

PP78

Mobile phone usage pattern and incidence of self-perceived health problems among 2nd and 3rd year undergraduates

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Objective: To determine the pattern of mobile phone usage among 2nd and 3rd year university students and to determine the proportion of selected population with self-perceived health problems related to usage of mobile phones.

Methods: The study was a descriptive cross sectional study which was carried out with 384 randomly selected population of 2nd and 3rd year undergraduates in University of Sri Jayewardenepura using pre tested self-administered questionnaires to ascertain data related to mobile phone usage pattern and self-reported health problems.

Results: Majority of the students were using their mobile phones for 1 to 5 year duration [44.6% (n=54) males; 69.3% (n=174) females] and 1 to 5 hour duration per day [57% (n=69) males; 56.2% (n=141) females]. A total of 6.6% (n=8) male and 6.8% (n=17) female students were using their mobile phones for more than 10 hours per day. 83.1% (n=309) students were moderately addicted to their mobile phones while 5.1% (n=19) were severely addicted. Most of the study subjects [71.9% (n=87) males and 55% (n=138) females] used vibration method on their mobile phones both day and night. 89.3% (n=108) males and 86.1% (n=216) females used to keep their mobile phone next to the ear when calling, while sleeping in a close proximity to the head on the bed [44.6% (n=54) males and 49.8% (n=125) females]. Higher mobile phone addiction level was significantly associated with the incidence of headache, body ache, ear ache, irritability/restlessness, sleep disturbances, hearing defects while or after using mobile phone among the study subjects ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusions: There is an urgent need to educate the public to depend less on the device and to take precautions during prolonged use.

PP79

The association between Z score in Advanced Level examination and position in common merit list in a selected group of medical students

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Objectives: The aim was to identify the relationship between Z score in the Advance Level examination and the position in the common merit list during 3 years (2007/2008, 2008/2009, 2009/2010 intakes) in a selected group of medical students and also to analyze the data to check the position of the selected students within the first 200 of the common merit list.

Methods: A descriptive observational study was conducted, where the admission data and common merit data of the students who entered the medical faculty from the original University Grants Commission (UGC) lists were analyzed. The students who entered through the other special criteria were excluded.

Results: In all 3 batches 30% were admitted on the merit basis. Interestingly, the percentage of female students in each batch was between 60-65%. Out of merit students, > 80% were admitted from the Colombo District. In all three batches, number of positions achieved within the first 200 were between 25 to 30. It was noted that there was no significant relationship between the UGC admission criteria and final common merit among the students. Out of 1st 200 of the common merit list nearly 30% were admitted according to district basis.