



“A STUDY ON THE USAGE OF SMART PHONES AMONG THE FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS IN COIMBATORE”

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ABSTRACT

The current study is done to find out the usage of smart phones among the female college students in Coimbatore region. A well drafted questionnaire was given to a sample of 100 respondents. The primary objective of the study was to find out the various uses for which the female college students use their smart phone and their average use in a day. The study aimed to find out the Smart phone brands that the female respondents use the most in the current scenario and the type of connection and the number of sim (Mobile Connections) they use. It also explored the relationship between family income and money spent on mobile recharges. Majority of the respondents responded that mobile phones are an indispensable part of their life. The study proved that most of the female college students use their smartphone to a larger extent making use of its various features.

KEYWORDS

smart phone, average use, mobile features, brand used.

Introduction:

The smart phone today is considered as a personal technology that will be with the user over day and night. The extent of college students' obsession is to the extent that they feel they cannot have a life without the device. The current study is restricted to female college students in Coimbatore region. The smart phone device is holding a strong control over the college student's life. The smart phone has redefined the pattern of communication with the user's friends and family and the concept of social networking. The communication concept from face to face has been changed to screen to screen. The smart phone has changed the way female college students interact with each other. Texting has become an integral type of interaction among the female college students. The Social networking apps like Whats app, Viber, Wechat, facebook, twitter, instagram etc has strengthen the college students smart phone usage. The smartphones with the high quality camera has made the female college students obsessed with taking pictures. The device fulfills the functions of information, entertainment and education and hence has become attached to the female college student's life.

Review of Literature

Over the last decade, the mobile phone has penetrated in every sector, presenting many opportunities to many areas, including higher education (Campbell, 2002). A lot of studies have been done on Mobile Phone and its usage and impact. Many researchers have done their study on Mobile and youth. Even though Mobile Communication has been identified by foreign authors years ago, in Indian context, not many studies have been done.

Mobile phone is the new digital culture (Ling, 2007). Mobile phones have become web enabled devices that may be constantly connected to the inter-net, providing more communication than just phone calls and Short-Messaging-Services (SMS) such as; social media and Instant Messaging (IM) (Auter, 2007; Beaver et al., 2010).

Smart phones provide varieties of features and services. It has become an integral part of college student's life. The use of smart phones among the youngsters is growing by leaps and bound. To many, the mobile phone is not a tool for making just phone calls, but rather, a 'lifeline' to the social networking and an instrument for smoothly operating and coordinating their everyday life (Matthews, 2004).

We are moving in to an era when mobile devices are not just for talking and texting, but also for accessing the internet and all it has to offer (Pew Research Center, 2010).

The integration of mobile phones into our daily lives is exaggerated in how younger generations talk about not being able to imagine themselves without their phones now (Thompson & Cupples 2008). Individuals are forming an attachment to their mobile phones, which

enables them to think that they cannot function without their mobile phone on a day-to-day basis. There are many factors that lead to mobile phone dependency, such as leisure boredom, sensation-seeking behaviour and low self esteem. Another aspect of the cellular world that contributes to dependency and changes the way in which we socially interact on a daily basis is SMS Text Messaging.

Mobile phones are known to be very popular among university students, increasing their social inclusion and connectedness as well as providing a sense of security as they can contact others in times of distress or emergency (Balakrishnan & Raj, 2012).

The mobile phone has been argued to function as a social connection device, especially among teens (Ling, 1999).

The mobile has become an instrument that teens use to define their personal space in relation to friends and parents (Oksman, 2006).

Young people have wide choice to spend time, what to access, where to access, and for micro coordination. (Stald, 2008). Social networking is just one type of internet service but it is a normal activity to enough for disturbing ones private space and privacy as whole. (Hansion, 2006).

Rich Ling and Jonnathan Donner in their book “Mobile Communication” has written that mobile phones has changed the way that teen interact with parents and with peers and it has changed the dynamics of social networks and the development of social cohesion. In a very short time, the device has had a major impact on the way we interact and organize our lives.

Methodology of the study

The data for the study was collected through survey method. A questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 100 female students in Coimbatore region.

Objectives of the study

The present research has the following specific objectives:

- To explore the average use of smart phones among female college students in Coimbatore region.
- To find out the smart phone features used the most by the respondents.
- To explore the most used brand of smart phone among the respondents.
- To investigate whether the family income of the respondents has any relationship with the mobile recharges done by the respondents.
- To find out the mobile plan and connection type among the respondents.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How many hours do the female college students use their smart phone?
2. What are the features in a smart phone that respondents use the most?
3. Which brand of smart phone do the respondents use the most?
4. What is the nature of mobile plan the respondents use and how many sim do they possess?
5. Is there any relationship between the family income and money spent on recharges among the respondents?

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1

CROSS TABULATION OF RESPONDENTS MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME AND MONEY SPENT ON RECHARGES IN A MONTH						
		MONEY SPENT ON RECHARGES IN A MONTH				Total
		Less than Rs.100	Rs.100-200	Rs.200-400	More than Rs.400	
MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME	Less than Rs.10,000	2	0	0	0	2
	Rs.10,000-30,000	8	21	10	0	39
	Rs.30,000-40,000	17	17	7	0	41
	More than Rs.60,000	5	0	5	8	18
Total		32	38	22	8	100

Majority of the respondents spent around Rs.200 for their monthly recharges and their family income falls in a range of Rs.10,000-30,000 and Rs.30,000-40,000. Only 8 respondents whose monthly income is more than Rs.60,000 spent more than Rs.400 a month for recharges. Hence it was proved that, there is a connection between income and money spent on recharges.

BRAND OF SMART PHONE USED

7 out of 100 respondents use Apple brand. 20 out of 100 respondents use Samsung brand. 4 out of 100 uses Nokia and a majority of 69 respondents use other brands, which were not specifically mentioned in the questionnaire. The other brands used by the respondents are given in the table below.

Table 2

OTHER BRANDS OPTED BY THE RESPONDENTS THAN THE LISTED BRANDS					
1	Redmi	20	7	Sony	2
2	Micromax	11	8	Asus	2
3	Lenovo	9	9	Acer	2
4	Vivo	8	10	Lava	2
5	Motorola	7	11	Coolpad	2
6	Gionee	4	Total=69		

Out of 69, the most used brand is Redmi, with 20 respondents, followed by Micromax (11), Lenovo (9), Vivo(8), Motorola(7), Gionee(4), Sony(2), Asus(2), Acer(2), Lava(2) and Coolpad(2).

The number of sim used by the respondents is in the ratio 40:60. 40 of the 100 respondents use 1 sim while 60 of them use 2 sim in their mobiles. The entry of JIO with its unlimited plans in to the mobile market boosted the usage among the respondents

Table 3

Majority of the users have unlimited plan in their smartphone which will not restrict their usage.

CROSS TABULATION OF TYPE OF MOBILE PLAN AND NATURE OF MOBILE CONNECTION					
		TYPE OF MOBILE PLAN			Total
		UNLIMITED PLAN	LIMITED PLAN	PAY PER USAGE	
NATURE OF MOBILE CONNECTION	PRE-PAID	62	12	19	93
	POST-PAID	7	0	0	7
Total		69	12	19	100

Table 4

CROSS TABULATION OF RESPONDENTS AVERAGE USAGE OF SMART PHONE AND THE MONEY SPENT ON RECHARGES IN A MONTH						
		Count				Total N=100
		MONEY SPENT ON RECHARGES IN A MONTH				
		less than 100	100-200	200-400	greater than 400	
AVERAGE USAGE OF SMART PHONE	Less than an hour	5	4	1	3	13
	1-5 hrs a day	17	18	13	0	48
	5-10 hrs a day	4	10	6	3	23
	More than 10 hrs a day	6	6	2	2	16
Total		32	38	22	8	100

Majority of the respondents spent 1-5 hours a day with their smart phone and they spent approximately Rs. 100-200 a month for monthly recharges. 23 of the respondents spent 5 to 10 hours a day and 16 of them spent more than 10 hours a day, in which 2 of them spent more than Rs.400 for monthly recharges.

FREQUENCY OF MOBILE PHONE FEATURES USAGE

Majority of youngsters use their smart phone several times a day for playing music and using social networking apps like whatsapp/viber, Wechat, Facebook, Twitter etc. The other features they use several times a day are browsing information followed by making calls, playing games and taking pictures. The detailed information about their usage is given below.

Table 5

	Several times a day	Few times a week	Once in a week	Less often	Never	N=100
1. Text Messages	39	4	15	28	14	100
2. Calls	73	20	2	5	0	100
3. Taking Pictures	47	32	5	13	3	100
4. Sending/receiving pictures	37	48	0	2	13	100
5. Play Music	87	3	0	0	10	100
6. Play Games	49	10	0	23	18	100
7. Use SN apps like Whatsapp, Viber, Wechat, FB, Twitter etc	81	0	6	0	13	100
8. Booking Rides	13	7	30	0	50	100
9. Browsing for news/information	62	28	0	5	5	100
10. E-Commerce/ Online purchase	0	15	12	48	25	100
11. E-Mail	8	20	16	43	13	100
12. Video Chatting	3	20	11	26	40	100
13. Radio	8	4	13	29	46	100

CONCLUSION

The study proved that the female college students consider smart phone as a part of their life, with out which they find something missing. The device helps them to coordinate their life and gives them as accessibility to their friends and family. The respondents interact through the device using inbuilt features and other networking apps and sites. Most of the respondents consider the device as a helping platform to enrich their knowledge, as they use it to collect information for updating their knowledge and for academic purposes. The smart phone fulfills the respondent's entertainment and information needs along with communication need.

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