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Nomophobia in University Students

Abstract

The objective of the article is to know the reasons and characteristics of nomophobia in university students. Scielo, Redalyc, ProQuest, Google Scholar, Mendeley and EBSCO are consulted. Articles by year and languages are filtered in a methodical, sequenced and ordered way. It is found that there is an increase in the use of the cell phone in young university students, access the internet through the cell phone, seek to be connected, is socially isolated, present psychological and behavioral features associated with nomophobia. It is concluded that the young university student uses the cell phone as a tool for communication, chat, and online games, presenting high statistics on its use.

Keywords: nomophobia; smartphone; university students

Introduction

In recent years, many university students are isolating themselves from their immediate environment, due to the impulse to remain connected to a cell phone, tablet or PC; the reasons and characterization of this situation deserve a bibliographic review on the subject; added to this, the statistics of the National Household Survey of the third quarter 2019 by educational level, reveal that 89.9 percent of Internet users with higher university education access the Internet through cell phones, and the results are higher among those with higher educational level; Thus, 98 percent of the population with higher university education uses a mobile phone (or smartphone) without necessarily implying that the phone belongs to the person, but rather that it is available to them,

thanks to their work, a friend, family member or other circumstances (National Institute of Statistics and Information Technology, 2019).

The smartphone has become an important information search tool because of its access to the Internet, which allows contact with people who are physically distant, access to websites and platforms of interest (Barbosa Finotti, and others, 2018); Research on the use of the smartphone by Colombian university students reveals that the use of this technological equipment and acquisition occurs more among medium and high socioeconomic strata; 90 percent use it to keep in touch, in leisure time or for fun, and only 22 percent, for study purposes (Peñuela Epalza, et al., 2014).

There is talk of a new culture among young people who interact socially through cell phones

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and applications (Mateus, Aran Ramspott, Andrada Sola, & Masanet, 2019); in Spain the penetration rate is 96 to 97 percent, with 32.6 million users who browse the Internet daily, from their smartphones, reflecting that users around the world are familiar with applications or virtual assistants (Ditrendia, 2019); A study in Colombia on the motivations of young people for using their mobile phones reveals that there is no difference between men and women, that the use of mobile phones is mediated by desire and sensory stimulation, linked to the way they are perceived by other individuals with whom they interact, by a social need, because buying a mobile phone generates a personal taste and satisfaction and their decision to consume is based on the specific qualities of the device and its references (Herrera Mendoza, Gil Vega, & Acuña Rodríguez, 2017).

One approach to the reason why university students very frequently access cell phone use is due to the applications that can be accessed with these technological equipment, with online, interactive games with multiple functions, which increasingly capture the attention of young people and increase their exaggerated use, which causes problems of various kinds in personal, work, family, academic and social isolation (Britos & Brítez, 2015; Gamero, et al., 2016; Denis Rodríguez, Barradas Alarcón, & Delgadillo Castillo, 2017).

Dependence on and deprivation of the cell phone brings traits of anxiety, depression and behavioral changes related to nomophobia (Lee, Kim, Mendoza, & McDonough, 2018; Larico Apaza, 2018; Jilisha, Venkatachalam, Menon, & Olickal, 2019), additionally anxiety, despair, inattention, insecurity, stress, uncontrolled anger, contractures, excessive sweating, tachycardia, gastrointestinal problems, and panic attacks (Matoza-Báez & Carballo-Ramírez, 2016), including high levels of anxiety when the cell phone stays at home, without battery or signal (García Umaña E. A., 2017; Quesada Varela, 2017; Almeida Salinas, Moreno Corzo, Vásquez Rovira, Duarte Suescun, & Silva Giraldo, 2018).

The term nomophobia comes from the English abbreviation non-mobile-phone phobia and refers to the fear of being unable to communicate via mobile phone, a disorder of contemporary society; studies in the UK by the British company SecurEnvoy, in 2011, used the term nomophobia and found that two thirds of the population (66 percent) were afraid of losing or being without their mobile phone.

The aim of this article is to understand the reasons and characteristics of nomophobia in university students, based on statistical data on the use of mobile telephony (cell phone) in university students, in these times of so much technology, and rescue the contributions of

research related to nomophobia in university students that exist worldwide, to better understand the reasons for their isolated and distant or anxious and irritable when they do not have the cell phone operational or at hand.

It also seeks to collect current information on the subject that contributes to a better characterization of young university students with features of nomophobia, which serves as a basis for its specialized approach from the university institution, because the training provided at the university, should be comprehensive, which meets the interests of students, as this dependence on the cell phone is growing (Pensado Fernández, Ramírez Vázquez, & González Muñoz, 2017; Ramos-Soler, López-Sánchez, & Quiles-Soler, 2017); in this sense, the teacher plays an important role because it is he or she who is observing the student's behavior in the classroom and outside the classroom, who in alliance with the parent can prevent this excessive connection from becoming an addiction.

Methodology

This document is a review article on the subject of nomophobia in university students; for this purpose, articles are searched in electronic libraries such as Scielo, in the Network of Scientific Journals of Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal such as Redalyc, in the website of electronic document publishing companies such as ProQuest, in scientific information search engines such as Mendeley, Google Academic, in databases such as EBSCOhost and in the electronic documents of organizations such as INEI published quarterly.

The selection of articles considered relevant to the study was carried out; it is located in the context in which the university student develops and seeks a characterization of the psychological and physical reasons and characteristics that are associated with nomophobia, since the effects of this problem of the new times bring as a consequence difficulties in interpersonal relationships and social distancing.

In this sense, it summarizes the main ideas that contribute to understanding what happens in the world of university students, in relation to the use of cell phones that generate dependence as seen in nomophobia. Likewise, the criterion for the inclusion of articles was the relevance of the contributions, the year of publication, preferably filtered from recent years and information from statistics related to the educational and social field.

Development and discussion

Nomophobia

Nomophobia makes no distinction in age or gender, affects the work environment, physical and mental appearance, lowers performance and makes the person isolated from those around him, creating a distance as in a bubble from which it is difficult to get out (Mauger, et al., 2019).

However, there are predisposing and maintaining factors that favor the presence of nomophobia, such as the need for personal satisfaction, rather than something strictly academic, which strengthens the inadequate use of the cell phone and the origin of nomophobia, which alters sleeping hours due to excessive connection time and exposure to radioactive waves, which interferes with the central nervous system, immune system and reproductive system, as well as boredom during free time, which is another maintenance factor present in 90 percent against improper cell use and the presence of nomophobia (Almeida Salinas, Moreno Corzo, Vasquez Rovira, Duarte Suescun, & Silva Giraldo, 2018).

Nomophobia in young university students

One of the images that catches the eye, in the new generations, is seeing young people glued to the screen of a cell phone for long hours; the worrying thing is to see that the smartphone is diverting the attention and priority of this population for academic preparation and causes academic performance, which is the basis of their professional development, to be neglected.

It is true that there is a need to search for information in the university activity and the phone considered smart provides it: its great potential makes them stay online for a long time and this is associated with behaviors that can be considered unhealthy, such as dependence, which can be considered a call to public health that needs attention (Ramirez Quimbayo, Fernandez Campiño, Hernandez Patarroyo, & Acevedo Osorio, 2018; Torres-Salazar, and others, 2018).

It is said that the excessive use of cell phones is caused by the attraction generated by this technological tool: Studies tell us that 69 percent of young university students use it for entertainment, to access information, share files, surf the Internet, record videos, listen to music, access social networks, WhatsApp, and 57 percent of young people admit to having used their cell phones in class, but to send messages, answer calls (Merino Pantoja, Cabello Teran, & Merino Vidangossy, 2017); Therefore, we can indicate that cell phone use is managed

incorrectly, without rules that flow from one's own will, from norms established in our personal culture, can increase dependency and lead to a behavioral disorder, such as nomophobia, and cause negative consequences for the young people themselves.

A large part of the youth population has a cell phone and its excessive use has generated inappropriate behavior, which affects their personal, social, academic and family activities, which are closely related (Ramírez Quimbayo, Fernández Campiño, Hernández Patarroyo, & Acevedo Osorio, 2018) and even more in the digital natives (Cárdenas García & Cáceres Mesa, 2019), which brings as a consequence, excessive fear of not having the cell phone, being observed a significant relationship with the addiction to smart phones and this is considered the disorder of the XXI century (Durak, 2018; Durak, 2019; Ramos-Soler, López-Sánchez, & Quiles-Soler, 2017; García-Umaña & Córdoba Pillajo, 2020).

This situation is evidenced by research conducted on 200 young university students in the state of Hidalgo, Mexico, whose ages ranged from 24 to 28 years, which indicated that 70 percent of the men were very worried or anxious when they forgot their cell phone or discharged their cell phone battery, while 56 percent of the women showed the same concern, although not only for the cell phone, but also for the personal computer, both groups with significant discomfort (Gil Bernal, Romero Palencia, & Cruz del Castillo, 2014).

Likewise, a study of 65 university students in the faculty of nursing in Mexico, to whom the MPPSA test is applied, shows indiscriminate telephone use, with 91 percent spending a large part of their time using a mobile phone, identifying a relationship of dependence in the symptoms; phantom vibration, 70 percent and headache, 65 percent, leading to a state of illness (Quiroz Ángel, Martínez Chimal, Ibarra Celaya, García Vicente, & Díaz Marrón, 2016).

The problem that evidences the excessive use of the cellular phone in university youths are older, this is revealed in the study where an AMIPCI test is applied to 130 high school students, about the traits of nomophobia in Mexico City, and this results in 42.3 percent always using the phone, the most representative with the symptoms of addiction, 65 percent, 6 percent do it daily during the whole month, 52.3 percent indicate to have a very strong need to use the cell phone and 41.8 percent manifest to have an acute symptom of addiction, using it for any reason, therefore it can be corroborated that this problem is palpable, it presents features that affect the student's behavior, which evidences disorders (Dorantes Coronado, Mendoza

Méndez, & Baena Castro, 2016; Muyambiri, & Chabaefe, 2018).

On the other hand, in another study of 552 university students, the majority indicated that they do not need a cell phone to feel satisfied; 44 percent considered it necessary; 51 percent recognized that they use their cell phone more than seven hours a day; 41 percent felt uncomfortable for not being up-to-date on their social networks, and 29 percent considered that life without a cell phone is boring, empty and sad; This indicator refers to the presence of nomophobia among the young participants (Almeida Salinas, Moreno Corzo, Vásquez Rovira, Duarte Suescun, & Silva Giraldo, 2018), since the potential for negativity in cell phone use lies in the pleasure young people find in using the Internet and the various openings it offers (Redondo Pacheco, Rangel Noriega, Luzardo Briceño, & Inglés Saura, 2016).

Finally, a study on the subject is carried out on 313 students of the pedagogy career in Chile, on the perception of the use of mobile phones and it is found that 84 percent consider that it is useful for communication, 78 percent that it gives accessibility to their family and friends, 65 percent say that it gives them access to information and 63 percent say that it has improved their social life, for some it could be considered as something positive, but really it cannot be denied that it is evident that the cell phone is part of the day to day of the students and it is generating dependence (Merino Pantoja, Cabello Teran, & Merino Vidangossy, 2017). From this we can deduce that the mobile phone is considered by the university students as something essential and that they will hardly be able to stop using a cell phone, because from their perception they see positive aspects, however we can't forget to mention that in the eyes of others it can be considered a distraction, which leads to social networks and cyberspace, despite the fact that it is also used to access communication with friends and family.

The teacher in front of the nomaphobia

One of the tasks of the teacher in the face of the problem of nomophobia is to seek in his students the capacity of self-direction of their learning, in response to the needs of their context, in the same way their teaching vocation, in their action committed to society and in the professional training of their students (López Colón, Olivares Olivares, & Turrubiarres Corolla, 2018); However, the technological change that is part of the contemporary reality has called attention for the use as a tool for teaching and learning and it is seen as convenient to incorporate the use of mobile devices in learning (Basantes, Naranjo, Gallegos, & Benitez, 2017).

Therefore, the teacher assumes the challenge of proposing methodological strategies to regulate the proper use of mobile phones in the classroom, because nomophobia is an emerging problem, as raised by some research to mention that it is important to achieve in students routines of detachment, which include activities and strategies to prevent and provide solutions (García Umaña E. A., 2017; Quesada Varela, 2017).

In this sense, digital learning can prevent this problem. Research has shown that its use in the process of teaching and learning is a technological instrument that strengthens education, which is why innovation and the development of competencies for teachers is important (Basantes, Naranjo, Gallegos, & Benitez, 2017).

All of this allows us to motivate students to use this tool in an adequate manner, to be a support tool to rescue the potential of the students, to manage anxiety and impulses, in a teamwork that allows us to diminish the digital hyperconnection, with an adequate practice, making use of their competences, since they are holders of technological skills that can lead them to build significant knowledge based on their competences, as well as to enjoy family and affectivity (García Umaña E. A., 2017; Gálvez Manrique, 2019).

It seems that excessive access to the Internet and its multiple communication applications take up much of the time of university students and cause behavioral and emotional changes (Ramos-Soler, López-Sánchez, & Quiles-Soler, 2017); however, there is control and its use is related to its use as a useful tool and behaviors can be modified in a positive way.

Thus, in a study carried out in Spain on a group of university students about the advantages of using electronic devices, the results showed that 87 percent of students use an electronic device and that 40 percent of them use it to do their work or practice during their break.

Another important data is that 67 percent use it to look for information as long as the device is theirs, but that information is related to messages, image review, videos, communicating with other people (Alonso Mosquera, González Vallés, & Muñoz de Luna, 2016; Ranjbaran, 2014); therefore, against this we can say that there is a predisposition to the use of the cell phone.

In addition, it should be noted that it is a challenge for teachers to deal with this problem and value the digital skills of students, since young people will not stop being connected to the network, because they are looking for all the

possibilities that technology offers them for total connectivity (Ditrendia, 2019).

Some authors point out that there is a need to include digital media literacy (García Umaña E. A., 2017), since there is a need to make use of technological skills, which allow for multiple opportunities for learning, creativity, entertainment, socialization and to move away from associated negative aspects such as emotional distance, loss of limits in communication and loss of the ability to listen, among others (Arab López & Díaz, 2015).

The commitment is to take the best of what we have to live with, without ceasing to watch over the integral formation of adolescents and young people. In this sense, strategies are sought that help to regularize the use of cell phones and to promote education, such as the use of applications, whose objective is to generate communication, facilitate activities, and encourage collaborative work (Cárdenas García & Cáceres Mesa, 2019). We cannot prohibit its use, but rather look for the benefit and the teacher must be a guide and facilitator of learning resources (Olivencia-Carrión, Pérez-Marfil, Ramos-Revelles, & López Torrecillas, 2016).

Conclusions

In the Peruvian context, the national statistics applied to households in the third quarter of 2019, reveal that 89.9 percent of Internet users with a higher university education access the Internet via mobile phones and 98 percent of the population with a higher university education use a mobile phone without necessarily owning it.

In the reality of university students, there is a high predisposition for the use of the cell phone with its different applications, according to research on the subject of nomophobia in university students, which generates dependency and behaviors that alter proper development and leads to nomophobia, a term little used, but whose effects are very evident.

There is talk of a new culture of young people who interact socially through cell phones and applications.

Young people are the main consumers of technologies and technological tools that allow them to have total connectivity, as they find it highly attractive.

Nomophobia in young university students is characterized by dependence on social networks, chat rooms, online games, sleep disorders due to excessive connection time to the network, overexposure to radioactive waves, which alter their central nervous system and immune system.

The exaggerated use of the cell phone causes various problems in the personal, work, family, academic and social isolation of the university student.

Among the reasons that lead the university student to present this dependence is boredom during free time, which is a maintenance factor present in 90 percent of young people, against the improper use of the cell phone and the presence of nomophobia, likewise the search for information and be connected with family and friends through the cell phone.

Young people have digital skills that they must contribute to build meaningful knowledge, which can be used in academic activities.

The excessive use of the cell phone is taking over the youth, entering the family in an inadvertent way, causing serious consequences, physical, psychological and family and require cooperative work between teachers and parents.

The cell phone can be a tool that can be used responsibly and with objectives

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