



SOCIAL IMPACTS ON THE USE OF SMART-PHONES

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Cite This Article: Dr. S. Veena, "Social Impacts on the Use of Smart-Phones", International Journal of Applied and Advanced Scientific Research, Volume 3, Issue 1, Page Number 381-384, 2018.

Abstract:

The objective of this paper is to survey how Smart phones are impacting the society and also how Smartphone's are going to transform the culture, social life, technology landscape and other diverse aspects of modern society. The intention of this study is to understand all the positive and negative aspects of Smartphone on the society. The study will primarily focus on impact of Smartphone on business, education, and social life. Smart-phones have greatly expanded since the turn of the century and have penetrated all aspects of people's lives, both positively and negatively. This study investigates the negative aspects of smart-phone use and examines the link between culture – collectivistic personal attitudes and descriptive norms, compulsive usage of smart-phones, stress derived from unhealthy technological use, and satisfaction with life.

Key Words: Smartphone, Society, Technology, Stress, Business, Education & Social Life

Social Impacts on the Use of Smart-Phones:

The convergence of communication and computing for mobile consumer devices is on the evolutionary course to bring interoperability and leverage the services and functions from each and every industry. In this process of convergence the Smartphone's are the leading devices taking the front end and playing the role of universal mobile terminal. As a marketing strategy the Smartphone term was introduced in the market, referring a new class of mobile phones that provides integrated services from communication, computing and mobile sectors including voice communication, messaging, personal information management (PIM) applications and wireless communication capability. In real sense Smartphone is a mobile phone with advanced features and functionality beyond traditional functionalities like making phone calls and sending text messages. The Smartphone are equipped with the capabilities to display photos, play games, play videos, navigation, built-in camera, audio/video playback and recording, send/receive e-mail, built in apps for social web sites and surf the Web, wireless Internet and much more. Due to same reasons the Smartphone's now become a common choice for consumers along with the use in business as it was initially intended for business users only. The latest surveys show that the popularity of Smartphone's is increasing in general public with the more paces then it is increasing in Corporations. Initially the Smartphone's were only perceived for business use due to their cost and application, but not today, today we are in a frenetic Smartphone society populated with the Smartphone's from many vendors providing a range of advanced functionalities and services on a piece of hardware. Today Smartphone's enable consumers, advertisers and publishers how to better engage, socialize using the ubiquitous experience this advanced platform by leveraging it's of the firm. The focus of income statement is on the operating revenues and expenses. User groups of financial reports for decision-making require data related to all easy to use and availability characteristic. Due to its ubiquitous nature and social acceptance we can find Smartphone in educational institutes, hospitals, public places and shopping malls etc.

Today's Smartphone's has been around since last six years when Apple introduced the Smartphone in mass consumer market, but in reality the Smartphone has been in market since 1993. The different between today's Smartphone and early Smartphone's is that early Smartphone's were predominantly meant for corporate users and used as enterprise devices and also those phone were too expensive for the general consumers [5]. The Smartphone era is divided into three main phases. First phase was purely meant for enterprises. During this phase all the Smartphone's were targeting the corporations and the features and functions were as per corporate requirements. The second phase of Smartphone era started with the advent of iPhone, the major breakthrough Smartphone market in 2007. Apple revealed its first smart phone in 2007. This was the time when first time ever industry introduced the Smartphone for general consumers market. Third phase of Smartphone was mainly closing the gap between enterprise centric and general consumer centric Smartphone and improvement the display quality, display technology and on top of that also aiming to stabile the mobile operating system, introduce more powerful batteries and enhance the user interface and many more features within these smart devices. The most popular mobile Operating systems (iOS, Android, Blackberry OS, Windows Mobile) and key Smartphone vendors (Apple, Samsung, HTC, Motorola, Nokia, LG, Sony etc.) are concentrating to bring features both in operating systems and devices which will provide exciting feature to enterprise and general consumers. The role of Android has been tremendous during this time period as it provided a great opportunity to all vendors to build devices using the great open source Android technology.

Smartphone has impacted almost all walk of human life. The prominent areas, where impacts of Smartphone are obvious include business, education, health and social life. Mobile technology has drastically changed the cultural norms and behavior of individuals. The impacts are both at the positive side and also at the

negative side. At one end Smartphone are enabling people to create their own micro-cultures and engage into activities considered dangerous of society and on the other end Smartphone enabling people to remain connected all the time. The subsequent sub-sections of this study provide detailed account on positive and negative impacts of Smartphone on society.

Smartphone has created new dimensions for business. It is not only the Smartphone vendors enjoying the business but it also created a new domain for mobile application developing companies, Internet services provider and other sectors of life to utilize the Smartphone to gain competitive advantages.

There has been a drastic growth in broadband and Internet service providers business in past few years and one of the main reasons for this drastic increase in their business is the ever increasing use of Smartphone's and growth of Smartphone and mobile applications. In a very small duration a huge number of Smartphone have been sold that provided an opportunity to businesses to invest in mobile application development and allowed to introduce new business dimensions in market space. As it is easy to change settings and make customizations on Smartphone, therefore there are several programs for Smartphone's from different vendors including Blackberry, Android, iPhone and Microsoft etc. Mobile Application Market is another business sector introduced by Smartphone's. Different mobile operating system vendors have their own mobile application technology hence having a different market for Mobile Applications. The most common one are iPhone application market, BlackBerry application market, Android market, Microsoft mobile Application market. These online market places enable users to download useful mobile applications on need basis. Furthermore these market places also provide some free of cost application and some applications have associated with reasonable cost. Smartphone's also impacted advertising business sector as well. Advertising is an old concept but the features of Smartphone have made it more effective and no doubt it is an additional positive impact of mobile application for business. Mobile application publisher, distributor and service provider are getting large revenue by providing ads as a part of mobile application [13]. Unlike the other computing advancement in the past, where most of those advancements came directly from security agencies, armed forces and large research centers and the initial purpose was defense or enterprise use, the advent of Smartphone and related technology innovations started directly in consumer market space in its own right. The polarity has reversed in the technology industry and now many exciting developments in the field of information technology (IT) are appearing in consumer market space first and only then making their way into other fields.

The major impact of Smartphone is on PC market. According to a survey by Compete, a web analytics firm, a large number of people almost up to 65% are using their smart phones to read news feeds, post status updates, read & reply to messages and post photos. This shows that now people are leaving PCs and moving towards Smartphone's. According to market results in 2011 Smartphone shipments beat those of PCs, with 73 million more units being sold. Today the Smartphone users having are more powerful than the most of the desktops we have 10 years back. Smartphone have outsold PCs in 2011 and soon they could replace our wallets as well. Furthermore in last few years PC upgrades have become less important because developer activity has stagnated on the PC platform. According to analysts, the long dominated Microsoft and Intel alliance is experiencing bad times due to the rise of Smartphone's and tablets, and the pressure to gain market share in the mobile device market is causing fractures in long partnership. It is true that still millions of PCs will continue to be sold every year, but the Smartphone's and tablets will see more considerable growth in the future. All companies are taking forceful steps to power their way into Smartphone market.

The notion and value of education has been exceptional and noble since day one in human history and the efforts to improve the quality of education has been appreciated throughout. Smartphone's introduced another means for the knowledge lovers to fulfil their thrust and dreams. Use of the Internet has become a part of life of every student and a mean to search for the information as and when it is needed. These days, use of mobile phones for internet purposes has become a routine and number of mobile consumer accessing the Internet is surpassing fixed line internet users. The growing demand of Smartphone, availability of the Internet and high speed mobile browsing is ready to provide an alternative channel to deliver education services. This will provide an opportunity to the users to utilize their Smartphone to get educational benefits within their available time irrespective to their location. Distance education is a learning mechanism that focuses to liberate students from limitations of time and location, while offering flexible opportunities for education. Distance learning enables students to utilize their time such that they can continue their education without impacting their work and family life. The Smartphone with the capability of always connected makes it much easier for the students to avail this type of education facility and makes the Smartphone a perfect fit device for distance learning. Smartphone within and without the classroom make it easier for students and teachers to collaborate. Students on sick leave or with health issues, or miss school for other reasons would be able to attend class through their Smartphone and keep up with their work, rather than falling behind due to unanticipated circumstances. The education system of developing countries might unarguably be the most prevalent beneficiary of the mobile technologies. Smartphone's are not just supplementary devices for developing countries, but these devices can play integral part of in their education systems. The Smartphone provide access to modern society a massive amount of educational and learning resources. In developing countries Smartphone

can easily compensate the limited access of internet and data access, which in turn help their infrastructure and education development.

Along with their fantastic facilities, Smartphone's enables students to text, cooperate on social networking sites, check e-mails, play online games, and even watch TV channels. This is one of the sources of distraction. This is not only distracting for the student, but it can also become distracting for other students around them and even sometimes for whole class. In addition, it wouldn't be easy for students to make calls during exams to cheat but it may be easy for pupils in a crowded classroom or examination hall to use their Smartphone's to access information online to cheat in exams. In fact some surprising statistics are there about the use of Smartphone's for cheating in the classroom. The misuse of Smartphone could be through the use of text message exchange with other students, find answers on the Internet, using advanced calculator and phone applications, reading notes saved on their phones to help on the test. Smartphone's can encourage bullying and hazing also. Bullying and hazing are very serious problems in schools across many countries including America. Smartphone's come equipped with camera and video technology, which can be used to record and photograph bullying and hazing in schools and colleges.

The social life has been drastically changed with the introduction of Smartphone's and this domain has encountered most of the impacts from use of Smartphone. Accordingly to research, around 15% of the current world population has some sort of disabilities and also the number of elderly persons increasing day by day. Furthermore, this research shows that, by year 2020 more than 1000 million people over 60 years age will be living on this planet. Keeping this in mind and looking into the capabilities of Smartphone, it is apparent that in such a situation Smartphone will play an important role in the integration process of people with special needs and elderly age. Smartphone's are capable to give this group of people the opportunity to live more independently. The more they can do by themselves, the better they will feel and enjoy the life.

Smartphone features like, text to speech, GPS and social Websites are some examples, which can help this group of people to easily remain integrated with society. Using these services and many more features, the target group of people can easily communicate their needs, seek assistance from others and remain connected to society. Even in today's busy world Smartphone had also made possible for us to remain connected with our friends and family all the time. Always connected to the Internet through a Smartphone provides a great instrument for individuals for constant communication resulting in great safety for children attending schools or going outside. The classic mobile phones provided this facility for long time but the Smartphone's utilizing the same and providing additional convenient capabilities to communicate with children and know their whereabouts anytime. The Smartphone has given an opportunity to individuals to act as a journalist at any point in time and real-time information to society. Smartphone features like the camera, video capture, access to social Websites and nature of always connected to the Internet enable individuals to capture any video at any time and share it with friends and family using social Websites and other Internet based options. Even though the quality of video/image cannot be that good but the features on social Websites and opinions and comments make it more absorbing and useful.

Addiction to Smartphone is major impact on social life. Surveys show that Smartphone addiction is interfering with our night's sleep. According to the survey, 33% of mobile workers admitted that they check their phones for email and message throughout the night. Nearly 50% of those surveyed said, they wouldn't even think of going to bed without have their Smartphone's tucked under their pillows. This addiction to Smartphone is impacting the social and family life and creating frictions in our lives. Another aspect is that applications installed on Smartphone enabling image and video editing, allowing individuals to manipulate the actual content and provide their version of the content. This shows that most of the time there will be issues with the authenticity of information received through these channels and it requires further research to ensure its validity and authenticity. According to another research, the organizations expect their employees to respond to the emails immediately even after working hours, due to that employee feel compelled to respond to official emails. Many Smartphone users engage in continuous monitoring of their work related emails, which creates compulsive routines of chronic checking and in the long run it is responsible for increased stress. There are evidences that Smartphone usage is responsible to blur the distinctions between the work and family life.

It is true that Smartphone has a sizeable impact on society and other aspects of life. Clearly the enormous usage of these devices by consumers demonstrates the volume of this impact. Consumers are in process of traversing away from the use of conventional cell phone as the Smartphone's are beginning the norm of the society. Manufacturers and marketing can be blamed for this hype, but there is no doubt that Smartphone's are bringing great features and capabilities to consumers. The key impacts like enable to be always-connected, addiction to phone, single device with all required features, business edge, convenient educational features, apps as new technology, entertainment, best utilization of time, disrespectful behaviour, privacy issues, impact on culture, distraction at work & at education Institutes and many more provide us both positive and negative sides of the Smartphone's. These positive and negative impacts are secondary, when we look at this existing technology from a different perspective and that perspective is interpretation and perception of Smartphone. There are several ways that we can control and minimize the negative impacts of Smartphone in

society. Education and Guidance: In order to understand the positive and negative impact of Smartphone it is very important to educate the users on how to use Smartphone's smartly. The education should emphasize to enhance the positive impacts and highlight the negative impacts clearly so that the users can take advantages of this exciting technology.

There are several initiatives from different vendors to combat the misuse of Smartphone at workplace and at Universities. SAP, Airwatch, McAfee and many other vendors provide solutions to control the access of Smartphone within the workplace and Universities. Such measures are very useful in environments, where security of information is the top priority. These can also be useful in controlling the access of Smartphone's in Universities to minimize the use of social Websites, minimize the misuse of Smartphone's for cyber bullying, cheating in examinations and tests. These mobile management devices will also enable the administrators to remotely control the access of these devices check what services are running on a specific device.

Policies and strict compliance procedure should be in place at workplace and at Universities to ensure the proper use of Smartphone's'. This will enable users to use their phones if it is really required and when the use is really important. In summary, Smartphone can certainly be smart if the vendors, society and technologists understand their responsibility towards usage of these devices smartly in order to get more benefit in business, education, health and social life. It is apparent from above facts that the benefits of Smartphone are tremendous and negative impacts are minor. So it is important to concentrate on how to stop and avoid smartly the misuse of Smartphone rather trying to stop or avoid use to Smartphone's.

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