decade, the widespread adoption of smartphones among young people has paralleled a concerning rise in poor mental health within this age group. Indeed, evidence of conflict, salience, tolerance and withdrawal were observed in the sample concerning smartphone addiction. This highlights the evolving public health concern surrounding problematic smartphone use, especially in younger ages.

- In total, 46.35% of the individuals that participated on this research were found to be addicted to smartphones.
- Female students tend to score higher at the SAS-SV score.
- No correlation was found between grades and SAS-SV Score, nor between household members and phone addiction level.
- Age is negatively correlated to SAS-SV scores, indicating a tendency for younger people to be more prone to smartphone addiction.
- Negative correlation can be also found between the SAS-SV score and exercising.
- No correlation of smoking with SAS-SV Score was found, but alcohol consumption is positively correlated to phone addiction score, as well as feeling anxious or depressed.
- Participants' perception of their health status is negatively correlated with SAS-SV scores.

References

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