

**ICT and Youth:
A Study on the Use of Smart Phone Apps among Youth in
Chennai Metropolitan City**

Dr. S. Nandakumar and A. Roselin Raja

Abstract

In 2011, India's total population was 121 crores, among them 19.2% are youth age between 15 – 24 years (Census, 2011). In recent adoption of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) India has near about 900 million people using mobile phones and one third (300 millions) of them using mobile phones with internet connectivity (Times Now, 2015). Smart phone is the latest advent of the technology which got rapid development in India predominantly among the younger generation. This new media revolution has evolved various generation of mobile phone technology (2G, 3G, 4G & 5G) and its applications technology (Feher, K. 2010). According to Rogers, 1995 youth are the early adapters of new innovations. The smart mobile phones have altered their life, customs, behaviours and traditions.

It has influenced the socio-cultural environment of youth in India. The use of smart mobile phone and its applications has been advanced attracted invariably from village to cosmopolitan cities, illiterates to literates and poor to rich or vies-versa. In India, this new technology has affected the natural and traditional method of communication among the people and they stay alone even in hectic situation (Wilska, T. A. 2003). With Uses and gratifications theory the objectives and research problems were set to study the significance and influence of mobile phone in the life of young generation of both genders. The second purpose is analyzing the impact of use of smart phone apps by youth (both boys and girls) in relation with their socio- cultural environment. Survey was conducted with the use of purposive sampling method and semi structured questionnaire administered among the youth in Chennai city. The collected data were analysed with SPSS and the result is interesting that the use of modest smart phone and its apps communication technology have paved platform to increase crime rate, street offences and moral ideas among the users. The uses of immoral and sexual contents on mobile internet surface have created negative impact among the youth minds.

Key words: Mobile Phone, Apps, Youth, Technology, Impact, Immoral, Culture, Chennai City

Introduction

In the present world of technology smart phones have become the center of attraction among the youth in the metropolitan city. The distinguished areas, wherever the impacts of smart phones are, mainly education, health and in the social life of the youth. Mobile technology has drastically modified the cultural norms and behavior of youth. It is said that “phones possess turned the world into a global town.” It has given way for the youth to know the world and incarnate the new technological advantages in to their life style. Especially smart phone applications have turned out to be a great communication technology to interact with each other living in one corner of the world. Every coin has two sides in the same way this upcoming new media also has two sides though there are many advantages one can also find many disadvantages. Very often the youth are engaged with their smart phone applications ignoring their social responsibilities. In some cases many have become addict to their smart phones and find very difficult to keep away their fingers from their touch screens. It affects their education, relationship, privacy and social life. The porn content available on web browsers deviate the young minds which in turn leads to the immoral sexual behaviours. The smart phones are misused by criminals as source to exchange their information. Sometimes the high mega pixel cameras and the voice recorders have turned out to be a medium for eve teasing.

According to 2015 report of The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), majority of Indian users of the Internet, particularly rural consumers, have simply bypassed the PC, and are using mobile devices to get connected to the internet services. This is a clear indication that the Mobile Internet users are likely to increase between 70% and 80% of the total online population by 2018, as compared with 60% to 70% in 2013. The most important turning point of this secular trend is that 70 percent of rural users access the Internet from their mobile handsets.

Today youths locked with ‘G’, the term coined by the Pocket Radio Service for indicating the different generations of mobile network as 2G, 3G, and 4G. These Gs have increased the possibilities of running many applications in a mobile device simultaneously. 2G helps in ushering of GPRS and 3G network allows more data transmission which enables video calling, internet surfing, file transmission, online TV, HD videos, Games and much more (Shukla, S *et al.*, 2013). The 3G network is more popular among youth because of the easy accessibility of Internet through their smart phones. 4G network is just getting in some urban cities of India. 4G network is providing 3G facilities in addition to data transmission between 100MBPs to 1GBPS speed. Also, 4G is suitable for operating all kinds of applications in smart mobile phones. This would lead in to a great revolution in usage of smart phone apps among the metropolitan youth (Fagbohun, O 2014).

Background of the Study

Indian government has recently announced that the age of 'youth' is up to 30 in age, scaling it down from its previous upper limit of 35. In this modern age, in which almost every product and idea under the sun is sold to people with the promise to make them feel young and smart in the society where they live in, no matter what their age, 'youth' is a touchy subject (National Youth Policy 2014). According to a report of Market Analysis & Consumer Research Organisation (2004) mobile phones transform information across the millions of people irrespective of their

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socio-economic status. Mobile phone technology introduces new sense of connectivity and speed to social life. The mobile phone companies are targeting youth by launching their products with various advanced features cool ring tones, e-mail alerts, screen-savers, games, and cameras with speedy processors enabling in it various applications that are used for organising the youth lives better.

Katz & Sugiyama (2005) reveals that the mobile phone culture is to show the fashionable image of smart phones which is co-created by both the industry and the consumer. At present the smart phone advertising and marketing has promoted the fashion element associated with youth, futurism and modernism. Simultaneously, marketers have emphasized on stylish design, elite status and fashion aspect of mobile phones. Youth are center of attraction of the mobile market.

According to Nishiyama H *et al.*, (2014) the users have rapidly expanded and penetrated as subscribers in mobile technology and absence of other sustainable ICT technologies. Media have prompted the public, private and the social sector to exploit mobile communication in India. The main reason for the increase of youth mobile phone users is due to the increasing online communication and information are accessible to young people more conveniently from mobile platforms apart from traditional PCs. Mobile platforms provide primary online access for some users and supplementary access for little others (Neumayer, C. & Stald, G. 2014). Access to the online communication and information opens the way for the youth to get connected to the Social network sites which are web-based services allowing individuals to construct a semipublic or public profile in a bounded mobile device. Maximum of the time social networking sites are used to communicate with people who are already their friends or connections in the social network sharing same mindset or same interests and views, discussions on debatable topics, news articles are most common topics on these networks. these sites are not only popular for providing a platform for chatting, sharing scraps, videos, pictures etc., but also for discussing social issues (Shabnam S Mahat & S D Mundhe, 2014). Youth are sharing more information about themselves on social media sites over their smart phone apps than they did in the past. Turner *et al.*, (2008) suggest that user personality and individual attributes such as age and gender were found to be differentially associated with some aspects of phone-related behaviors." Billieux *et al.*, (2008) tested gender differences in both teams of impulsion and problematic mobile phone use among the young.

Spanish college students, Jenaro *et al.*, (2007) found that high cell-phone use is associated to being female and having high anxiety and insomnia. Nysveen *et al.*, (2008) investigated gender differences related to their mobile phones and users' perception and attitude towards their use in public and private places. They concluded that while females perceived the service very positively, there was a persistent trend for males to dislike the service, regardless of location.

Research Methodology

Uses and gratifications theory was used to set the objectives and hypothesis. Survey was conducted with the semi structured questionnaire to find out the results in the selected districts of Tamilnadu. Purposive sampling method was administered in collecting data from different areas of Chennai metropolitan city. The sample size was fixed into 400 which is been divided in to 200 males and 200 females. The collected data were analysed with SPSS package.

Objectives

1. To study the adoption and usage of smart phone apps among the youth of both genders, male and female in Chennai metropolitan city.
2. To study the socio-cultural and socio-political awareness created by smart phone apps among the youth of Chennai metropolitan city.
3. To study the positive and negative effects of smart phone apps of youth in metropolitan city.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. To study the adoption and usage of smart phone apps among the youth of both genders, male and female in Chennai metropolitan city.

Table 1. Most Favourite Apps

| Gender | WhatsApp | | Messenger | | Facebook | | Twitter | | YouTube | | Skype | | Others | | Total | |
|--------|----------|-------|-----------|-------|----------|-------|---------|------|---------|------|-------|------|--------|------|-------|------|
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Male | 84 | 42% | 42 | 21% | 37 | 18.5% | 8 | 4% | 10 | 5% | 7 | 3.5% | 12 | 6% | 200 | 100% |
| Female | 107 | 53.5% | 53 | 26.5% | 22 | 11% | 7 | 3.5% | 5 | 2.5% | 5 | 2.5% | 1 | .5% | 200 | 100% |
| Total | 191 | 47.5% | 95 | 23.8% | 59 | 14.8% | 15 | 3.8% | 15 | 3.8% | 12 | 3% | 13 | 3.3% | 400 | 100% |

Table 1 shows that the youth responded about their favourite smart phone apps. About half of the total respondents (47%) most favourite apps is WhatsApp (42% male and 53.5% female) and followed by Messenger (21% male and 26.5% female) 23.8%. considerable percent of youth responded to Facebook (18.5% urban and 11% of rural). Very little percentage of respondents' favourite social media applications are twitter (3.8%) YouTube (3.8%) Skype (3%).

Table 2. Usage

| Gender | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | | Total | |
|--------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|----|----------|-----|-------------------|-------|-------|------|
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Male | 26 | 13% | 140 | 70% | 2 | 1% | 24 | 12% | 8 | 4% | 200 | 100% |
| Female | 17 | 8.5% | 126 | 63% | 6 | 3% | 20 | 10% | 31 | 15.5% | 200 | 100% |
| Total | 43 | 10.7% | 266 | 66.5% | 8 | 2% | 44 | 12% | 39 | 9.8% | 400 | 100% |

Table 2 shows that the youth responded about the usage of smart phone apps. Above three fourth of the total respondents (77.2%) agreed to the statement on the usage of Smart phone apps (83% Male and 71.5% Female). Almost one fourth of respondents (21.8%) disagreed to the statement (16% Male and 25.5% Female). While very little respondents are uncertain about the

statement (1% Male and 2% Female). Both the youth population agree the usefulness of smart phone apps in good number where as male are little more in number agreeing to the statement.

2. To study the socio-cultural and socio-political awareness created by smart phone apps among the youth of Chennai metropolitan city.

Table 3. Awareness on socio-cultural changes

| Gender | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | | Total | |
|--------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-----|----------|------|-------------------|------|-------|------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 102 | 51% | 72 | 36% | 12 | 6% | 11 | 5.5% | 3 | 1.5% | 200 | 100% |
| Female | 92 | 46% | 54 | 27% | 36 | 18% | 13 | 6.5% | 5 | 2.5% | 200 | 100% |
| Total | 194 | 48.5% | 126 | 31.5% | 48 | 12% | 24 | 6% | 8 | 2% | 400 | 100% |

Table 3 shows that the youth responded on the statement that the usage of Smart Phone apps has brought awareness on socio-cultural changes taking place in the society. Above three fourth of the total respondents (80%) agreed to the statement (87% Male and 73% Female). Some of the respondents (12%) are uncertain about the statement (18% Male and 6% Female). While very little respondents (8%) disagree to the statement (6% Male and 9% Female).

Table 4. Awareness on Socio-Political Issues

| Gender | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | | Total | |
|--------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------|----------|------|-------------------|------|-------|------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 73 | 36.5% | 83 | 41.5% | 32 | 16% | 9 | 4.5% | 3 | 1.5% | 200 | 100% |
| Female | 75 | 37.5% | 69 | 34.5% | 30 | 15% | 15 | 7.5% | 11 | 5.5% | 200 | 100% |
| Total | 148 | 37% | 152 | 38% | 62 | 15.5% | 24 | 6% | 14 | 3.5% | 400 | 100% |

Table 4 shows that the youth responded on the statement that Smart phone apps bring awareness on Socio-political issues. Three fourth of the total respondents (75%) agreed to the statement (78% Male and 72% Female). Some of the respondents (15.5%) are uncertain about the statement (16% Male and 15% Female). While very little respondents (9.5%) disagree to the statement (6% Male and 13% Female). Both the youth population agree to the statement in large number that smart phone apps bring awareness on socio political issues.

3. To study the positive and negative effects of smart phone apps of youth in Chennai

Table 5. Convenient tool to stay connected with friends and relatives.

| Gender | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | | Total | |
|--------|----------------|-----|-------|-------|---------|------|----------|------|-------------------|-------|-------|------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 26 | 13% | 136 | 68% | 2 | 1% | 28 | 14% | 8 | 4% | 200 | 100% |
| Female | 30 | 15% | 130 | 65% | 5 | 2.5% | 22 | 11% | 13 | 6.5% | 200 | 100% |
| Total | 56 | 14% | 266 | 66.5% | 7 | 1.8% | 21 | 5.2% | 50 | 12.5% | 400 | 100% |

Table 5 shows that the youth responded on the statement that smart phone apps are convenient tools to stay connected with friends and relatives. Above three fourth of the total respondents (80.5%) agreed to the statement (81% Male and 80% Female). Some of the respondents (17.7%) disagreed to the statement (18% Male and 17.5% Female). While very little respondents (1.8%) are uncertain about the statement (1% Male and 2.5% Female). The youth of both genders agree that smart phone apps are more convenient tool to stay connected with their friends and relatives.

Table 6. Threat to Privacy

| Gender | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | | Total | |
|--------|----------------|--------|-------|-------|---------|------|----------|--------|-------------------|------|-------|------|
| | Male | 38 | 19% | 100 | 50% | 18 | 9% | 41 | 20.5% | 3 | 1.5% | 200 |
| Female | 47 | 23.5% | 77 | 38.5% | 12 | 6% | 56 | 28% | 8 | 4% | 200 | 100% |
| Total | 85 | 21.25% | 177 | 44.5% | 30 | 7.5% | 97 | 24.25% | 11 | 5.5% | 400 | 100% |

Table 6 shows that youth answered that smart phone apps are threat to their privacy, where 50% of Male and 38.5% of Female respondents agree, and 19% of male and 23.5% female of the respondent responded strongly agree. 20% of male and 28.5% of female youth disagreed and 1.5% of male and 4% of female youth have strongly disagreed with the statement. While 9% of male and 6% of female respondents are uncertain about the statement. Though smart phone apps are the powerful weapon in their hands but almost two fourth of the youth are aware of this fact that it also stands as a major threat to their privacy.

Table. 7 Cybercrime

| Gender | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | | Total | |
|--------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|-------------------|------|-------|------|
| | male | 45 | 22.5% | 107 | 53.5% | 16 | 8% | 24 | 12% | 8 | 4% | 200 |
| Female | 30 | 15% | 101 | 50.5% | 34 | 17% | 33 | 16.5% | 2 | 1% | 200 | 100% |
| Total | 75 | 18.5% | 208 | 52% | 50 | 12.5% | 57 | 14.5% | 10 | 2.5% | 400 | 100% |

Table. 7 shows that youth were asked smart phone apps paved way in increase of cyber crime, where 53.5% of male and 50.5% of female respondents agree, and 22.5% of male and 15% female of the respondent responded strongly agree. 12% of male and 16.5% of female youth disagreed and 4% of male and 1% of female youth have strongly disagreed with the statement. While 8% of male and 17% of female respondents are uncertain about the statement. Almost more than 70% of youth are in agreement with the statement that due to smart phone apps cyber-crime has increased.

Table.8 Immoral Content

| Gender | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | | Total | |
|--------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|------|----------|-------|-------------------|------|-------|------|
| | Male | 20 | 10% | 96 | 48% | 16 | 8% | 46 | 23% | 22 | 11% | 200 |
| Female | 65 | 32.5% | 89 | 44.5% | 22 | 11% | 16 | 8% | 8 | 4% | 200 | 100% |
| Total | 85 | 21.5% | 185 | 46% | 38 | 9.5% | 62 | 15.5% | 30 | 7.5% | 400 | |

Table 8 shows that youth were asked smart phone apps promote immoral pictures, video clips and images among youth. Where 48% of male and 44.5% of female respondents agree, and 10% of male and 32.5% female of the respondent responded strongly agree. 23% of male and 8% of female youth disagreed and 11% of male and 4% of female youth have strongly disagreed with the statement. While 8% of male and 11% of female respondents are uncertain about the statement. Almost more than 60% of youth are in agreement with the statement that smart phone apps promote immoral pictures, video clips and images among youth.

Conclusion

Muhammad Sarwar and Tariq Rahim Soomro (2013) reveal that the impact of Smartphone is on almost all walk of human life. Some of the prominent areas, on which the impacts of Smartphone obviously include, could be said as education, business, health, social communication and social life. Smartphone technology has drastically changed the behaviour of individuals and cultural norms. The impacts of it on society are both at the positive side and also at the negative side. At one end Smartphone enabling people to remain connected all the time and on the other end Smartphone are enabling people to create their own micro-cultures and engage into activities considered dangerous of society. Freedom is the word which always centered on the life of youth. Today's young generation feel that smart phone apps have opened the way for them to express their views with much freedom. It has become the most convenient tool to share and transfer the data in the form of video, pictures, photos, descriptions and instant short messages. Freedom without restriction could promote lots of immoral activities. Mobile social media Apps when used in a wrong manner could also lead in to unethical issues. Youth have also agreed that due this convenient tool which is a powerful weapon in the hands of youth paved way in increasing cyber-crime, spreading of wrong messages and immoral contents. This medium has also aroused as a threat to their privacy. This study reveals the fact that social media usage increased due the growth in mobile phone technology at the same this has also tremendous effect in the life style of youth. Having both effects positive and negative smart phone apps have become a big challenge for the youth of today in knowing the its effect on them.

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