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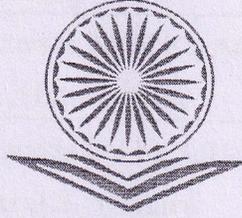
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21. Impact of Mobile Phones on Youth

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Introduction

The Mobile Phone is perhaps the most revolutionary invention made by man in the 20th century. More than anything else, it has occupied a very fundamental position in human life today. It has become widespread. It is simply impossible to imagine human life without mobile phone in today's world. It has become the integral part of our life. It helps us to communicate with our relatives and friends, do our business with people who are not physically with us. Having smart phone is no longer a status symbol, but the need of the hour. We see nearly everyone carrying a mobile phone in his/her hand. The business men, service men, housewives, doctors, teachers, students, journalists, engineers, lawyers, employed and unemployed youths, hawkers, plumbers, electricians, homemakers, porters, maids, milkmen, rickshaw pullers use mobile phone as a need. It has made human life smart and easy-going. It has proved to be a remedy for many problems and has helped man solve innumerable problems. It is of enormous benefits for us in every walk of life. It has become an indispensable tool today. It has made the world faster with its unimaginably speedy functions than ever before.

People had to use fixed telephone or used to go to public telephone booths to communicate with their near and dear ones before the invention of mobile phones. It was very difficult to establish such a communication as the number of telephones was very limited. The only other way was to visit the person and communicate face to face. It consumed lot of time, money and energy. At the same time urgent messages were not communicated properly due to lack of any such advanced way of communication. Moreover, as these telephones were stick to one place, they needed to be attended by persons instantly which caused many troubles. The invention of mobile phones solved these and many more problems of all human beings.

Usage and Craze for Mobile Phones

Basically Mobile Phone was intended to make phone calls and send text messages to our near and dear ones. However, today it is of much more use. With the spread of connectivity of

network throughout India, various mobile companies have established their towers even in the remote areas of the country. Hence, in addition to these primary functions the mobile phone is used to listen to music and songs, watch movies, play online and off line games, browse the internet, e-mail, banking, payment of various bills, download and install the new applications we need, find various job vacancies and apply for the same, calculate and solve mathematical problems, visit various useful sites, record voice and live videos, photographs, track GPS locations, make video calls, as a torch and watch, etc. Thus, mobile phones have many other functions that help us at our work. We do not need to carry our computers and lap tops wherever we go. The Mobile phone in our pocket has every function in these electronic devices and can do every activity promptly for us. It is a kind of all in one device of daily use.

Smart phones are the source of immense information for young students. Sitting at their study tables they can know everything of their use by using mobile phone. It opens new vistas of information. It includes vast library, variety of books, labs, pictures, maps, information related to science, literature, medical science, law, engineering, and clues for every other problem. If properly utilized, it can give wings to students' imagination and make them creative with new and innovative ideas. They can sharp their brains by searching for various features of mobile phone and working on its multifaceted functions.

Moreover, the government also encourages the citizens to make optimal use of mobile phones for every purpose, especially after demonetization. It has launched various apps for different types of transactions to encourage online payment for everything. These apps have various cash back facilities for their users. All types of bills such as telephone bill, electric bill, insurance instalments, EMIs, Income Tax, house tax, etc, can be paid online through mobile phones. There are some online shopping websites like Amazon, Flipkart, Naaptol, Jobong, Snapdeal, Myntra, Homeshop 18, Shopclues, Firstcry, Patym, eBay India, Zivame, Nykaa, Bigbasket, etc, which are browsed through mobile phones frequently by customers. Rarest of the rare things are made available on these websites. They supply all kinds of items in a very small span of time to every corner of our country today.

As has already been said, mobile phones have remarkably been used by men and women together. The rate at which young people have adopted the mobile phone all over the globe is even more remarkable. The gradual reduction in cost of various handsets, variety of handsets in the market, their smaller and slim size, introduction of variety of features in handsets, ready



availability of them in the market and online, variety of colours available, and introduction of the pre-paid sim cards contributed to the surprisingly rapid craze for these smart phones among young children. Various surveys done throughout the world have proved that the number of adolescents owning mobile phones has risen dramatically. These surveys have also shown that the young children prefer their mobiles to television or computer. It has become a favourite means of communication among children, at times, their only friend. It has acquired a status symbol among them. The features in it, its appearance, personalised accessories like wallpaper, ringtones, phone covers all are attested to the phone's status. The ownership of a smart mobile phone is indicative of one's social concerns, one's being socially connected and in demand. It is also symbolic of one being independent from one's family and self-dependent.

One of the basic reasons of the craze for mobile phones among the adolescents is their functionality in social life. It is a time of transcending the family boundaries and generating one's own space in the society. Smart mobile phones laced with all features have provided many opportunities to the young children without having any interference from their parents. These phones have played a huge role in connecting youths with one another. They serve to link youths together more closely than the fixed phone. Messaging, Whats app, twitter, facebook, instagram, e-mails, messenger are some of the channels through which young children get connected with one another. By this way they share their views, express doubts and get them solved. For sincere students these apps are really helpful and useful to clear doubts and remain updated.

As far as parents are concerned, they allow their children to own mobile phones because they feel that it is the safe way to be connected with them. They feel carefree to know that they are able to contact their children any time and know their whereabouts. In this world of materialism parents too wish to maintain their status in society. Allowing mobile phones to their wards is one way to do it. The mobile phone means both enabling the child to call parents if they are in trouble and it also provides a surveillance capacity to parents. This has resulted adversely in that the children can contact each other without parental knowledge. Parents may not know who their child's friends are because of lack of friendly communication with them.

Its Adverse Effect on Youth

The family and the school are the traditional agents of socialisation. A child gets first lessons regarding his/her behaviour to be a good human being first at home and then in school. Mobile phone, if used properly at proper age, can be taken as supplementary to them.



Unfortunately, mobile phone is handed over to a child at a very young stage, sometimes just to keep him/her silent and to keep oneself away from getting disturbed. Children at young age feel attracted to smart phones because of their enchanting features. Initially they play games, watch videos, cartoons and listen to children songs. However, gradually they get addicted to mobile phones. As has been found out, abusing the use of mobile phones can generate stress, anxiety or addiction, specifically among teenagers who use their mobile phones too frequently. They are prone to anxiety, sleep disorders, stress and fatigue. They do not properly concentrate on their lessons, studies, homework and other necessary activities. The students in colleges and schools use mobile phones extensively instead of attending and concentrating in classes. Sometimes they disrupt the classroom teaching and learning due to disruptive nature of mobile phone calls or message tones. This results in children failing to pay attention in the class. Even after the constant warnings some students do not switch off their mobile phones in classes.

Mobile phones have become the most sophisticated means of cheating during examinations and it is harder to detect. Because of the short time frame in which questions are sent from one mobile phone to the other and answers are received instantly, mobile phone has proved to be the effective means for cheating during examinations. The character of **Munna** in a Hindi film, **MunnaBhai MBBS** plays as a role model for such students in their actual life.

Many of the college and school going students are seen addicted to mobile phones. They spend too much time in browsing different social networking sites, watching movies or playing games on mobile phones. Some of them are seen sending offensive messages or even watching pornographic videos.

Use of mobile phones while driving is one of the most adverse effects on the youths. Sometimes to show their extra smartness, they dial numbers and receive phone calls while driving. They neither lower the speed of their bikes nor do they use wired headsets, although these measures are also equally dangerous. This act on the part of youths has come forward as a major cause of road accidents. This is really a serious problem.

The craze to have selfie anywhere and at any time has created lot of turbulence today. The young boys and girls wish to have selfie standing at very risky spots, inviting deaths. Likewise, chatting with friends for hours causes loss of time and youth energy. Young children busy in chatting, is a common scene at every public place. Cyber bullying has also been increasing via mobile phones.



Safety Tips

There are both uses and abuses of the mobile phone. It plays a vital role in the development of modern civilization. Although it has its disadvantages, we cannot deny its usefulness and necessity in our day to day life. Putting it to the proper use, young children can perform miracles in their lives. We need to understand the tremendous technological prowess of the mobile phones. It is the most effective learning tool for children. However, parents need to be cautious while providing mobile phones to their children. Here are some of the important safety tips to be followed by parents-

1. Avoid giving mobile phones to children under the age of sixteen.
2. Ask your child to use wired headset instead of holding the phone close to the ear.
3. Do not allow your child use mobile in areas where the signal strength is weak.
4. Restrict your child from taking phones to the school.
5. Bring to the notice of your children the side effects of over use of mobile phones.

To conclude, it is impossible to avoid the use of mobile phones in today's fast moving world. It has become an integral part of our life. We need to put it to the optimal use by being vigilant. The youths need to be given proper guidelines to make healthy use of this useful gadget which can mould their career.




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