

# The Impact of Pphubbing and Age on Present Absence and Satisfaction with Life

## phubbing

verb [fuhb-bing]

ignoring real people in favor of the virtual universe inside a phone or other mobile device; as in phone + snubbing

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## ABSTRACT

The primary aim of this study was to establish a link between smartphone overuse and Present Absence within romantic relationships. It also sought to establish if the age that a smartphone is first used can predict Present Absence levels. The findings suggest there is a strong correlation between smartphone over use and Present Absence and that the age a smartphone is first used correlates with Present Absence levels.



## DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The current study has built on previous research by demonstrating that higher levels of smartphone usage can have a negative impact on the way couples communicate within romantic relationships. Perhaps more importantly it also suggests that the age a smartphone is first owned/used may be a predictor of levels of Present Absence within romantic relationships.

It is however, important to note that while the correlational findings are strong, further research needs to be undertaken to establish possible antecedents to this smartphone overuse such as depression or anxiety.

The findings within this study are important and relevant for the general population but perhaps more specifically for educators and parents in assisting with the formation of boundaries for children when using smartphones. Therefore, while this study adds to a rapidly growing body of research there is much more to be done to fully grasp how and why a smartphone alters how humans communicate

**"Life is what happens when your smartphone is charging"**

Emanuel, et al., 2015

## INTRODUCTION

Smartphone technology in 2018 is pervasive, Deloitte & Touche (2017) report that 68% of people use their smartphone while having dinner with family with 80% admitting to using them while talking with friends and ownership saturation levels are predicted to reach 90% by 2020.

Due to the fast-paced and universal nature of this technology, research is sparse and out-of-date relatively quickly. However some recent studies have addressed how this technology impacts communication within different settings. A study by Roberts & David (2016) specifically addressed the relationship between smartphones and romantic relationships and coined the term Pphubbing which is a portmanteau of the words, partner, phone and snubbing. Their findings suggest that Pphubbing may cause conflict and lower relationship satisfaction resulting in reduced overall wellbeing.

Furthermore being physically present but not fully attending to your partner due to the distraction of a smartphone device can result in negative or antisocial feelings (Rosman, 2006). And as Misra, Cheng, Genevie, & Yuan (2014) found, conversations held while simply having a smartphone device present, but not in use, were less empathetic than conversations with no smartphone present.

The aim of this study is to build on previous research in the area of smartphone technology, communication and relationships. It specifically sought to find a significant link between excessive smartphone use within romantic relationships, high levels of Present Absence and reduced satisfaction with life/wellbeing. Additionally it aimed to establish if there is a difference between adults who have grown up with smartphone technology and those who adopted that technology later in life and Present/Absence scores.

## Hypotheses

**H1** - Those with high levels of smartphone use will have high Present Absence Scores

**H2** - Those with high levels of smartphone usage will have low Satisfaction with Life

**H3** - Those with high levels of Pphubbing will have lower Satisfaction with Life.

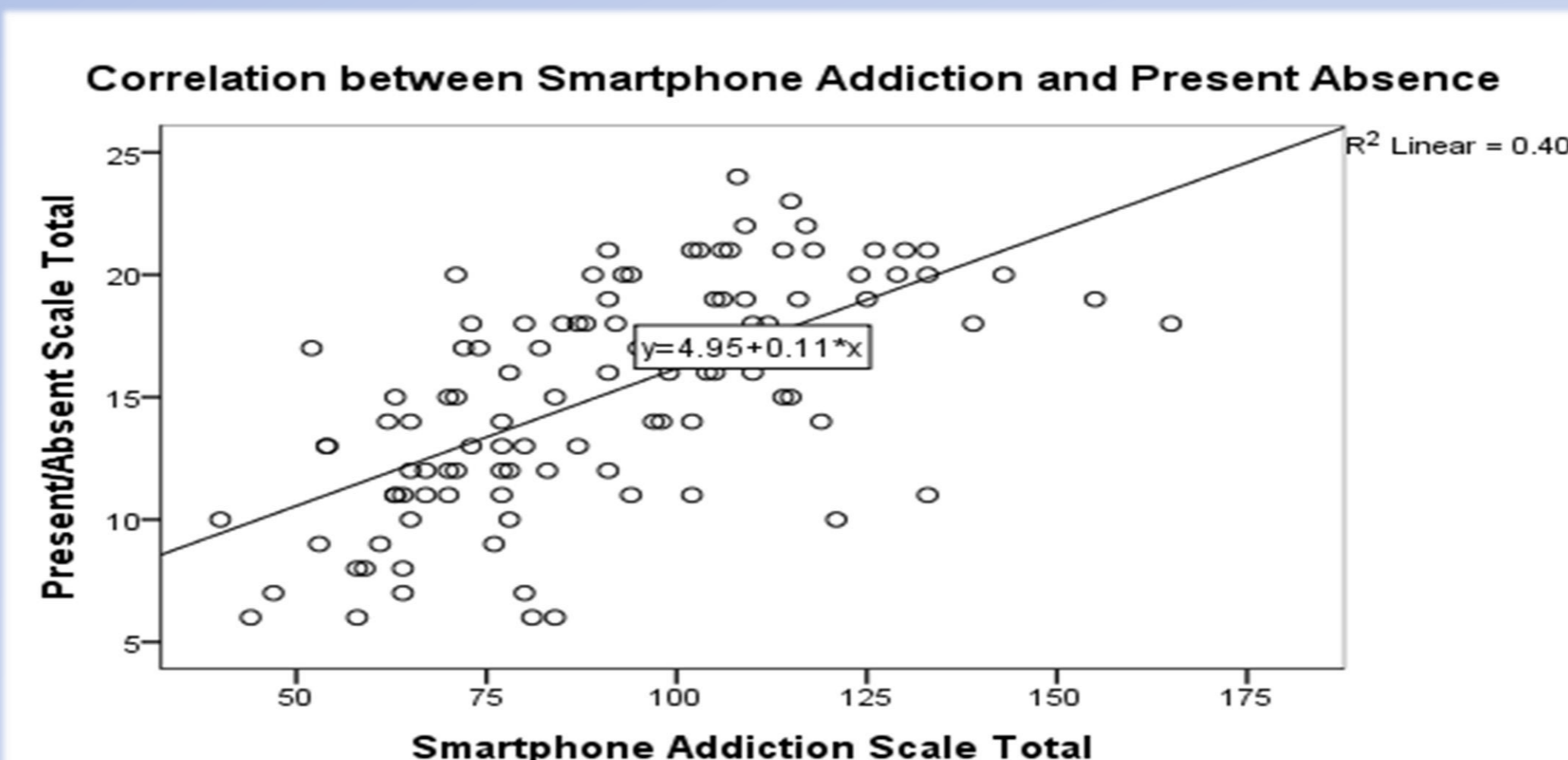
**H4** - There will be a significant difference in Present Absence scores, depending on the age a smartphone is first owned.

## METHODS

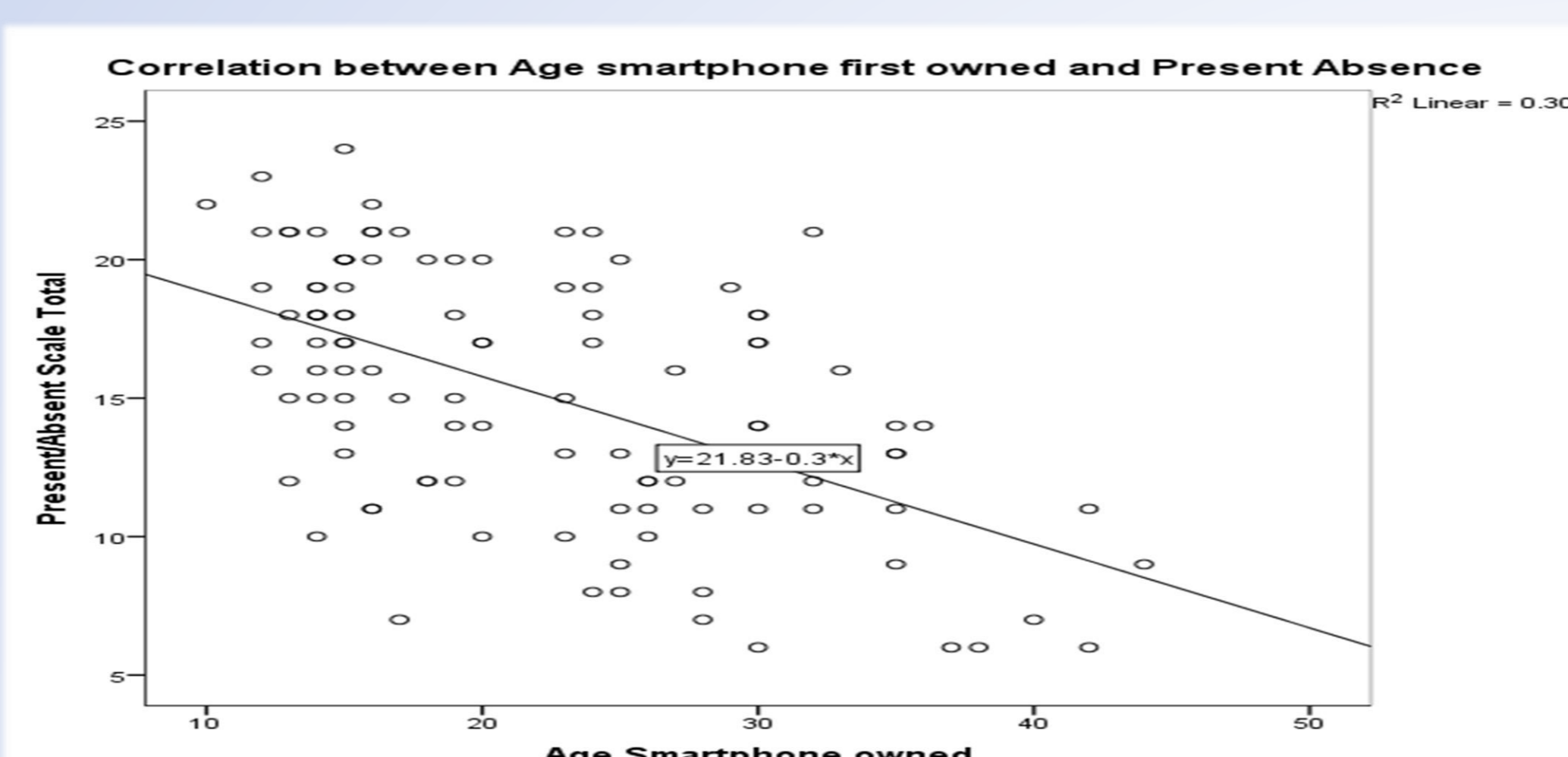
- ❑ **Participants:** 107 participants consisting of college students and general public. Inclusion criteria was smartphone ownership and aged 18 years or older.
- ❑ **Materials:** Demographic questionnaire followed by four self-report scales, Pphubbing scale, Present Absence Scale, Satisfaction with Life Scale and Smartphone Addiction Scale.
- ❑ **Procedure:** Hardcopies of the questionnaire were handed out to be completed. All participants were advised that participation was non-compulsory and anonymous.
- ❑ **Design:** This study is correlational in design and used purposive sampling
  - A Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to test all four hypotheses and a liner regression was used to establish to what level age of smartphone ownership is a predictor of Present Absence.

## SIGNIFICANT RESULTS

The results support the hypothesis that there is a correlation between smartphone overuse and high Present Absence scores within romantic relationships. It also suggests a negative correlation between the age a smartphone is first used and Present Absence with romantic relationships. This supports the hypothesis that the younger a smartphone is owned/used the higher the Present Absence levels within romantic relationships.



The scatterplot above shows the strong positive significant relationship between smartphone overuse and Present Absence.



The above scatterplot shows the strong negative significant relationship between age of 1<sup>st</sup> ownership and Present Absence.



## REFERENCES

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