

# Use of Mobile Phones in College Premises: A Case Study on Undergraduate Students in Jorhat District of Assam

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## ABSTRACT

*Mobile or cell phones or smart phones are now a days an integral part of modern telecommunications in every individual's life. Mobile phones provide multitude of features and services so much and it has become an important part and parcel of everyday modern life. Today business is next to impossible without a mobile phone. Mobile phones, as advanced technology provide the potential for the college students too and it is becoming increasingly one of the most popular information access devices 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 utilisation of mobile phones by undergraduate students in Jorhat district of Assam.*

**Keywords:** Mobile Phones, Smart Phones, Undergraduate Students, Classroom

## INTRODUCTION

A mobile phone also known as a cellular phone or simply a cell phone is a wireless handheld device that allows users to make and receive calls and to send text messages, among other features. Today's mobile phones are packed with many additional features, such as web browsers, games, cameras, video players and even navigational systems. 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).

## 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 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.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To study the adoption level of mobile phones among the undergraduate students
2. To study the purposes of use of mobile phones
3. To study the utilisation of mobile phones for educational augmentation

## METHODOLOGY

**Study area:** The present empirical study is conducted in Jorhat district of Assam. The three colleges so selected for the study are CKB Commerce College as the only full-fledged Commerce College, JB College (Autonomous) as the largest college in the district offering three streams and Bahana College as the largest college covering a good number of rural students.

**Tools used:** Questionnaires is the main tool used in the study.

**Collection of data:** Primary data has been collected by distributing questionnaires to the students of undergraduate courses in Jorhat. Secondary information has been collected from different relevant books, journals, published reports of reliable agencies.

**Size of sample:** As much as 500 questionnaires were distributed and 378 questionnaires found to be duly filled up. Hence, 378 is the sample size of the study.

**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.

## 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 female students showing increased mobile phone use for safety and socializing, interest in brand and trends, as well as signs of addiction. Wulystan P. et al (2012) found that majority of the students in higher education used their mobile phones for teaching and learning process.

## ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF MOBILE PHONES

In this current world, mobile phones are really essential for everyone's life. But, it doesn't mean that we can't live a life without a mobile phone. The following are few of the advantages and disadvantages of mobile phones for students.

### *Advantages:*

1. **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.
2. **Great equipment in order to improve knowledge:** Brilliant students may gain some extra knowledge and surely which is from the internet. One can search anything and get the great explanation with the help of mobile phone.
3. **Doubts cleared as soon as you got one:** 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.
4. **Get to know what happen around the world:** Nowadays even school student know what happening around the world. How's it changed? It is happening nothing other than mobile phones and the internet.
5. **Adviser/Guider/Instructor/Teacher/Director:** A student having a mobile phone means that the student has everything. 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.

### *Disadvantages:*

1. **Playing games every time:** Playing games every time in mobile harmful because their studies and other useful activities destroy by this exercise.
2. **Change their way to some unwanted things:** In this current world, mobile phones change students' habit a lot. 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.
3. **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.

4. **Disturbed other students:** Mobile phones disturbing other students in two ways. One is when there is an important lecture going on and if mobile phone rings on that time, it will disturb the whole class. 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.
5. **Reduced to spend time with family:** This is another major disadvantage of having a mobile phone by a student. Students spent their free time with mobile phones, either playing games or chatting with friends via mobile phones.

### 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 : Number of Cell Phones**

	Frequency	Percent
One	268	70.9
More than one	110	29.1
Total	378	100.0

Source: Field Survey

**Table 2: Types of Phones**

	Frequency	Percent
Smart Phone	334	88.4
Standard Phone	44	11.6
Total	378	100.0

Source: Field Survey

**Table 3: Number of SIM Cards**

	Frequency	Percent
One	134	35.4
More than one	244	64.6
Total	378	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 64.6 percent of students are using more than one SIM card. Another important thing is that maximum of 84.9 percent of students are using pre-paid SIM cards.

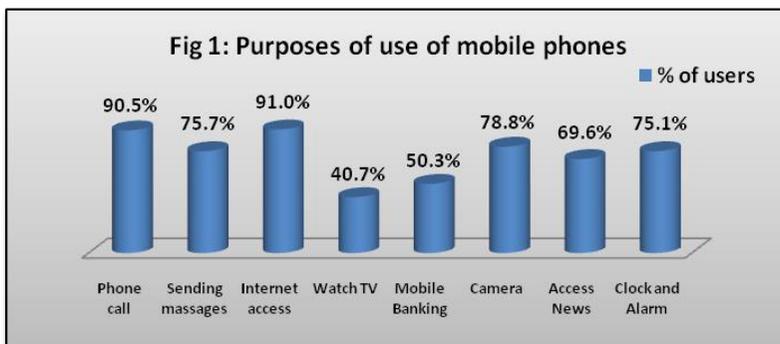
**Table 4: How long using Mobile Phone**

	Frequency	Percent
From School Level	110	29.1
After HSLC	104	27.5
After HS	164	43.4
Total	378	100.0

Source: Field Survey

The above table shown that 57.9 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 29.1 percent of students are using mobile phones from their school level. 27.5 percent of students use mobile phones after HSLC and 43.4 percent of students use mobile phones after passing Higher Secondary Exams. One interesting thing is that 12.2 percent of students are still using phones without net pack whereas 87.8 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 90.5 percent of students use mobile for phone call, 75.7 percent of students use for sending massaging, 91.0 percent of students use for internet accessing. 40.7 percent of students use it for watching TV, 50.3 percent of students use it for mobile banking purposes, 78.8 percent of students use as camera, 69.6 percent of students use for access news and 75.1 percent of students use as clock and alarm.

Table 5: Mobile phone interrupted personal time

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	134	35.4
No	244	64.6
Total	378	100.0

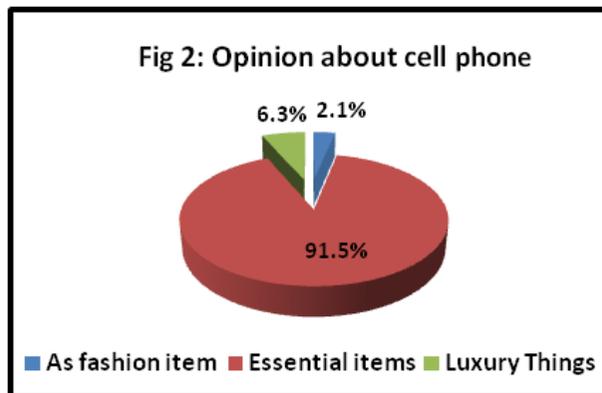
Source: Field Survey

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.

Table 6: Cell phone is essential for making friends

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	172	45.5
No	206	54.5
Total	378	100.0

Source: Field Survey



Source: Field Survey

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.

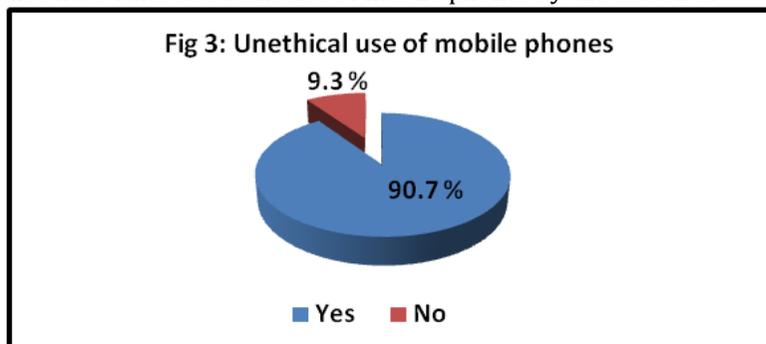
**Table 7: Parents should impose rules of using phone**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	231	61.1
No	147	38.9
Total	378	100.0

**Table 8: Agree with having rules in the college**

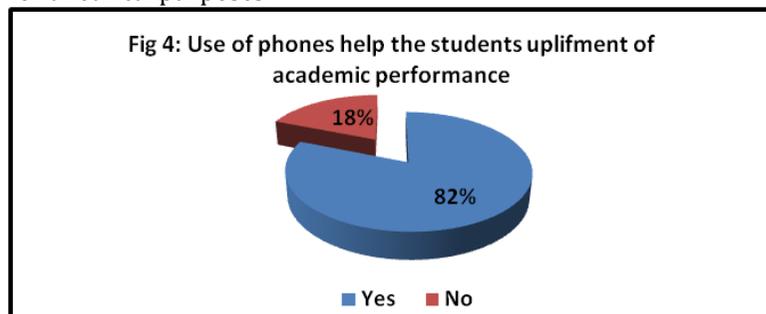
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	340	89.9
No	38	10.1
Total	378	100.0

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.



**Source: Field Survey**

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.

**FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS****❖ FINDINGS:**

The various findings have been arrived at after doing the analysis and interpretation of the collected data. 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 in Jorhat district of Assam. This study finds that maximum students are having smart phones and they use more than one SIM card. Most of the students are using pre-paid SIM cards. About one third of students are using mobile phones from their school level. Students use mobile phones for phone call, sending massaging, for internet accessing, for watching TV, for mobile banking purposes, use as camera, for access news and use as clock and alarm. More than half of students use mobile phones at late night. Almost all the students think mobile phone as an essential item. They feel 'mobile phones interrupted the personnel time. More than half of students use mobile phones under the rules of their parents. They feel parents as well as the colleges should have rules about the use of mobile phones. One of the threat coming out of the study is 90.7 percent of students agree that students make use of mobile phones even for unethical purposes. Most students have opinion that mobile should not be used while driving. Most important outcome of the study is that mobile phone can help the students for the upliftment of their academic performance.

**❖ SUGGESTIONS**

- Parents should monitor their children while using mobile phones if they find something bad on them.
- More research is needed to better understand the impact of using mobile phones in the college by undergraduate students.
- 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 when can Smartphone usage can be disruptive of learning processes and detrimental to studies.
- 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 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. 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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