

## Impact and Utilization of Smartphone among the Rural People: A Sociological Study

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### Abstract

*In world of technology where country moves towards the digital world put a great impact on the people of a country. Smartphones' rising penetration in rural areas has resulted in significant changes in several sectors of rural life, including education, healthcare, agriculture, and socioeconomic development. Smartphone use in rural India has increased access to previously unavailable or difficult-to-obtain information and services. Smartphones have revolutionised rural education by providing students with access to online educational resources, tutorials, and even virtual classrooms. This has helped to close the education gap between rural and urban communities. The research paper put an effort to find out the impact and utilization of smartphones in rural areas where people usually prefer the traditional way of communication etc.*

**Keywords:** Information and Communication, Technology, Smartphone, Socio-economic Development, Mobile Applications, Virtual Classroom.

### Introduction

The word technology is formed of two Greek words one is tekne that means art, skill, technical and another word is logos which means knowledge. So, the definition of technology is the set of experience, knowledge, skill and techniques with the help of which humans change, use environment and transform to make tools, products, machines that meet out his/her needs. The definition for mobile is that "it is a wireless handheld device that allows users to make calls and receive calls and to send text messages, among other features. In earlier, there are only phones that have features of only doing calls and messages but with the passage of time and introduction of technology the mobile phones got modified and nowadays there are many different types of smartphones are available in the market with highly advanced features that help people in many different ways and the quality of the product also provides a variety of smartphones in the market for the people.

History of mobile communication Mobile communication is not less than a magic for our ancestors which was started in 1895 as a telegraph by Marconi. There are mainly three types of wireless communication (History of Mobile Communication): - a) Pioneer era (till 1920) b) Pre cellular era (1920-1979) c) Cellular era (beyond 1979) The first mobile phone system was launched by Bell in St. Louis, USA in 1946. The first mobile used a single high-power transmitter with analog frequency modulation techniques to cover up 50 miles approximately. To eradicate the problem of coverage Bell lab introduced the principle of cellular. Then there is an evolutionary series of services started from 1G to 5G (1G-2G-3G4G-5G .....). Each generation provides better and better services to the people and always eradicate the problem of the previous one. The GSM is a standard of European standard which had addressed many problems related to compatibility especially with the development of digital radio technology. The first commercial GSM system was launched in 1991 (History of Mobile Communication).

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Dramatically mobilizing due to the use of information technology mainly mobile phones technology in social life as well as the working environment. According to Chatterjee and Sarkar extend mobility into five dimension-a) Intrinsic nature (seamless, temporal, spatial and contextual) b) Purpose (availability of information and need for social inclusion) c) Modalities (traveling, wandering and visiting) d) Physical manifestation (mobility of users, devices and services) e) Implications (the effects of mobility) The mobile technology got attention, importance and popularity due to applications in mobile, mobile payments for different purposes, the net banking through phones and electronic procurement application systems by using or go through mobile phones and laptops (Looi, 2009).

The concept of anytime and anywhere is directly related to the two main characteristics of mobile wireless technology -mobility and reachability respectively. With the help of wireless network users can take services and use network information anytime and anywhere. E.g. nowadays some public places give an internet facility for the public like at the railway station, airport, parks etc where one can easily exceed the internet and got information and do it another work. The mobile also leads to live people on individual life without the interference of other people. With having a mobile phone one can easily spend his/her time if there is no one. But the habit of using mobile is increased so much that even one cannot live without a phone for a few hours. The internet use on mobile is very useful while traveling, visiting and going to some new area to know the location of what we are searching for or needed.

Nihanth, Jain (2019) in their report they first talked about the advantages of smartphone and then they do comparatively study about the advantages and disadvantages at different places like school, at the time of driving, in education and workplaces, etc. They told that texting while driving is very dangerous and leads to severe road accidents. They said that brain activity is reduced by 37% if someone use the mobile while driving. Then they provide some data that 50% of young between age 18-24 and 20% of adults are using phones while they drive a vehicle and 80% of the road accidents are due to texting while driving. Same the mobile distracts the study and disturb the classroom when it rings during the class lecture is going on. The data provided by authors are that 41% of students are affected by the mobile during their studies. According to the 2008 report, an average worker spends around 40 minutes per week on mobile. And this will lead to a decrease in 38% of the productivity of the workers. Naser, Elsobeihi (2017) study among the 120 students of Al-Azhar students, and an analysis of previously conducted studies, he concluded that the technology is the main reason for the reduction in the face to face interaction between the family members and friends. The main reason they told of all these are the people engaged more and more on mobile, internet and technology also provide a vast space or platform to the different peoples to interact with known, unknown in a better way and make each other comfortable for communication. They also mention for the majority the technology is responsible for the degradation of their quality of communication. In last, they concluded that due to technology the face to face communication is decreased both in quality and quantity. Gladden (2016) the main problem that one is facing after using smartphones is face to face conversations. He also discusses that people likely to miscommunicate and further, misunderstand information's through the use of cell phones. He finds a significant relationship between social needs and smartphone dependence (sapacz et. al, 2015). He also discussed the social anxiety and loneliness as two characteristics that are negatively correlated with smartphone usage. It also talks about the dependence of smartphones, social stress. as per study in computers in human behavior (sapacz et. al, 2015) there is inbuilding of a habit to check smartphone unintentionally at random, the wrong times. Most affecting being are of age group 18-30 years old by the smartphones. 2. Younger

individuals spend more time on the phone than older ones. 3. The rise in health-related issues and loneliness nature of people increases as there is no face to face relationship.

## **Mobile Phones in India**

Watkins, Kitner, Mehta (2012) mainly concerned with the comparative study between rural and urban sites in India. One study is based on a middle-class urban user in Mumbai and Belgaum. Another study is based on a station which is located in the rural Bundelkhand region in Madhya Pradesh. Rao (2011) talks about different aspects related to the internet and mobiles and some others. The main argument she showed in her article is the reports from two different forums. The one is a BBC news that “a study from the London business school in 2005 concluded that an increase of 10 mobiles per 100 people in a developing countries in Africa would increase GDP growth by 0.6%”(www.comviva.com/media/news. Bbc.pdf). report that was conducted by the Statista research department in 2018. Here it is also imagined that the increase in smartphone users is increasing day by day. So, the department conducted the report in 2018 so after 2018 till 2022 all the information on the smartphone users is imaginary. t the percentage in 2022 is about 36.2%. The bar diagram shows that there is a regular increase in the percentage of users from 2017 to 2022. Before 2017 from 2014 to 2016 there is an increase in percentage and then it goes down in 2017 and after that, there is much increase in the users of the smartphone. Diwanji (2019) the report shows that the number of users of mobile phones is increasing year by year and the maximum increase in the year from 2016to 2017 where it is around 80 million people increased at a rapid rate. Then the average is around 30 million per year increase from 2015 to 2023. So, the bar diagram clearly shows that the number is still increasing and it is going to increase in the upcoming years.

## **Impact of Mobile Phones on Rural Consumers in India**

Ravi and Gopal (2017) the percentage of mobile subscribers in 2017 is 57.02 in rural India and 172.28 in urban in Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Report (TRAI report). Tele density is determined by the purchasing power of people the mobile phones in rural are increased by a storm. Mobile phones can provide rural people with need-based and user-centric information and services at an affordable price. The paper analyses the impact of mobile phone usage on the livelihood of rural people in India. According to the study it comes out that by 2030, the possession of smartphones will exceed color television. By the study of TRAI report July 2017, the subscribers in India of mobile 1204.98 million whereas in urban 697.06 million and rural is 507.92 million. The tele density increased to 93.61% in India. Mainly the rural tele density has increased to 57.55%. The subscription of wireless has increased to 676.65 in urban and 504.18 million in rural. According to NSSO data India spend 25.33% of its income on mobiles and followed by beauty services at 11.07 % and other services. The Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) maximum spends went to communication and connectivity of Rs 36.35 in rural and Rs 102.46 in urban areas. Mobile phone only means to gain access to the internet and with smartphones taking over desktop. newspaper (The Finance Express) report (2017) the writer said that - The mobile radio in 2013 made waves almost all the globe which includes Hindustan Unilever's (HUL), kan khajure tesan(kkt) mainly in the region of Bihar and Jharkhand. Kkt provides fully entertainment people on a specific given number. As per Ambika Sharma (pulp strategy MD and founder) said that rural markets in India account for 60 percent of new mobile subscription growth. This article is mainly conducted in the two states one Bihar and the other one is Jharkhand. This shows that the report is mainly conducted on the economically weaker states and to know how the poor states are managing themselves to keep standing himself with the rapid change or development that is going on. Rathee (2018) A Newspaper (Business Standard news) Report with title Next Wave of Growth in Mobile Internet to come from Rural India: Study -the report is from rural background. rural areas show

growth over 15 percent as compared to last year. The user under 27-year age 57 percent who use mobile. According to the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and Kantar, Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB), 59 percent users, urban India goes slowdown. But in rural growth estimated to reach 478 million by that year. The report said the feature of mobile is the main point through which people get attracted. Around 46 percent of younger in urban and 57 percent in rural are using mobile internet.

## **Field of Study and Research Methodology**

The present study is deals with the village Mandhana is situated in the tehsil Narnaul district Mahendergarh of Haryana. The village is situated around 8k.m. from the Narnaul. The life of the people of the village is simple and everyone is busy in its life. The village have a diversity of caste in which six caste groups are living. The dominant caste group is the Ahir (OBC) in the village followed by chamar (SC) and then the other caste and there is only one house of the bhangi caste. The income source of most of the people is agriculture and there is a good number of peoples in government jobs also. The village has 10 army persons. The percentage of female literacy i.e. 63% is very less as compared to male i.e. 94% approx. which so somehow male dominancy in the village. In the total population of 3327 people this village has also connected with other highways. The village has one primary, two middle school. Village also has a Primary Health Centre (PHC). The village has its water supply well for the whole village and the drinking water is reached through a pipeline that is spread in the whole village without any cost. There is a canal also passes through the village that is often used for irrigation facilities.

## **Research Methodology**

The present study took about 1% of the population size as a sample for the research. The population of the village is 3327. The sample size is 35 which approx. In 1% of the population and 35 sample size, there is 14 female and 21 males. Here is the ratio of male to female is 3:2 and in each group, there is the same ratio of 3:2 to male to female. The present study research/ fieldwork is based on a semi-structured questionnaire that has been prepared under the guidance of the supervisor. By taking the questionnaire researcher conducted his fieldwork and reached to a better conclusion. In the present study, researcher take both male and female as its respondents as a researcher want to or go through the view of both the gender. Researcher makes his study more reliable. By taking one gender may be the findings got diverted or it may be a specific gender centric either male or female and that is not good for research. The data that the researcher collected through makes some sense and provides some useful information.

## **Data analysis**

The smartphone become the part of life of people. In today's world where individuality and private space play an important role in this condition, the smartphone plays an important role in the life of people. They tried to engage themselves as long as they can. Everyone has a pattern and then there are internal locks on the application so that no one reached to their life. According to data 64% of the respondents who used smartphone for more than 4 hours a day. They told it will go high on some days but regularly they used 6-7 hours a day. 15% of the respondents use 2-4 hours a day and 21% of respondents said that they used smartphones less than 2 hours. The reason behind spending more hours on smartphone is mainly two reasons some of respondents play online games like Pubg, Ludo, and Movies etc. so they doesn't look towards time and keep playing but many school going and college going respondents are taking online classes so it take long hours to stay on smartphone

Table 1: Number of Smartphones in Respondents Family

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Sr. no	Number of smartphones in family	Numbers of respondents	Percentage
1	Only 1	5	14.28
2	2-3	20	57.14
3	4-6	8	22.85
4	More than 6	2	5.71
	Total	35	100

The data shows 14.28% of respondent's family have only one smartphone in the family, 57.14% of the respondents have 2 to 3 smartphones in their family, 22.85% have 4 to 6 smartphones in their family and 5.71% of the respondents have more than 6 smartphones in their family. The number of smartphones not exact but somehow shows the number of members in the family as most of the family are nuclear so every individual has its smartphone in the family. The range of 2 to 3 smartphone has the highest percentage and the range of more than 6 smartphones in the family is the lowest one. As the number of smartphone by per person is based on the economic status of family if family have better income then it afford but mostly are farmers and agriculture is the main occupation so they manage 2-3 phone in a family but those having government job have more phones.

Table 2: Applications used by the Respondents

Sr no	Applications used	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Facebook	5	14.28
2	Youtube	18	51.42
3	Tik-tok	6	17.14
4	Instagram	6	17.14
	Total	35	100

The study excludes WhatsApp as this application is used by all the respondents. The respondents who used Instagram and Tik-Tok are the same that is 17.14% each. The most used application among the respondents is the YouTube that is used by the 51.42% that is more than half of the total number of respondents while the 14.28% of respondents are using Facebook. The use of WhatsApp is 100% by all the respondents as it becomes a part of life. Respondents share their view as they open several times the app to check the status, and messages from their friends and relatives.

Table 3: Purpose of Smartphone used by Respondents

Sr no	Purpose	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Entertainment	25	71.42
2	Payments and banking	7	20
3	Others	3	8.57
	Total	35	100

The purpose for which the smartphone is used by the respondents excluding the calling purpose as calling is used by all the respondents and it is a basic purpose so this table shows information other than calling or we can say that except calling the other useful purpose of using the smartphone. 71.42% of the respondents have used the smartphone for their entertainment purpose. 20% of the respondents used for doing payments and for banking

purposes while only 8.57% of the respondents used it for like stock marketing, for searching information, for study, etc. mostly the young respondents said that the smartphone is used for entertainment purpose as they can play attracted games and watch movies.

Table 4: Impact of Smartphones on the Respondents

Sr no	Impact on respondents	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Positive	16	45.71
2	Neutral	4	11.42
3	Negative	15	42.85
	Total	35	100

The impact of smartphones on life i.e. how the smartphone affects the life of respondents -positively or negatively and there is no effect on their life. The data shows that 45.71% of respondents are agreed that the smartphone put a positive effect on their life. The 42.85% of respondents are in favour that the smartphone has a negatively effect on their life while the 11.42% of respondents said that there is no effect in their life. They are as same as they are before using smartphone. The majority said that they got benefits from the use of smartphones and smartphones proved to be useful for them. In their daily life smartphone has a specific role and it became a part of life.

## Summary

It is no doubt that technology changed the whole life of the people and makes everything easier and saves a lot of the time of the people. But everything has two faces one is positive and the other is negative. The present study goes through both the faces of the smartphone. The information that is provided by the respondents and through the views of different authors that support the present study. Then the researcher reached some conclusion that is mention in the present study. 100% of the respondents have smartphone and among all respondents' male respondents are more in number than the female respondents. However, females have their own smartphone but they have less time to use it especially the married women who are engaged in the work of the household. The main applications that are used by the respondents are YouTube, payments application, shopping applications and other useful applications. The calling and WhatsApp are basic and used by all the peoples so we excluded them. The young respondents are more engaged in the smartphone then the old aged respondents. The students are using more studying applications and social applications like Tik-Tok, Instagram, etc. They are spending more time on smartphones then the office going respondents as they are engaged in the works. Despite the income of the family every member of the household has a smartphone except the very old or we can say the very old person of the family. The old women are avoiding to have phones not only smartphones about the keypads also. As they say they did not know how to use it and some old age person argues that the eyesight is not good and it create problem to them. They prefer to sit with the fellow and talking instead of using mobiles. They prefer the physical relationship among people not the technological. Most of the respondents said that they are getting useful effects in their life. As it helps them in many ways like getting information, studying materials, e shopping's and connecting peoples, friends etc. In the world of individuality, the young respondents are very happy as it will secure their privacy. Some respondents said that the number of smartphones you have the higher the status you got in your friend circle, society. Then some respondents have negatively affected their life as a lot of time spent on smartphones and if it gets damaged a lot of money is also spent. The respondents provide the information about the monthly expenses on a smartphone which is come out approximately Rs 200/- for one person i.e. if there

are four members in a family that it goes Rs 800/- per month and when it comes to yearly it is nearly Rs 10000/- for a family. In the area where almost income is based on agriculture only it is quite expensive for the family but to maintain their standard, they do such expenses. There is a problem with eye diseases on using smartphones continuously for a long time. A lot of accidents also takes place due to the use of mobile during driving. The education studies also get disturbed s students are more engaged in the mobile. There are a lot of other applications that influence the people by offering discounts, free subscribing. The most serious effect that smartphone technology put on people's life is the reduction of social relationship. The people used e- methods to connect with the peoples. If someone is in the same house then they talk on mobile. It reduced face to face relationships. But in another way, it is useful as it connects people that are living far away from the family and country. The present study concluded that most of the respondents are positively affected by the smartphone and fewer of them have negatively affected the people. The farmer that is the main in the rural area are also benefited by the smartphone. As they got information regarding the different government schemes and other information regarding this. They also got information about weather on mobile and they can then plan their cropping. With

## **Conclusion**

On the basis present study, we cannot say that smartphone is 100% beneficial for the rural people but it surely helps people to come on the trend with the ongoing technology and modernity. In last overall conclusion is that on some point the smartphone are beneficial to people but not in always sense and every age group people have different experience on smartphone. In one hand it proves informational helping and made many things easy on the other hand it makes people lazy, eye diseases, sleeplessness and many other harmful effects is also seen.

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