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PROFILE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS REGARDING MOBILE PHONE USAGE – A STUDY OF NAVSARI CITY COLLEGES

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Abstract:

Cell phones are indispensable part of student's life be it for knowledge, information gathering, communication, staying connected to social media or for games and fun. College students form a considerable part of the cell phone market place. This study tries to study the behaviour and preferences of students regarding their mobile phone usage. It tries to extract information viz. brand preferences, time spent on various features of a cell phone, favourite feature, service provider preference, monthly expenses, and usage during lectures in classrooms. These findings could give a useful insight to various stakeholders like mobile service providers, college management, cell phone companies and parents.

KEY WORDS:

Cell Phone Usage, Preferences, College Students, Behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Cell phones are now here to stay. Living without a cell phone is almost inconceivable as far as college student's life is concerned. This gadget has an all round usage, be it as a communication device, as a social media machines, as camera, as gaming systems, as time-fillers or boredom killers. Not being instantly connected at all times, whether on campus, in a bus, at home, at the movies or in a restaurant, is a major source of anxiety. Cell phones have been strikingly evolving with complex technologies and the rate at which this is growing now is more than ever. Variety of cell phones with added features are flooded in the market place at an increasing rate. "On the quad, in class, at the dining hall—take a look around any of these campus haunts and you'll likely see students with their heads down, focused intently on their phones. Phones allow students to be constantly connected. Friends who live together still text all day and post on each other's Facebook walls; students get emails from professors while walking to class. Gone are the days when students would pull out a book or newspaper while waiting for the bus. Even when there's no pressing reason, students whip out their phones at any spare moment. The devices do everything—especially killing time, whether students are waiting in line to get lunch or riding the bus to their next class. And if one student takes out their phone, odds are good that everyone else around will fish theirs out of their pockets shortly thereafter. It may seem like mobile phone-mania, but at the end of the day, students use these devices to keep afloat at school. Between juggling class, work, friends, and family, students use their phones to stay in the loop and express themselves" (Nahorniak, 2010). It is, thus, quite obvious to note that college students have a high affinity towards gadgets like cell phones. Since college students compose a considerable part of the market for cell phones, the newer designs come with characteristics that are most desired by them and that fit their needs. This study, consequently, analyses the behaviour and preferences of the students regarding cell phone usage.

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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Chakraborty S. (2006) mobile phones are one of the most common information access devices with almost 31% of the global population having access. In his exploratory study, the author investigated usage patterns of, and attitude about, cell phones among university students in a mature market (United States) and a rapidly growing new market (India) by surveying students in each country. Key findings from the study included similarities in the usage of phones to communicate with others and in the perception of mobile phone usage in public settings, and differences in the use of text messaging and opinions regarding driving and mobile phone usage. Overall these results suggest students in India use mobile phones differently from their American counterparts. In a developing market like India, mobile phones may be the primary and only phone to which students have access. Aoki and Downes (2004) studied the intrinsic motivations for the adoption of mobile phones and the behavioral characteristics of their usage in the context of US students. This study extends the previous research by including a cross-cultural comparison of university students in the United States and India. Knowing the intrinsic motivation for adopting technology may help in gaining a better understanding of why a technology is used a certain way by a particular group of people. The behavioral characteristics included usage data such as length of cell phone use, typical time of cell phone use, average number of calls received/sent, typical location of cell phone use, use and number of text messages. Mahajan & Khurana (2011) mobile phone usage patterns amongst Delhi Consumer. Mobile phones are one of the most common information access devices with almost 31% of the global population having access. This exploratory study investigated usage patterns of, and attitude about, cell phones among Delhi Consumer in a mature market and a rapidly growing new market (India) by surveying students in each country. Key findings from the study include similarities in the usage of phones to communicate with others and in the perception of mobile phone usage in public settings and differences in the use of text messaging and opinions regarding driving and mobile phone usage. Overall these results suggest consumer of Delhi use mobile phones differently from their counterparts. In a developing market like India, mobile phones may be the primary and only phone to which everyone has access. Weilenmann, A., & Larsson, C. (2001) conducted field studies of public use of mobile phones among teenagers in Sweden. Their study shed light on how the mobile phone has come to be used as a tool for local social interaction, rather than merely as a device for communication with dislocated others. Their observations pointed towards the collaborative nature of mobile phone use. The researchers examined how phones were shared and how their field data could be of use when designing new mobile technology and services for the youth. Shanti & Prakash (2013) conducted a study in order to determine the effects of mobile phone on the performance of students at college level. The paper also seeks out the usage patterns of mobile phones as an information access device with respect to these features. The study hopes to address a variety of questions: What are the most common uses of mobile phones amongst the students, its impact on their career and general guidelines and policy to the students, parents and teachers on cell phone use. As reported by Barack L. (2013), researchers at the University of Haifa in Israel, focuses on 9–12th grade students at three different high schools. Out of the 591 students surveyed, a whopping 95 percent said they regularly sent emails or texts during classroom lessons, while 94 percent said they browsed file-sharing sites or social media sites like Facebook. Listening to music is another popular classroom activity, according to 93 percent of students, while 91 percent admitted to actually talking on their phones during class. Overall, 60 percent of students use their cell phones in class, with 10th graders the most aggressive cell phone users and 12th graders picking up their phones the least, according to the survey.

3. METHODOLOGY

Objective: The primary objective of this study is:

1. To know the preferences of students regarding use of mobile phones.
2. To study the usage pattern of students regarding mobile phones.

Sample Unit: College students of Navsari City

Sample Size: 200 Respondents

Sampling Method: Non-probability sampling – Judgmental and Convenience methods

Field area: Navsari City

Research Instrument: The study is of descriptive type and the instrument used to measure the objectives is questionnaire.

Sample Distribution: Stream-wise and Income-wise as shown in the tables below;

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Table 1: Streams of courses

Streams	% Users
Commerce	45%
Science	12%
Management	18%
Arts	16%
Engineering	09%

Table 2: Household income

Household income (p.m.)	% respondents
Less Than 15000	39%
15001-30000	22%
30001-45000	18%
45001-60000	14%
More Than 60000	07%

4. DATAANALYSIS & RESULTS

The data collected and analysed is presented in a tabular form below;

Table 3: Cell phone brand preference among students

Brand Name	Respondents (%)
Samsung	36
Nokia	22
Sony Ericson	11
Apple	08
Black Berry	04
Other(Specify)	19

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Table 4: Time spent on different features

Features/Service	Don't Use It (%)	Less Than 30 Min (%)	From 30 Min To 1 hr (%)	From 1 Hr To 2 hrs(%)
Camera	27	38	30	05
Internet Browsing	23	41	26	10
Gaming	19	31	37	13
Text Messaging	18	24	38	20
Phone Calls	00	40	32	28
Music/Radio	25	36	32	07
Other Apps	47	18	25	10

Table 5: Favourite feature in a mobile phone

Features	Respondents (%)
Camera	12
Text Messaging	14
Application	23
Internet Browsing	29
Gaming	17
Other	05

Table 6: Number of mobile service provider used

Use Of Service Provider	Respondents (%)
One	41
Two	34
Three	18
Four Or More	07

Table 7: Reasons for service provider switchover

Reasons	Respondents (%)
Promotional Schemes	67
VAS/ VAS Tariff	45
3G/2G	73
Service Area Of Network	79
Call Tariff	83
CUG	35

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Table 8: Number of cell phones used at a time

No. of Cell Phones	Respondents (%)
One	52
Two	34
Three	09
Four Or More	05

Table 9: Mode of payment

Mode Of Payment	Respondents (%)
Pre Paid	92
Post Paid	08

Table 10: Expenses on cell phone usage

Expense Per Month (Rs)	Respondents (%)
LESS THAN 200	63
200-400	21
400-600	12
MORE THAN 600	08

Table 11: Usage of cell phones during lectures

Responses	Respondents (%)
Yes	32
No	68

5. FINDINGS

The leading brand mostly preferred and used is Samsung, while Blackberry and Apple users are least. Majority respondents mostly use their cell phone for call, text, gaming and browsing usage whereas use of camera, music and other apps stand at lower level of use. Most favourite feature in cell phone is internet browsing and applications. Mostly respondents use single service provider at a time. The maximum respondents changes service provider due to higher rates in call tariff, weak network coverage and unavailability of 2G/3G facility. Approximately, 52% respondents prefer using one phone at a time. Majority of respondents use prepaid mode of payment for their cell phones. Majority of the respondents spend approximately Rs 200/month. 32% respondents are found to use cell phones during lectures in classroom.

6. CONCLUSION

Cell phones play an integral role in a college student's life. It is indispensable nowadays, especially among the youth. Cell phone usage among students, hence, amounts to larger attention. This study, consequently, studied the preferences and usage pattern of college students regarding cell phones. Among many brands available in the market, the top preferred brand is Samsung. Majority of respondents happen to use their cell phones for calling, texting, gaming and browsing purpose. Respondents are mostly found using single service provider at a time. Service provider switchover behaviour of the respondents is largely due to call tariff structure, network coverage problems and internet speed.

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