PURPOSE OF SMARTPHONE USE AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Majority of the college going students are using smartphones and have integrated technology into everyday life experiences which also includes their learning. The aim of the present study was to know the pattern of smartphone use by the PUC and degree students. One hundred and sixty PUC and degree students were selected randomly from different colleges. A self-structured 'Smartphone Usage Pattern Questionnaire' was used to elicit the data. The data was analyzed by using number, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and 't' test. The results revealed that the college students from both the groups indicated a higher usage of smartphone. They do use their smartphones for various purposes such as academics, social networking, entertainment and gaming. Degree students' usage was higher when compared to PUC students. A higher percentage of boys use their smartphones for entertainment and gaming purpose. A higher percentage of girls use it more for academic purpose.

Key words: *academics, college students, smartphone, usage*

INTRODUCTION:

Youth is a time of self-expression, curiosity, exploration, adventure and self-discovery. It is the time of creative energy and vitality. Youth are defined as young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years as per WHO criteria (2014). Today, 20% of people in the world are young people, constituting 1.2 billion people worldwide. Nearly, 243 million adolescents and youths live in India (UNICEF 2011). It is also a period of anxiety, a time to adjust with the changes occurring in them during that period, a time to find out the reason for their existence (Santrock 2013). Adolescents and youth experience many physical and psychological changes. On one hand, they are dependent on their parents with reference to their life and identity; on the other hand, they try to become independent of their parents, to establish their identity and to create an independent space for themselves. This is the time they enter the college for their higher studies and make major decisions of their life which include education and career.

The desire to establish social relationship and to gain social approval in a group is at its peak during this period of lifespan (Papalia 2005, Santrock 2013,). A close relationship with smartphones and its applications begins at this time and the students feel that they get a platform to exercise their thoughts and also feelings. Smartphone- a device which has many features provides them an

avenue for expression of emotions in the social groups. Smartphones, being a smart device attracts all and youth is no exception.

Social life for youth has changed from socialising in different places to their smartphones. As Internet natives they cannot imagine a day without interacting with other people via text, chat, or social media. The youth also use their phones to showcase their lifestyle and for entertainment purposes (Barth 2015) Many of the college students use the smartphone for academic purposes (Veena and Lokesha, 2016). Smartphone not only provides them the information and entertainment; it also has its negative implications. Hence, they need to be guided about the effective use of smartphone.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Aim: To study the pattern of smartphone use among college going boys and girls.

Objectives:

1. To know the general pattern of smart phone use among college students.
2. To assess and compare two age groups of college going boys and girls with respect to the pattern of smart phone use under six selected dimensions- academics, social media, gaming, chatting, entertainment and miscellaneous.

Procedure:

Eighty boys and 80 girls who were studying in pre university (PUC) and degree courses were selected for the study. The age groups of the sample were 16-17 years and 20-23 years. Survey design was used to collect the data. A questionnaire was developed for the purpose of collecting the basic and specific information for the study. The specific information included the details regarding the pattern of smart phone use under selected six dimensions- academics, social media, gaming, chatting, entertainment and miscellaneous purpose. The data was complied, tabulated and analyzed by using number and percentage.

Results and Discussion:

Among the technological gadget's, smartphones play the most important role as the new generation devices offer various features and functions. Recent day, everyone has experienced that youth spend more and more time (The Times of India, 2018) with their smartphones and the usage pattern of smartphone varies from one individual to another. Each day there is a new interest and new apps that make them use it more and more. The comparison of the usage pattern of smartphones among PUC and Degree students is presented in Table-1.

Table-1: Comparison of dimension wise usage pattern of smartphones among PUC and degree students

Usage Pattern of smartphone	Number	PUC students (Mean ± SD)	Degree students (Mean ± SD)	Significance of t value
Academic	80	16.87 ± 2.57	17.56 ± 2.70	1.6558^{NS}
Entertainment	80	8.71 ± 1.64	8.76 ± 1.67	0.1911^{NS}
Social media	80	12.12 ± 1.53	12.30 ± 1.58	0.7323^{NS}
Gaming	80	10.44 ± 1.34	10.83 ± 1.08	2.0270*
Chatting	80	8.72 ± 1.01	8.85 ± 0.90	0.8597^{NS}
Miscellaneous	80	6.76 ± 1.32	6.93 ± 1.31	0.8177^{NS}
Overall	80	63.61 ± 4.04	65.21 ± 4.50	2.3665*

* Significant at 5% level ^{NS} Not significant

The results revealed higher mean scores in the usage of smart phones for academic purpose in both PUC and Degree students. The difference between them was found to be non significant, which implies that both of them use it more for academic purpose. Significant difference was observed in the gaming purpose, where the higher mean scores (mean score = 10.83) of degree students indicated that they use smartphones more for gaming when compared to their counterparts from PUC (mean scores = 10.44). The difference between them was also found to be significant ('t' value = 2.0270*). However, in the other uses of smartphone , non-significant difference was observed between both the respondents. Further, the 't' test indicates a significant difference ('t' value = 2.3665*) in the overall usage of smartphones between the respondents where the degree students (mean score = 65.21) indicate a higher mean score when compared to the PUC students (mean score = 63.61). This implies that the degree students' usage pattern of smartphone is more when compared to the PUC students.

Table-2: Comparison of dimension wise usage pattern of smartphones among boys and girls

Usage Pattern of smartphone	Number	Boys (Mean ± SD)	Girls (Mean ± SD)	Significance of t value
Academic	80	16.45 ± 2.71	17.98 ± 2.36	3.8088**
Entertainment	80	9.52 ± 1.51	7.94 ± 1.40	6.8635**
Social media	80	12.41 ± 1.72	12.02 ± 1.35	1.5957[NS]
Gaming	80	10.91 ± 1.44	10.35 ± 0.89	2.9598**
Chatting	80	8.78 ± 0.99	8.79 ± 0.93	0.0658[NS]
Miscellaneous	80	6.90 ± 1.22	6.78 ± 1.41	0.5758[NS]
Overall	80	64.99 ± 4.28	63.83 ± 4.34	1.7023[NS]

** Significant at 1% level   [NS] Not significant

The comparison of the usage pattern of smartphone among boys and girls is presented in Table-2. Both boys and girls indicated higher mean scores in the usage of smartphone for academic purpose. The results further indicated a significant gender difference in three dimensions, viz., academic, entertainment and gaming. In the dimension- academic, girls indicated a higher mean score (mean scores = 17.98) than boys (mean scores = 16.45). The difference between them was found to be highly significant ('t' value= 3.8088**) which indicates that girls use the smartphone more for academic purpose than boys.

A reverse trend was observed in the dimension- entertainment and gaming, where the boys indicated a higher mean score on entertainment (mean score = 9.52) and gaming (mean score = 10.91) when compared to girls (entertainment = 7.94, gaming = 10.35). The difference between the boys and girls in both the dimensions was found to be highly significant with the 't' value being 6.8635** and 2.9598** respectively. This implies that boys use their smartphones more for entertainment and gaming purpose. In other dimensions, the difference between the boys and girls were found to be non-significant. The results are in line with Thelwall, et al., (2010) where it reported that boys use their smartphones more for online gaming and entertainment. Further, the results are also in support with Alfawareh, et al., (2014) and Subramananian, et al., (2015) where it was reported that a higher percentage of students do use smartphones for academic purposes.

Table-3: Comparison of overall usage pattern of smartphone among the respondents

Categories	Boys (N = 80) (Mean ± SD)	Girls (N= 80) (Mean ± SD)	Significance of 't' value
PUC (N=80)	63.87 ± 4.19	63.34 ± 3.90	0.8282[NS]
Degree (N = 80)	66.09 ± 4.11	64.31 ± 4.73	2.5410*
Significance of t value	3.3831**	1.4152[NS]	

** Significant at 1% level   * Significant at 5% level   [NS] Not Significant
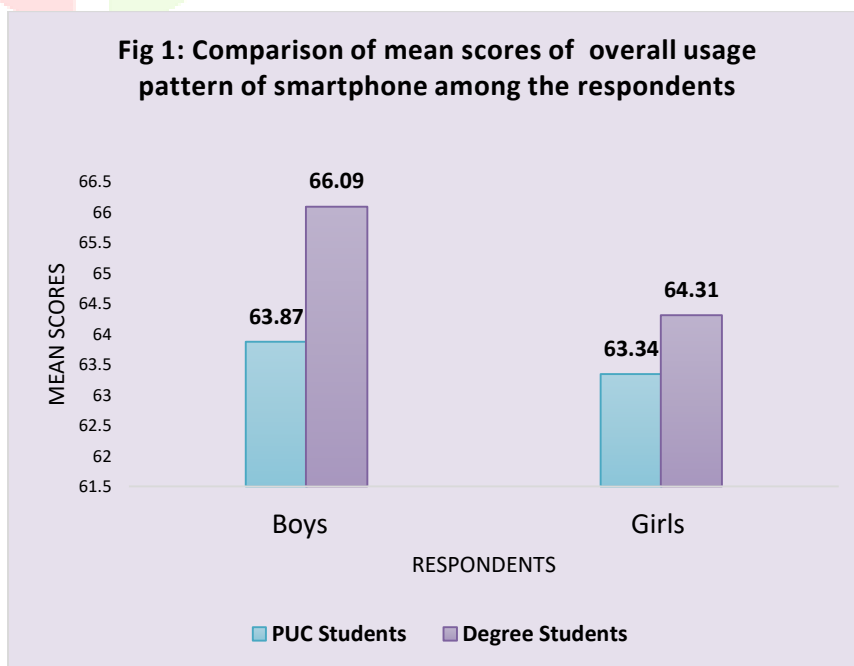

Fig 1: Comparison of mean scores of overall usage pattern of smartphone among the respondents

Table-3(Fig -1) discerns the comparison of overall usage pattern of smartphone among the respondents. It was observed that the boys from PUC indicated higher mean scores (mean scores = 63.87) when compared to girls (mean scores = 63.34). But the difference between them was not significant. A similar trend was observed with regard to the degree respondents where it was evident that the boys indicated higher mean scores (mean score = 66.09) when compared to their counterparts (mean score = 64.31). The difference between them was also found to be highly significant where the 't' value (2.5410*) indicated the significance at 5% level. The results indicated that there is a variation between two age groups of college going boys and girls with respect to the pattern of smartphone use.

Summary and Conclusion:

The results indicate that the use of smartphones is higher among college going boys and girls both PUC and Degree courses. Thus, it could be concluded that technology has become a vital part of today's students life as they use it for various purposes of their day to day living such as academics, social media, gaming, chatting and entertainment. Among all the uses of smartphone, the highest use has been indicated in academics and social networking. It is evident that the smartphones are used for various other purposes such as shopping, entertainment and social networking. In the quest of using the technology for academic purposes, the youth are often deviate from the purpose and end up using it for other purposes and thus wail away the precious time which they have to use for academics. Hence there is a need to create awareness among the college students about the usage of smartphones.

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