

Whether Cell Phone Is a Necessity or a Luxurious Item?

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Abstract: Fundamental purpose of the study was to know about whether cell phone is a necessary or a luxurious item. Research was also conducted to explore the knowledge about different features, uses & benefits associated with mobiles. At the same time some drawbacks of mobiles were also needed to be explored through this study. Research was carried out on 250 students & teachers of 3 famous universities of Lahore. Respondents were selected randomly. Sample included respondents having different ages and qualifications. After data analysis & interpretation about the relevant topic, researchers have found that Cell phone is the best communication device and a crucial information management tool. Regardless of above mentioned beneficial facts, mobiles have also certain problematic and destructive aspects as frequent use of mobile phone may also cause anxiety & emotional stress and can also have serious impacts on kids' studies. Finally conclusion of our research is that cell phone has so many valuable aspects & people feel so incomplete without cell phone that it has become a necessity of their lives but on the other hand, mobile has become luxurious item as well because people consider it a status symbol now a days.

Key words: Cell phone • Different features • Best communication • Necessity

INTRODUCTION

There was a time when the world was deprived of technological revolutions. No communication mean was available. People had to wait a lot to know about information regarding their dear ones. Even pigeons were used as communication means. After that telegrams or letters were used by the people to communicate with each other.

With the passage of time technological innovations took place. Latest communication means were developed. Improved technological means made it possible for the people to keep in touch with each other from thousands of miles away. Landline and such similar devices were introduced for communication purposes. In 19th century fixed telephone was invented but "portable" cell phone was a quick revolution in the series of technological development. A tremendous expansion can be seen into the mobile phone technology. "1st official cell phone was used in 1946 by Swedish Mobile company and 1st strictly calling "portable cell phone" was created by Motorola company in 1983". Cell phone is an invention of such advancements.

Cell phone made huge comforts in our lives. It seems that cell phone is a great blessing in the current era. It has taken so much crucial place in our lives that we can't imagine to live with out it. Almost every aspect of our daily life is dependent upon it. It was considered a luxury item some time ago, but now it is considered to be part and parcel of every walk of life [1]. In present era cell phone has become a necessity item that people of current generation can't forget while leaving their homes. We cannot at all challenge the significance of these phones and the comforts that they carry into our lives.

One the other hand cell phone is proved to be luxurious item. No doubt it was invented to fulfill the needs of the people. In fact the use or misuse of any technological item proves it to be a necessity or accessory. The use of cell phone as an accessory item is too much common especially in young people. People use it as a fun. They tease others through wrong messages or trunk calls. Even they used to keep more than one phone as fashion symbol. Cell phones with latest specifications are used by people, even though they didn't have any need of them.

The cell phone becomes a perfect accessory when a person seeks to gain more than what is really desired. A person can give the justification regarding the requirement of cell phone but demanding latest features and expensive models that are not helpful in the living pattern is a complete accessory. Possessing a cell phone should be only for sensible motives [2].

Literature Review: Cell Phone is not the invention of modern age; its history goes back in 1947, when the first phone was developed in the shape of Car Mobile Phone. Bell Laboratories are considered the originators of cellular phone who gave the primary theory on it with authorization of FCC (Federal Communication Commission). This theory included everything regarding dissemination of messages through airwaves. In 1973 basic call on moveable cell phone was made by ex general manager of Motorola, Mr. Martin Copper.

Cell phones are the major element of telecommunication sector and getting more and more popularity in all age groups. Cellular phone is such a revolutionary innovation that boosts up the communication industry and is still the center of attention of people and is not effected by any other invention [2].

Regular use of cellular phones make people addicted to such extent that without it they feel there is something missing. It is considered to be the necessity of life that people keep it with them far and wide [3]. It is major source of connection with their fellow beings [4]. And feel cut off from others without it [5-8].

Various characteristics of cell phone have been presented by many researchers, such as medium of building new relations and maintaining the older ones [5]. It is also stated that having the mobile phone with you creates the sense of protection in state of emergency [10-12]. Access, feasibility and mobility are the amenities offered by cell phone that is used by youngsters for the fulfillment of social relations [13]. The feature mobility offered by mobile phones facilitates parents to be informed regarding the activities of their children while being busy in their professional lives [14-15]. Cell phone are also useful in academic activities as SMS (short messaging service) increase interaction among students and this directs towards improved learning even in the class lectures [16]. Cell phones make it possible for students to be connected with their families and to keep them informed regarding their studies, health and experiences and are a source of getting psychic moral support from family members [17]. Productivity is enhanced by effective communication and means of

communication among family members, contemporaries and peer groups are revolutionized by use of cell phones [18]. Teen agers are much conscious about their deference among their friends and peer groups and use cell phone as a mean to obtain that recognition [19].

Energy and time is saved by usage of mobile phone as it is possible for anyone to make contact with certain person at certain time. By using cell phone technology a person can be in touch with his family and friends even at the road. Surely, its use depends upon the routine of person that he have. In current age of time lifestyle heavily depends upon technology and without having updated technology, to keep with the pace of progressive and productive life is much more difficult [2]. In India mobile phone is not an accessory and considered to be attached only to rich community. It is changing the mode of running business in the countryside where even basic necessities were considered as a luxury. It is adopted by the people with fewer earnings as medium of expanding their business.

When the cell phone turned into a luxury? This takes place only when one hunts for it more than its actual requirement. One can hardly give justification for sophisticated features and ostentatious models as a mean of fulfilling social needs. Possession of mobile phone must be for rational basis [2].

In spite of above mentioned advantageous factors of cellular phone, certain problematic and destructive aspects are also highlighted by many researchers, as excessive use of mobile phone leads to anxiety, damaged relations, spendthrift and emotional stress among youngsters [20-23]. But it is founded by Matthews [15] that on average five calls per day are made by youngsters and 85% of them used SMS (short messaging service). Serious psychological, physical, educational and social hazards are result of excessive use of cell phone. A link has been observed between criminal activities and extreme use of mobile phone such as use of narcotics, alcohol fighting and theft [18]. As far as academic connotations are concerned, many research studies founded that students do not stop using cell phones even in classrooms during the lecture [24]. Safety problems are increasing day by day specifically in youngsters because they continue to use cell phones while driving [25].

Use of cell phone is increasing day by day and reached to the extent that youngsters have become so addicted that they don't feel any hesitation while using it at the places where its usage is banned, for instance hospitals, petrol stations and planes [20-26]. Financial indebtness of teenagers is also result of undue usage of

mobile phones (Griffiths and Renwick, 2003). In 2003, a study conducted by Aoki & Downes [3] on U.S students and concluded that majority of students are habitual of making phone calls at night which result in sleeplessness. It is also established that adolescents want to in contact with their fellows dreadfully [27]. According to Warner [28] youngsters want to be in touch with their friends almost all the time and for this purpose they practice (SMS) short messaging service. Thus it is requirement of the time to make the people especially be youth fully aware regarding menaces instigated by extreme use of cell phones [29].

Research Methodology: Mobile Phone is the amazing electronic device which can perform multifunction for its customers. Life seems to be impractical without it. Mobile phone is also an important element of the telecommunication sector. Study was conducted on educational institutions of Lahore. 250 students & teachers were selected from three famous universities of Lahore i.e. University of Punjab, Lahore College for Women University and University of Engineering & Technology. Respondents were selected randomly for investigation. For accurate results and by taking into consideration the biasness aspect, convenient sampling was used as sampling technique because it removes biasness from results. As primary data source, questionnaires were used. Close ended question were asked and five-point likert scale starting from 1 "Strongly Disagree" to 5 "Strongly Agree" was used. As Secondary data source, lot of books, research papers & websites were consulted. 250 questionnaires were distributed in above mentioned universities and 200 filled questionnaires were collected for further research. So, response rate was 80%. Data from filled questionnaires was recorded in SPSS (Sophisticated Package for Social Sciences) and tables & charts were obtained. For data analysis purpose, frequencies and percentages were used. Data analysis leads to the findings, discussion & then final conclusion.

Findings: Out of 200 respondents, 34% were males & 67% were females. 4% respondents were having ages between 15-20 years, 68% were from 20-25 years of age bracket while 29% were more than 25 years old. 4% respondents were having qualification equivalent to intermediate, 76% were bachelors, 10% were masters & 11% were above masters qualified. 64% respondents purchase cell phone because it is helpful for personal information management. 62% respondents currently own mobile of Nokia

Company. According to 74% respondents, the best part of their cells is that they are the best communication devices. 44% respondents change their mobile phones due to technological obsolesce. 44% respondents are satisfied from their mobile phone service providers because their cells are easy to use. 89% respondents said that today's cell phone has become a necessity. 29% respondents agreed with that life is no more possible without cell phones. 54% respondents were of the view that mobiles can be well thought-out as a status symbol now a day. 89% respondents claimed that cell phones are indispensable piece of technology in today's age. 31% respondents declared that cell phone is used to contact people only in critical situations. 84% respondents stated that cell phone is used for communication through text messaging. 53% respondents agreed with that "Smart Phones" with internet and various other functions are necessary when owning a cell phone. 77% respondents claimed that presence of many cell phone companies make selection of a company more difficult. Only 28% respondents stated that to save time, it is better approach to use black & white cell phone instead of colored one. 89% respondents were of the view that mobile usage should be limited for kids up to specific age range. 50% respondent said that s a cell phone permits them to use their time efficiently. 43% respondents claimed that using they use their cell phones without thinking. 83% respondents declared that cell phone helps them to keep in touch with their friends. 63% respondents were of the view that they feel incomplete without their mobiles. Only 32% respondents admitted that they use their cell phones without keeping in mind the affordability factor.

DISCUSSION

Cell phone is the best communication device as it helps its users to keep in touch with their loved ones very economically specially through text messaging. It is also an important tool for managing personal information in a well efficient manner. No doubt, mobile is a necessary piece of technology & in fact life is considered to be impossible without it in today's era but mostly people don't use it to contact others in emergency cases only instead it has become a status symbol for many people now a days. That's why people want to have "Smart Phones" with internet capabilities and various other applications instead of just a cell phone. There are various mobile phone companies available in market like Black Berry, Samsung, Nokia, Motorola etc which really confuse the customers to choose the best one but mostly

customers prefer to purchase a mobile of Nokia Company because they are easy to use & people always want to have a "User Friendly" cell phone. Besides various benefits of mobile phone like communication device, information management tool, essential piece of technology, it can have adverse effects on children as they ignore their studies while using cells very frequently. At the same time mobiles with internet facility can have serious impact on a child personality as internet contains immoral contents as well along with valuable information. So, there should be restriction on mobile usage for kids of specific age group.

Limitations: Research was carried out on students & teachers level only. Selecting businessmen & other professionals as respondents may give different results. Due to limited resources, this research study is restricted to students & teachers of Lahore College for Women University, Punjab University & University of Engineering & Technology only. Findings of the research are confined to the answers given by the respondents. For primary data collection purpose, only structured questionnaires were used. Sample size selected for study was small.

CONCLUSION

Most of our respondents were female students & having qualification equivalent to bachelors. Most of the respondents were from the age range of 20 to 25 years. Most important reason of buying a cell phone is that it is very important tool for managing personal information. People mostly prefer to have a mobile of Nokia Company. Mobiles are the best communication devices. People switch from one cell phone Company to another company due to technological obsolesce. Most of the people want to have user friendly mobile phones. Now a day, it has become a status symbol to have a mobile phone. Using mobile having black & white display instead of colored one does not mean to save time. Restriction should be imposed on mobile usage for children up to particular age bracket. Mostly people keep in mind the affordability factor while using cell phones.

Recommendations: Large sample size should be selected because small sample may sometimes hide many valuable facts & aspects about the research topic. For providing more valuable information, interviews of experts and surveys should also be conducted. Research can also be

carried out on mobile phone users by selecting respondents related to different educational institutions other than taken in this study. A comprehensive & comparative study can also be carried out on benefits & harms of different mobile phone companies which might be very helpful for upcoming mobile companies in designing their mobiles.

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