

Is Mobile Phone Indispensable in Colleges? A Study on Undergraduate Students of Commerce

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Abstract: *Technology plays a profound role in everyday life. Mobile phones, as advanced technology provide the potential for the society particularly the college students. Mobile phones provide multitude of features and services so much and it has become an important part and parcel of everyday modern life. Mobile phones are being extensively used by common man and woman, doctors, engineers, service man and students at all levels in their day-to-day activities. Today business is next to impossible without a mobile phone. Mobile phone is becoming increasingly one of the most popular information access devices even amongst the college students day by day. However, it has an extensive and continuing effect on how they make use of it. Thus, increased popularity of cell and smart phones in recent years has attracted research attention. This study examines the usage and impact of mobile phones on undergraduate students of commerce in Jorhat district of Assam.*

Key Words: *Mobile Phones, Smart Phones, Undergraduate Students, Classroom*

1. INTRODUCTION

A mobile phone is a portable telephone that can make and receive calls over a radio frequency carrier while the user is moving within a telephone service area. Mobile phone not only provides wireless interpersonal communication, but it has now evolved into multi-media devices that allow for a host of different communication and multi-media functions. As a communication technology, mobile phones facilitate various kinds of communication through voice calls, text messages, picture messages and video messages. As media devices, mobile phones can be used for various media-related activities such as accessing news alerts and video clips or listening to music and taking pictures. As banking delivery channel it is used for mobile banking, m-wallet and other e-banking services. As record keeping tools it is used for keeping of different information, photos, write ups, books etc. Presently, cell phone use is a dominant and defining characteristic of this generation of college students and often occurs during class time, while completing homework, and while studying (Smith, Raine, & Zickuhr, 2011; Tindell & Bohlander, 2012).

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Mobile phones have become an almost essential part of daily life since their rapid growth. While in college students are supposed take on their prescribed roles as student with full concentration on their studies and free from contact with the outside world. However, the mobile phone gives room to blending students' roles with other roles thus distracting and disrupting the students' academic work. In the past when fixed telephones were the norm in colleges, there were minimum distractions and disruptions but presently with the invasion of mobile phone and the eagerness of parents to maintain contact with their wards, the device is becoming part of the classroom. This particular study will assess the impact of mobile phones in learning as they enhance students' learning in different ways.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Use of mobile technology for teaching and learning is still an emergent area for study, and more scholarly research must be conducted. This study investigates motivations of usage, common usage scenarios and the attitude towards mobile phones among undergraduate commerce students in the district of Jorhat, Assam. The author believes that the study will contribute valuable learning about the field of mobile communication to the broader academic knowledgebase. It is also believe that this study will add to the growing body of research by providing empirical information about the use of mobile phones by young people.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this case study is to examine the usage and impact of mobile phones by young commerce students between the ages of 18-25 living in Jorhat. The following are the major objectives formulated to carry out the work:

- i) To study the adoption level of mobile phone among the undergraduate commerce students
- ii) To study the purposes of use of mobile phone
- iii) To study the utilisation of mobile phone on educational enhancement

5. METHODOLOGY

Study area: The present empirical study is conducted among the undergraduate commerce students in the Jorhat district of Assam. The two colleges so selected for the study are CKB Commerce College as the only full-fledged Commerce College and JB College (Autonomous) as the first college to be offered commerce education in the district.

Population: There are almost 1300 students studying commerce in undergraduate level in those two colleges. Therefore, 1300 students are the population of our study.

Size of Sample: The sample size was determined 20% of the total population i.e. 260 students. However, questionnaires from 275 students were found duly filled up and this is the sample size of the study.

Tools used: Questionnaires is the main tool used in the study. Questionnaires have designed with the mixture of close ended and open ended questions. Few questions were also designed on five points Likert Scale with 'Strongly Agree' dictating the highest level of believe, and 'Strongly Disagree' as the highest level of disbelieve.

Collection of data: Primary data has been collected by distributing questionnaires to the students of commerce colleges offering undergraduate courses in Jorhat. Secondary information has been collected from different relevant books, journals, published reports of reliable agencies. Different websites has also been visited to collect secondary data for the study wherever found necessary.

Duration of the collection of data: Primary data have been collected during the period from January to June 2017.

Data Analysis: The collected data has been processed and analyzed by applying the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) Version-16. Descriptive analysis techniques like average, percentage, frequencies etc. have performed on the data for getting an overall structure of the sample. Tabulation and creation of pictorial presentation has also been done wherever found appropriate.

6. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is limited in the sense that it is restricted to a limited area and a limited number of respondents taken from a large population. The study area has been confined to only one district of Assam. The study is done among the undergraduate commerce students only. Moreover, this study has covered a few area of utilization of mobile phones. In addition to it, lack of awareness of the students about the impact of using mobile phone in colleges.

7. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

National Status: Chakraborty S. (2006) gives an insight into the similarities and the differences in the usage of mobile phones across two very different countries. Halder I. et al (2015), observed that the attitude of undergraduate students towards using mobile phones for educational purpose varies according to gender, medium of education and residence though the academic discipline (science or arts) does not impose any significant difference. Krithika M. and Vasantha S. (2013), stated that the development and modernization of technology has made people's lives easier and contributed positively to social well-being so far while it has also brought about some problems and threats stemming from irresponsible use of mobile phones among teens young adults.

International Status: Alderson J. E. (2012) stated that individuals use mobile phones as a crutch for both emotions and responsibility. This has positive and negative outcomes for individuals. Jollie N. Alson & Liezel V. Misagal (2016), stated that

the benefits of the actual use of Smartphones like sending messages (SMS), calling, chatting, opening documents, checking e-mails, internet browsing and downloading informative files that have shrunk the globe and erased the borders of getting information and learning. Leap A. et al (2015) stated that the cell phone is ever-present on college campuses and is frequently used in settings where learning occurs. North D. et al observed that differences in mobile phone used gender wise. They found female students showing increased mobile phone use for safety and socializing, interest in brand and trends, as well as signs of addiction. Wulystan P. (2012) et al found that majority of the students in higher education used their mobile phones for teaching and learning process. They found that most students reported to use traditional mobile learning applications including text messages and calls.

8. ADVANTAGES OF MOBILE PHONES TOWARDS THE STUDENTS

- i) **Very useful in emergency situations:** It's very clear to all that mobile phones came to this world for emergency purposes. If students have a mobile phone, then it's easy to contact anyone at their needs. Mobile phone is one of the best solutions for any emergency situations.
- ii) **Great equipment in order to improve knowledge:** Brilliant students may gain some extra knowledge and surely which is from the internet. Before the library helps the student to gain some extra knowledge and now the whole library is in the student's pocket as a mobile phone. One can search anything and get the great explanation with the help of mobile phone.
- iii) **Doubts cleared as soon as you got one:** In the early days, students waited until the next day to meet teacher or friend. But now students straightaway make a call to friend or teacher and cleared their doubts as soon as possible. If they miss one important lecture they can just phone a friend and get to know about the whole lecture.
- iv) **Get to know what happen around the world:** When we look back to early days, only aged people follow the news around the world. But nowadays the trend changes and even school student know what happening around the world. How's it changed? It is happening nothing other than mobile phones and the internet.
- v) **Adviser/Guider/Instructor/Teacher/Director:** A student having a mobile phone means that the student has everything. Early morning it works as an alarm clock. Also, it works as a reminder if we put some notes on the reminder. We don't need a calculator as long as you have a mobile phone. We can take a snapshot or download lecture slides. Or even we can record the whole lectures. Any doubts we can just Google it. We can manage our spending or receiving money with the help of money management apps. We can use the mobile phone as our personal diary.

9. DISADVANTAGES OF MOBILE PHONES TOWARDS THE STUDENTS

- i) **Playing games every time:** Nowadays lots of students hate everything other than mobile phones. They love it because they can download so many games there. Playing games every time in mobile harmful because their studies and other useful activities destroy by this exercise.
- ii) **Change their way to some unwanted things:** In this current world, mobile phones change students' habit a lot. Through mobile phones we can search lots of good stuff; meanwhile we can search lots of bad stuff as well. Nowadays almost all the students addicted to porn videos and some other porn activity websites. This is why we can see lots of student with cigarettes and drugs. This is one of the major flaws for the rise of technology.
- iii) **Sleepless nights and get tired:** When students playing games on mobile phone, they don't care about time as they concentrate fully on the game. Most of the students choose night bed time for playing, because no one would disturb them. So they play till midnight unless parents come and shout them to sleep. Some students choose the sleeping time for chatting with friends. Chatting also makes them sleep at very late.
- iv) **Disturbed other students:** Mobile phones disturbing other students in two ways. One is when there is an important lecture going on and if your mobile phone rings on that time, it will disturb the whole class. Ringing tone completely disturbs others and the lecturer. Another one is, some students want to have a mobile phone, but their parents don't allow them to keep one. Such students mentally disturbed when they see the next bench student having a mobile phone.

- v) **Reduced to spend time with family:** This is another major disadvantage of having a mobile phone by a student. Before these phones and technology, students spend plenty of time with their family. Now students spent their free time with mobile phones, either playing games or chatting with friends via mobile phones. They don't have any idea about how much family is important in their life.

10. OPINION SURVEY, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Responses collected from the respondents through questionnaires were processed using SPSS (Statistical Package in Social Sciences) Version-16. Every variables included in the questionnaires are put into the tables. Figures have been prepared with the help of windows excel.

Table 1: Types of Phones

	Frequency	Percent
Smart Phone	243	88.4
Standard Phone	32	11.6
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Table 2 Types of SIM

	Frequency	Percent
Post paid	24	8.7
Pre-paid	233	84.7
Both	18	6.5
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Maximum of 70.9 percent of students have only one cell phone whereas 29.1 percent of students are having more than one cell phone. 88.4 percent of students are having smart phones and 11.6 percent students are having normal phones. On the other hand maximum of 65.1 percent of students are using more than one SIM card. Another important thing is that maximum of 84.7 percent of students are using pre-paid SIM cards.

Table 3: Who made decision to purchase mobile

	Frequency	Percent
Self	108	39.3
Parents	161	58.5
Friends	6	2.2
Total	275	100.0

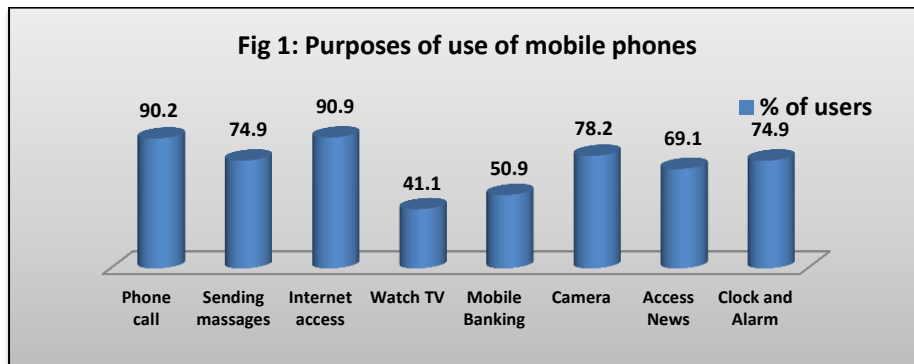
Source: Field Survey

Table 4: How long using Mobile Phone

	Frequency	Percent
From School Level	83	30.2
After HSLC	74	26.9
After HS	118	42.9
Total	275	100.0

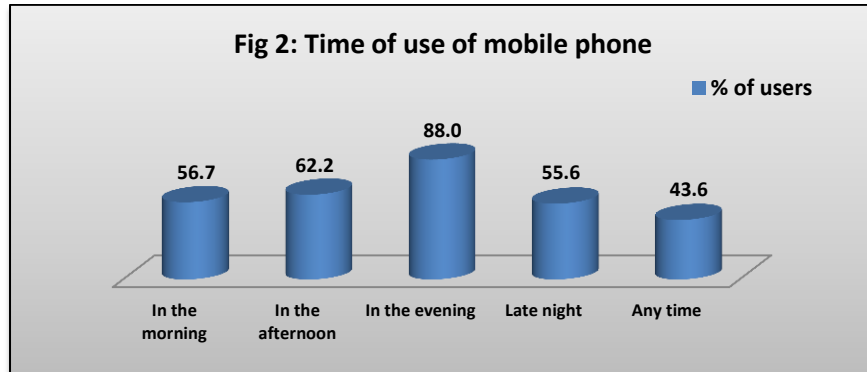
Source: Field Survey

The above table shown that 58.5 percent of students have used mobile phones according to their parents' decision and 39.3 and 2.2 percent of students purchased their mobile phones on their own and according to the advice of their friends. Most important thing is that 30.2 percent of students are using mobile phones from their school level. 26.9 percent of students use mobile phones after HSLC and 42.9 percent of students use mobile phones after passing Higher Secondary Exams. One interesting thing is that 12.4 percent of students are still using phones without net pack whereas 87.6 percent of students are using net pack.



Source: Field Survey

While going to study about the using pattern of mobile phones it is found that 90.2 percent of students use mobile for phone call, 74.9 percent of students use for sending massaging, 90.9 percent of students use for internet accessing. 41.1 percent of students use it for watching TV, 50.9 percent of students use it for mobile banking purposes, 78.2 percent of students use as camera, 69.1 percent of students use for access news and 74.9 percent of students use as clock and alarm.



Source: Field Survey

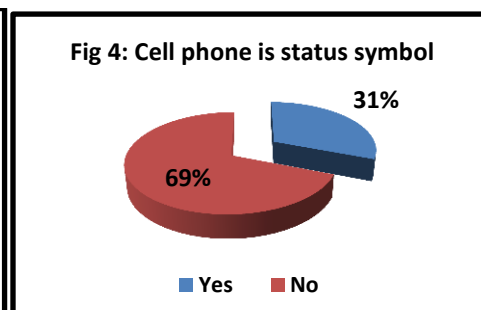
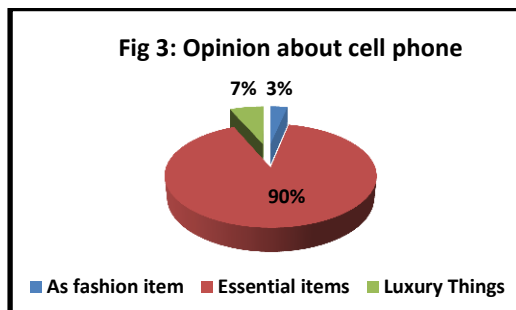
Most of the students use mobile phones during the evening time. The percentage is 88. One of the important outcomes of the study is that 55.6 percent of students use mobile phones at late night. 423.6 percent of students use mobile at any time of the day.

Table 5: Mobile phone interrupted personal time

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	100	36.4
No	175	63.6
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Another important thing coming out of the study is 'mobile phones interrupted the personnel time of the students'. 36.4 percent of students feel that mobile phones interrupt their time to share with their parents and relatives. However, 63.6 percent of students feel mobile phones do not harm personnel relationship with their parents and relatives.



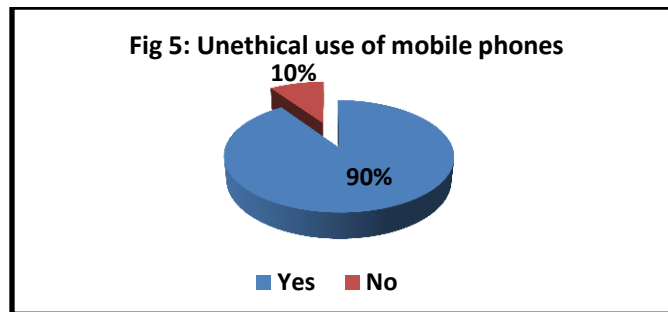
One important thing coming out of the study that maximum of 90.2 percent of students feels that mobile phone now a day is an essential item. Whereas, 3.3 percent of students thinks it as fashion and 6.5 percent of students feels it as luxury item. 30.9 percent of students think it as status symbol. 46.2 percent of students think that mobile phone is essential for making friends.

Table 6: Parents should impose rules of using phone

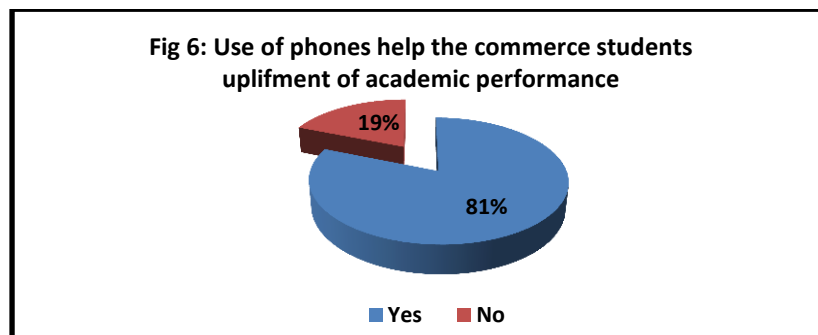
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	168	61.1
No	107	38.9
Total	275	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Maximum of 54.2 percent of students using mobile phones under the rules of their parents whereas, 45.8 percent of students use mobile phones without any restrictions from their parents. However, 61.1 percent of students feel that their parents should have rules about the use of mobile phones. Most important thing coming out of the study is that 89.8 percent of students feel the colleges should have rules regarding the use of mobile phones during college hours. Moreover, 43.6 percent of students have opinion that the government should also have rules about the use of mobile phones by the students.



96.4 percent of students carry mobile phones to the college. 65.1 percent of students switch off their mobile during the classes whereas, 34.9 percent of students do not even switch off their mobile during classes. One of the threat coming out of the study is 90.5 percent of students agree that students make use of mobile phones even for unethical purposes.



Source: Field Survey

Most important outcome of the study is that mobile phone can help the commerce students for the upliftment of their academic performance. Maximum of 81.1 percent students feel that they can get benefited by using mobile phone properly.

11. FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

❖ FINDINGS

The study could find out the following major findings which are considered to be the most important indicators for evaluation of utilization of mobile phones by undergraduate students of commerce in Jorhat district of Assam. Altogether 275 students of undergraduate level were responded their questionnaire of which 60.4 percent were boys and 39.6 percent were girl students. Out of them 64.7 percent of students live in urban and 35.3 percent of students live in village area.

- Most of students have only one cell phone majority of them is having smart phones. Maximum students are using more than one SIM card and most of them are pre-paid.
- One interesting finding is that 12.4 percent of students are still using phones without net pack whereas 87.6 percent of students are using net pack.
- Another thing found in the study that 58.5 percent of students have used mobile phones according to their parents' decision and 39.3 and 2.2 percent of students purchased their mobile phones on their own and according to the advice of their friends.
- Most important finding is that one third of students are using mobile phones from their school level.
- Students use mobile phones mostly for phone call and internet accessing. Other uses are sending messages, watching TV, mobile banking, as camera, access news and use as clock and alarm.
- Most of the students use mobile phones at the time of evening. One of the important outcomes of the study is that more than half of students use mobile phones at late night.
- Maximum students feel that mobile phone now a day is an essential item.
- Another important finding of the study is 'mobile phones interrupted the time of the students' with their parents and relatives.
- More than half of students use mobile phones under the rules of their parents whereas.
- Most of students feel that their parents should have rules about the use of mobile phones.
- Most important thing coming out of the study is that students feel the colleges should have rules regarding the use of mobile phones during college hours.
- One of the threat coming out of the study is 90.5 percent of students agree that students make use of mobile phones even for unethical purposes.
- Most important outcome of the study is that mobile phone can help the commerce students for the upliftment of their academic performance if they use proper use of it.

❖ SUGGESTIONS

- Parents should monitor their children while using mobile phones if they find something bad on them.
- Educators and administrators in higher education may wish to carefully consider policies regarding cell phone use in the classroom, laboratories, and other settings where learning occurs.
- Further study should be undertaken as to the specific extent so that Smartphone usage can be disruptive of learning processes and detrimental to studies.
- More research is needed to better understand the impact of using mobile phones in the college by undergraduate students.
- Media taking a lead role in bringing to the knowledge of the general public about the negative consequences of mobile phone usage and tips to tackle such consequences.
- Mobile phone makers and service providers researching on the social context of teenagers' mobile phone usage and then promoting products or services suitable to the research findings.

❖ CONCLUSION

The study investigates the actual use of mobile phones among college students of undergraduate level. The impact of use of mobile phone depends on the users how they make use of it. Mobile phone usage is so strongly integrated into young people's behavior that symptoms of behavioral addiction, such as cell phone usage interrupting their day-to-day activities. There is no doubt about that the benefits of the proper use of mobile phones in sending messages (SMS), calling, chatting, opening documents, checking e-mails, internet browsing and downloading informative files are tremendous. Use of mobile

phones may be beneficial to the students of undergraduate level students of commerce too if they use it properly. Although there are many benefits of using a mobile phone, there can also be negative effects on the users and the others. Lectures are disrupted when mobile phones are used at inappropriate times in the classroom. Other negative consequences of mobile phone use include addiction, manifested as over dependency, which can cause problems such as emotional stress, damaged relationships, and falling literacy. However, avoiding mobile completely is not at all good. Some person may misuse the mobile phone that is not the problem of mobile; it is the problem of the user himself.

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BIOGRAPHY:

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