

Usage of Mobile by Female Students in University India

Rahul Kushwaha*

Amity School of Communication, Amity University, Haryana, India

Abstract

This study surveyed the utility of cell phone among female students of Amity University (AU) studying in Amity School of Communications. The study applying both quantitative and qualitative methodology was done on 33 participants. Findings indicate that Amity University female students use their cell phones for receiving calls, chatting, visits to social media, watch video, contacting new and old friends and sending message to gratify their specific needs. They contacted parents, relatives, friend and others, too. Findings show female students use their cell phone maximally for direct call, chatting or texting, information searching on internet, internet calling, for capturing events, receiving incoming video calls, for editing home photos, sending message with pictures, and browsing internet. The researcher also found some negative fall outs while using cell phones like Internet poor connectivity and Wi-Fi problem, time consumption, addiction to cell phone, false or fabricated information postings and unknown sources tagging unwanted material like pornography.

Keywords: Smart phone; Internet; Chat; Browsing; Network; Wi-Fi; Touch screen

Background of the Study

Globalization has revolutionized communication making the world a smaller place. New discoveries and continuously developing technology have reduced distances and minimized human differences. Mobile phone communication has become an integral part of everyday life.

Advances in hardware allow for mobile phones to function as a multipurpose device that serves as a phone, navigational device, portable music player and library, gaming system, still camera, video camera, mobile payment device, and portable computer all in one. "The spread of mobile phone is affecting people's lives and relationships and their interaction" [1]. In addition to direct calls, it provides text or messaging communication (written). Now a days mobile communication has spread to all network reaching places to the hands of all sectors of the society [2].

University students in USA and South Africa access websites through mobile phone, especially the lower income youth who do not own computer. Smart phones are popular devices that provide access to many features such as games, access to internet and social networks, messaging, video, multimedia, and navigation, in addition to their use for communication.

In this study, the researcher has targeted Amity University (AU) female communication students who own smart phone.

Mobile phones are popular among university students, increasing their social inclusion and inter connectedness as well as providing a sense of security as they can contact others in times of distress, or emergency [3]. The security angle and mobile use has drawn this researcher to this subject and an attempt has also been made how far a mobile can help in this vital area. Little study has been done on this subject.

Statement of the problem

A study in New Zealand by Dresler Hawre and Mansuelt [4] indicated that over half of the university students admitted to constantly checking their mobile phone for missed calls and messages. The majority of these were female students indicating that female students showed a greater sign of addiction to their mobile phone. The three

main reasons the university students needed to communicate are for inclusion (need to belong), control, (need to give instruct others or be instructed), and affection (need to love or be loved) [2,5]. While being readily contactable was found to be an advantage, it was also noted that it can be a disadvantage as contact could occur at inappropriate times. Phone calls during class lectures divert students' and teachers' attention and lead to a communication problem [3].

Smart phone addiction is a type of behavior associated with groups of negative symptoms such as disregard of harmful consequence, pre-occupation, productivity loss and feeling of anxiety and loss.

Research questions

1. What is the mostly used purpose of smart cell phone by the female students?
2. Who are using smart phone?
3. What benefits are they getting by using smart mobile phone?
4. What challenges do they face in using smart cell phone?

While major objective of this study has been exploring the utility of smart cell phone among female students of AU, this research has specifically analyzed frequency of use of smart cell phones by AU female students, the purpose of using, benefit they get and the flip side of using the smart cell phones by them.

The researcher has used both the quantitative and the qualitative methods for this study. Also used are primary data collection tools and secondary sources.

The study has used purposive sampling method. The samples were selected because they were accessible to the researcher since the study

*Corresponding author: Rahul Kushwaha, Amity University Haryana Gurgaon, Haryana, India, Tel: 0124-2337015; E-mail: rahul_graphicsindia@yahoo.co.in

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was done on the female students smart phone users in AU. Subjects were chosen based on their dependency on mobile phone. This technique is considered easiest, cheapest and least time consuming.

Data gathering instruments used for this study are questionnaire, and focus group discussion. The subjects for the group discussion were selected based on the usage pattern (regularity) of smart phones. Three students who spend longer time on their cell phone and three who rarely spent time were selected.

This study tells us how the female students use their smart phones and why beside the merits and demerits of using smart phones. It should be a source of information for other readers and researchers.

Limitations

No list of smart phone using female students is available and to select samples from the total population is difficult. Therefore the researcher has purposively selected female students using smart phone for communication. As no such study on the subject has been done earlier, the researcher has throughout felt handicapped due to lack of reference material and other details. Review of related literature According to Yang and Jacie [6] the mobile phone developed into a device with new interactive features and functions that of a laptop and known as a Smartphone. A typical smart phone has high-resolution touch screen display, Wi-Fi connectivity, Web browsing capabilities, and the ability to accept sophisticated applications. According to Agar [7] the accelerating use of cell phones and the emergence of an exciting class of mobile Internet devices like iPhones, Netbooks and so on are creating an explosion of data transfer across wireless networks all over the world. Digital cameras allow us to share pictures of ourselves, our families and special events with friends all over the world. In order to maintain effective communication, it is essential that organizations and individuals adapt to the latest technology to keep people interested. This most certainly is the case for youth-especially students. Mobile technology continues to shape how individuals communicate whether in business, political, social, entertainment or individual setting

Auter's [2] and Balakrishnan and Raj's [3] studies say university students in the USA and Malaysia were found to consider their mobile phone as their primary phone, as opposed to using their home landline, in order to keep their conversations private from their parents and siblings. And portability also provided students with more privacy by allowing conversations to take place away from authority figures, families, peers and groups [5]. In Malaysia, universities students saw mobile phone as a necessity as it alters the learning method at the higher learning institutions.

According to Baran, Communication is an impartation of living ideas evoking mental and emotional responses to a receiver; it also involves hearing, understanding, encountering, listening, responding, speaking, writing and delivering speech through cell phone. The adoption of the mobile phone in some developing countries has resulted to interesting changes in some societal and business institutions. According to Seppanen cell phone has been strongly regarded as a personal medium, which can be defined as institutionally and structurally different from mass media with more possibilities for social interaction and user-generated, non-professional content creation. Gender differences exist with regard to cell phone addiction, reachability and politeness norms, with female university students showing a stronger relationship with those behaviors [4]. According to Trent D. Buskirk and Charles Andrus, Smartphone is a mobile phone that offers more advanced computing ability and connectivity

than a contemporary basic feature phone. Smartphone is everywhere nowadays and is being used by people for calls, SMS, emails, browsing the internet, blogging, social networks, watching videos, reading eBooks, listening to podcasts, using applications to shop or bank online and many more ways. Smart phones are giving students the opportunity of new ways to learn and more current ways of learning and simultaneously provide them with more time to learn. In response to a question about mobile-phone addiction, one out of three students said that they felt addicted to their phones. This sense of addiction may be related to dependency and heavy usage. Most scholars agreed that the gender gap in Internet use had narrowed significantly in the college age group. However, some gender differences had been found in attitude towards technology, intensity of Internet use, online applications preferred, and experience in cyberspace. Several studies reported that males had significantly more positive attitudes toward computers than females did [8]. Also, technologies were not utilized in similar ways by men and women and as a result some differences still existed [9]. Gender difference was also found regarding the use of web applications. Male college students were more likely to use the Internet for recreational purposes, information gathering and entertainment while females preferred to use the Internet for communication and females tended to be social as they used e-mail and instant messaging more than their male peers [10]

Ogunyemi found that African male students living in the United Kingdom or England prefer to text in order to show affection while the female students prefer to receive a call rather than a text. University students tend to receive more calls than they make, with most of their calls aimed at maintaining friendships, keeping in contact with family and making social arrangements. Female university students tend to make more and lengthier calls, send more text messages, and are more likely to keep in contact with their parents than male university students [11]. Mobile communication is perceived as a social phenomenon, in its social contexts or within particular communities or culture. Motivations to use technology, ranging from radio and television to digital TV and now the internet and mobile phones, can be explained by the Uses and Gratification theory. Uses and gratification theory places the power of choice in the hands of the audience. The theory is an attempt to explain something of the way in which individuals use communications, among other resources in their environment to satisfy their needs and to achieve their goals [12]. Uses and gratification theory directly relates to the researcher's intent to ascertain why AU female students use their smart phones and specifically their use to get news, information, entertainment, and technologies and level of gratification that occurs when doing so.

Research Design

The researcher employed both the quantitative and the qualitative methods for this study. Also primary data collection tools and secondary (indirect) method were used. In the indirect method, books and other reference tools were used as primary source and in the direct method students (sample) were used. The researcher has used purposive sampling methods for qualitative. Two data gathering instruments were used for this research to be complete and effective. These are questionnaire, and interview. The questionnaire was closed ended and the subjects for the interview were selected randomly from the total samples of 33.

Data Presentation and Analysis

From the total 33 respondents, 22 were from urban area while 11 from the rural. The duration respondents stayed away from their

families is another factor taken into account. According to the data, 13 of the respondents stayed 6 months, 9 respondents 3 months, 8 respondents and the rest 3 were found away from family for more than one year.

The average summary of respondents total cost invested on cell phones indicates that the respondents' usage of money invested on cell phone is high. From the data the researcher understood that respondents had cordial relations with their fathers who are the source of money for their cell phone cost. The data also revealed that mothers of the respondents are regularly connected through cell phone. Respondents have a wide range of connection with their brothers and their daily life. The other relations of respondents contacted are their sisters.

Among the respondents 16 had been using their cell phones for six years, three for eight years, three for four years, three for three years, three for two years, two for seven years, two for 12 years and the rest one for 10 years. This data shows that the 67% of the respondents had good experience of using cell phones.

Only two respondents use their cell phone for a personal use other than contacting others and the rest 31 were found to use their cell phone for contacting others over cell phones.

Ogunyemi [5] held that cell phone usage could cause disturbance in students' sleeping pattern. Students tend to get engaged in text messaging and feel anxious when not receiving replies from their friends even during the night when they are supposed to be sleeping. But during this study, 19 and 11 respondents said they did not get upset when facing these challenges.

Wrong calls disturbed 25 of the respondents. The rest eight said they are not disturbed by wrong incoming calls. Further, 55% respondents were found not to respond to wrongly incoming messages while 45% respondents do. From the respondents 82% respondents always carry their cell phone with them. It shows there is high dependency on cell phone among the respondents of the study.

The other dimension of cell phone usage was Internet. In this case 84.84% were found using internet via cellphone. This implies that the highest number of respondents use their cell phone for internet searching information they need. About respondents' usage of cell phones during academic session, 28 (84.84%) were found having the habit of checking their cell phone for messages and missed calls. Among these 22 do reply back to message and missed calls immediately on receiving while 11 do not respond. This implied that most of the respondents do have higher level of communication when they need and others need to contact them.

Parents, relatives, friends, and others were suggested customers of respondents through cell phones. Based on this 30 subjects were frequently contacting their parents while three contacted less frequently. In case of relatives 9 respondents frequently contacted them and 14 less frequently. The rest 10 do rarely get contact with relatives. It indicates that most of the respondents rarely contact their relatives. In contrast to this high level of respondents 21 (63.63%) contact their friends frequently and 10 (20%) less frequently. Only 2 (16.5%) rarely contact their friends. It implies that the respondents gave high place for their friends than their relatives other than their parents. Only two were frequently contacting people other than families, relatives, and friends, seven less frequently contact unknown or other people while the rest 24 (72.72%) rarely contact other people.

Among the respondents 20 were spending around 10 min while

communicating with their parents in a single call. Rest 13 took around 7 min. The same people took around five minutes talking with their relatives. When asked how long they talked with friends all the respondents said they took more than 15 min in one go. It shows respondents spend more conversation time with their friends than with parents. However, all of them said that they took less than five minutes while talking to other relatives and strangers.

The quantitative data shows that 73% with parents, 39% with relatives, 61% with friends, and 24% with others had communication to share information. Gossip was also the purpose of respondents when communicating with parents, 2 (16.5%), 1(3%) relatives, 8 (24.24%) friends, and 3 (9%) other people. Here, sharing and seeking information, casual talks, and gossip were respectively major purpose of communication. The next attempt was on the purpose of their cell phone. Baron and Campbell, (2010) found that female university students are more likely to keep in contact with their family members, to share experiences and seek emotional support and their families would communicate without much difficulty at any time and place. The data show female students use their cellphone more for communication purpose with their families and friends. Purpose of the usage I was found that 75.75% of respondents use their cellphone for socialization, 33.33% for their safety, 36.36% for privacy purpose, 3% as a status of symbol (pride), 12.12% for pleasure, and the rest 21.21% for self-online presentation on social networks. It shows cell phone usage by the female students has highest share in creating strong social bond followed by a means to keep their privacy. The data reveal that 84.84% respondents use their cell phones when they have free time. There is also growing usage of cell phones at places with Wi-Fi availability as 60.60% of the respondents' answers show. There are also 12.12% respondents using cell phones in class room during lectures, and 9% during reading at library. Regarding handling the technology, 81.81% respondents agreed that it is easier to use internet via Smartphone as compared to other ordinary cell phones. The device also enhanced learning as 48.48% respondents said. According to Roberson and Hagevik cell phone functioned to access education material through online learning. Here in this study subjects found using cellphone for education purpose. With little difference come 42.42% results indicating that smart cellphones have more socializing power than other cell phones. There were finally, 33.33% respondents using smart phones just because they feel proud to have it since it is smart. As per data, the highest 27 respondents said that cell phones are used for direct calling. Receiving incoming video call, sending message, with pictures, and editing photos reveal 14 (42.42%) respondents' answer. It implies there is growing technology adoption by female students. It is also found that, 60.60% respondents use their cell phone for chatting or texting, and information searching on internet maximally. There are also found 45.45% respondents who use it for capturing events with camera and share it. Another 30.30% of responses implied that the subjects use cell phones for playing different games, and browsing internet. Internet voice calling comes right to direct calls based on 54.54% results. It shows the dependency and usage of internet via cellphones. In all 29 of respondents put their cellphone in silent mode during lecture. They do not want to miss any call, message, and event while learning. But they focus on checking it even if it is silent. Two switched it off and the rest two kept it ringing. It can be concluded cell phones are tracking students' attention affecting academic performance. Maximum usage satisfaction in the study it was attempted to know in which activity via cell phone respondents got maximum satisfaction. It was when they use chat that 16 got maximum satisfaction, followed by visiting social media by 14 respondents. Besides, 10 respondents said they get satisfaction in receiving calls.

Watching videos also satisfied 9 of the respondents. Eight responded that they get more satisfaction also when they get new friends via cell phones. Yet other 7 felt satisfied also when they got sending message. It can be concluded that most cell phone users get maximum satisfaction in using internet. It shows how technology with internet is getting on with female students.

Katz et al. [12] stated that motivations to use technology can be explained by the Uses and Gratification theory that focuses on consumers' choice. Users use technology to satisfy their social and psychological needs. In this study the findings show that the respondents use their cell phones to gratify their needs.

All the respondents felt that Internet connection and poor wireless network affected their usage of cell phones and voiced need for high speed Internet connection. All the students conceded that cell phones are advantageous to communicate with family, to the world, and getting new information, to get different information about customers, family and friends, communications as we wish and easily. It helps us to connect with friends who are distantly located and sharing information; it makes contacting in many ways and obtain information, and Chatting contact with others and searching information for education purpose. Beside sharing information with others, it helps to get new friends, access internet, to entertain. And if the cell phone is smart, it is easy to access information as compared to other phones and it helps to visit websites and connecting with peoples in it. According to Baron and Campbell [13] University Female students from the USA are more likely to have conversations over cell phones regularly. This is because females are more relationship oriented than males, and they use cell phones to facilitate social interaction. Their studies found that female university students are more likely to keep in contact with their family members, to share experiences and seek emotional support. As can be decoded all interviewees have varying extent of cell phone usage. We can see the first person highly using it for calling 40%, the second for capturing and watching video 90%, the third 75% for listening radio and other needs for education and for entertainment. The other interviewee using her cell phone for dispatching her work is 70%. These show the subjects use their cell phone for a variety of purpose and used it for high extent usage. Cell phone usage benefited the interviewee in cases like easy communication with people everywhere, to get friends missing for long, put 'like' on Facebook, less cost communication via social networks as Facebook, viber, whatsapp etc, have access to information everywhere and time and it replaces the function of a computer of the respondents, 22 were found using internet via cell phone for searching information and reply back to message and missed calls immediately on receiving. This implied that most of the respondents do have higher level of communication when they need and others need to contact them. Communication is vital in journalism therefore in one another way respondents are practicing journalism. Similarly 24 respondents' purpose of cell phone usage were found out for sharing information, to seek information, and 25 respondents were also using cell phone for self-online presentation on social network. 27 respondents access to internet for academic importance, socializing power, sending messages with pictures, and editing photos for chatting or texting, and information searching on internet maximally. Also 15 respondents use it for capturing events with camera and share it. Respondents on interview used their cell phone for getting information, for listening radio programs, news, feature stories and dramas, for reading social media posts, visiting websites seeking and delivering news information and events, for watching and accessing famous persons doing in the world, watching interview stories and talent shows and digging out current trends, information related to journalism and other related course.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The core purpose of this study identified the following research objectives: frequency of use of cell phones, the purpose of using Smart cell phones. It was found that AU communication female students' cell phone usage was mainly for socialization, privacy, safety, online presentations, and escapism. The researcher found the purpose of their communication through cell phones was to share information, seek information, and gossip. Most of female students get satisfaction when they are using their cell phones for chatting, visit to social media, receiving calls, watching video, contacting new friends, and sending messages. Female students frequently used their cell phone for contacting with parents, relatives, friend and others respectively. Female students use cell phone maximally for direct call chatting or texting information searching on internet, internet calling, for capturing events, receiving incoming video calls, for editing home photos, sending message with pictures, browsing internet, and playing different games. Female students mostly used cell phones find out when they have free time, at Wi-Fi connection area, in class room, and during reading at library respectively. Most of female students were using their cellphone in silent and vibrant mode during lecture class, some of them switched off and ringing. Motivations to use technology, ranging from radio and television to digital TV and now the internet and cellphones, can be explained by the Uses and Gratification theory and it focuses on why consumers turn to technology to satisfy their social and psychological needs. The theory implies that consumers are actively involved in their decision to use, and how to use technology in order to fulfill certain needs. It is recommended that the following issues be threadbare examined and explored for further study. Female cell phone users feel stressed when their cell phone is not in their hand or is off. This is on account of addiction. This issue can be explored in greater detail. A study may be done on use of cell phone by journalists and how the communications differ gender wise.

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