



# MOBILE PHONE IMPACT ON CAPACITY BUILDING AND EMPOWERMENT AMONG COLLEGE WOMEN STUDENTS

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## Abstract

This study explores the influence of mobile phone usage on capacity building and empowerment in college women students. The research, conducted with a diverse group of respondents, delves into mobile phone behaviors and their consequences. It reveals that mobile phones are fundamental tools in the daily lives of these students, used for various purposes, including communication, entertainment, social work, and political awareness. Mobile technology also aids in academic endeavors, with both smartphone owners and non-owners benefiting from it. Despite occasional disruptions attributed to mobile phone use, the study suggests a positive impact on capacity building and empowerment. Additionally, mobile phones provide a sense of security and connectivity, reducing feelings of isolation among students living away from home. These findings highlight the multifaceted role of mobile technology in college women students' lives and emphasize the importance of balanced and responsible usage.

Keywords: Mobile phone usage, Empowerment, Communication, Technology impact, Youth behavior

## Introduction

In India, there exists a significant gender disparity in mobile phone usage, with only 33 percent of women using mobile phones compared to 67 percent of men, as reported by the Indian Express in 2017 (Indian Express, 2017). This gender gap in mobile phone ownership in India is more pronounced compared to other countries at a similar level of development. Despite this gap, it is noteworthy that an increasing number of women and girls in India now possess mobile devices, particularly smartphones, which have become fundamental tools for various purposes (JIM, 2013). These devices serve as essential media equipment for women, enabling them to engage in a wide range of activities, including communication, accessing information, entertainment, and creative pursuits.

The utilization of mobile technology among women in India holds the potential to address and reduce gender disparities in various outcomes, notably in the realm of employment. Mobile phones can play a pivotal role in connecting job seekers, particularly women, to employment networks and job opportunities. They can access online job listings, employment-related information, and even participate in skill development programs through their mobile devices. This connectivity and access to information can significantly enhance women's prospects for meaningful employment and economic independence.

Moreover, mobile phones offer women a sense of independence and empowerment. These devices provide them with the means to manage their personal and financial affairs efficiently, contributing to their self-reliance. Women can access banking services, handle financial transactions, and budget effectively, which can be instrumental in improving their financial well-being and independence.

Mobile technology also serves as a straightforward tool for communication, allowing women to maintain social connections with family, friends, and communities. Given the vast and diverse landscape of India, mobile phones bridge geographical distances, enabling women to stay connected with their support networks and access assistance when needed. This sense of connectivity contributes to their overall empowerment and well-being. Furthermore, mobile phones facilitate social awareness and activism through social media platforms. Women can use their devices to participate in discussions, advocate for women's rights, and engage in social causes. This digital activism has the potential to drive positive societal change and contribute to gender equality by raising awareness of critical issues and mobilizing support.

### **College Women Students from Rural Background**

Majority of Indian rural villagers felt that mobile phones are creating problems for girls and their parents. Therefore, under the parent's supervision only girls are allowed to handle the mobile phones. However, According to NSSO data, the people of rural India spend 25.33% of their income on the use of mobile phones and telephones. However, men only play a majority role to spend money.

### **Objectives**

1. To study the college women student's engagement with mobile phone
2. To find the use of mobile phones by college women students
3. To examine the perception of college women students towards the capacity building through mobile phone

### **Methodology**

The study employed a quantitative research method, which involves the collection and analysis of numerical data to identify patterns, trends, and relationships among variables. Data were collected through an informal interview schedule. This implies that the study used a structured questionnaire or interview guide with predetermined questions to gather data from the respondents. Respondents were interviewed personally in their classroom, indicating a face-to-face data collection approach.

Variables: The interview covered several factors, including age, gender, education level, attitude towards mobile phone usage, social-political awareness, capacity building, and behaviors.

**Sample Size:** The survey included 120 respondents. The sample was selected using a convenience sampling method, which is a non-probability sampling technique that selects respondents based on their easy accessibility or proximity to the researcher. The respondents were college women students. They fell within the age group of 19 to 22 years, suggesting a relatively narrow age range. No specific information is provided regarding the educational level or field of study of the respondents.

#### Data Sources

In addition to primary research (interviews with respondents), the study also incorporated secondary data. Secondary data were collected from articles published in magazines and books, and this data collection process involved visits to a library and online research through the World Wide Web.

It's important to note that the use of convenience sampling may introduce bias into the findings, as it may not represent the broader population of college women students. Additionally, the study's findings and conclusions would be based on the data collected through the interviews and secondary sources, and the analysis would be performed using quantitative research methods.

The study's focus on college women students' attitudes, awareness, capacity building, and behaviors related to mobile phone usage and social-political issues indicates an interest in understanding the role of mobile technology in empowering or influencing this demographic group in their educational and social contexts.

#### Data Analysis and Interpretation

Usage	N	Total (N)	Total (%)
Women students using mobile phone	96	96	80
Women students not using mobile phone	24	24	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Computed

The study included a total of 120 respondents who were college women students. Among these respondents, 80 percent of them reported using mobile phones. Conversely, 20 percent of the respondents indicated that they were not using mobile phones. From these findings, it is evident that a significant majority of college women students in the study (80 percent) are using mobile phones as part of their daily lives.

Table -2

Particulars	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Using Mobile for Talking	80	20	100
Using Mobile for Social Media	63.33333333	36.66666667	100
Linkage with Bank Account	56.66666667	43.33333333	100
Mobile is Essential	100	-	100
Mobile Phone is also the disturbance	46.66666667	53.33333333	
Mobile phone Increasing capacity	80	20	100
Mobile phone helps to Empowerment	73.33333333	26.66666667	100
Using Smart phone helps to keep in touch with friends	94.16666667	5.83333333	100
Using Smart phone helps for studies	100	-	100
Using Smart phone makes to feel safety	75.83333333	24.16666667	100
Using mobile phone helps to get help	85.83333333	14.16666667	100
Using Smart phone helps for Political awareness	80.83333333	19.16666667	100
Using Smart phone helps for Social awareness	95.83333333	4.16666667	100

Source:computed

It's notable that all 120 respondents, representing 100 percent of the college women students in the study, expressed the belief that mobile phones are essential for their lives.

47 percent of the college women student respondents reported that mobile phones are a source of disturbance for them, while 53 percent did not view mobile phones as a disturbance. This finding suggests a divided perspective among the respondents regarding the impact of mobile phones on their lives. The fact that nearly half of the respondents considered mobile phones to be a disturbance despite acknowledging their importance highlights the complex relationship that many individuals, especially younger generations, have with this technology.

80 percent of women respondents said that using mobile phone helps to build the capacity. Only 20 percent of mobile phone holder says mobile phone does not contribute to increase the capacity. In general, it is derived that, for most of the college women students mobile phone contributes for their capacity building.

The college women students 73.33 percent of the respondents say mobile phones helps for an empowerment. 26.66 percent of the respondents say mobile phone does not help much for an empowerment. In general, it is derived that most of the college woman students are experienced and thinks that mobile phone is helpful for empowering them.

It is observed that out of the total 120 respondents of the college women students 94.16 percent of the respondents say mobile phones helps to keep in touch with friends. They feel that wherever they go they do not feel lonely now a days. 5.83 percent of the respondents say mobile phone does not help to keep in touch with friends. This virtual mechanism does not make the feeling of being with them. In general, it is derived that most of the college woman students are experienced and think that mobile phone is helpful to have the feeling of being with friends.

100 percent of the respondents, all the 120 respondents, said smart phone is helpful for their studies. The college women students who are having the Smartphone said that they are using it to study and collect study materials. Students who are not having the smart phone also using their friends mobile phone to collect study materials. In general, it is derived that all of the college woman students said, through their experience and assumption, mobile phone is very helpful to study especially in the exam time.

It is observed that, out of the total 120 respondents of the college women students. 76 percent of the respondents said they feel safe while they are having mobile with them.

Especially women students who are staying in the hostel, when they try to travel for the long distance feeling well support by mobile phones. About 24 percent of the respondents said mobile phone help to get free. In equated it is derived that, majority of the respondents felt safe and secured to have mobile.

It is observed that, out of the total 120 respondents of the college women students, 86 percent of the respondents said mobile phone is most helpful to ask small helps and supports from friends and family. Only 14 percent of the respondents said they don't contact through mobile to helps. In general, it is derived that, most of the respondents felt mobile phone is useful to seek help and support from friends and families.

It is observed that out of the total 120 respondents of the college women students 80.83 percent of the respondents says social media applications through mobile phones helps to get lots of information on political awareness. 19.16 percent of the respondents says social media applications through mobile doesn't help much to get political awareness. In general it is derived that most of the college woman students are helpful in getting political awareness through social media applications through mobile phones.

It is observed that out of the total 120 respondents of the college women students 95.83 percent of the respondents says social media applications through mobile phones helps to get lots of information on social awareness. 4.16 percent of the respondents only say social media applications through mobile phone doesn't help much to get social awareness. In general it is derived that most of the college woman students are receiving and forwarding lots of social awareness oriented information through social media applications.

## Major Findings

- Most of the college woman students are using mobile phones. In this study, it is found that about 4/5<sup>th</sup> of the college women students are owning mobile phones and keeping it with them.
- All the respondents of the college women students who are using mobile phone are using SMS service. Along with the voice communication this 'Short Message Service' is also being used by all the respondents. After the arrival of popular, easy to use messaging apps like whatsapp, facebook messenger, viber, wechat, snapchat, and Yik Yak the use of SMS is drastically reduced.
- Majority of the college women students are using internet in their mobile phones. It is also found that all the respondents who are having the internet-enabled mobile phones are using internet.
- Majority of the college woman students are using social media applications in their mobile phone. All the respondents, who are using smart mobile phones are having social media application. All the smart phone using respondents are using at least whatsapp and face book. Respondents also having YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Flickr, Google+, etc.
- Majority of the college women students are using mobile phones for an entertainment. It is also found that all the respondents who are having the internet-enabled mobile phones are using for an entertainment. Few of the respondents are keeping the game apps like chess, candy crush, saga, temple run etc. They say few of their friends were once addict of these games and sometimes spent their full nights to play these games. Most of the respondents regularly spend time for watching their interesting videos in the YouTube, chatting in the messaging groups with classmates, college friends, school friends, village friends etc., Most of the face book users daily look at their wall, they like many posts of their friends, also they comment the interesting posts, memes, and criticisms.
- More than half of the college woman students are having linkage with bank account with their mobile phone.
- All the respondents including smart phone holders, basic phone holders and even the respondents without mobile also said mobile phone is essential for their life.
- Even though mobile phone is very much important for the younger generations, almost half of the respondents said mobile phone is also the disturbance.
- Most of the college woman students are experienced and thinks that mobile phone is helpful for empowering them.
- Most of the college woman students are experienced and thinks that mobile phone is helpful to have the feeling of being with friends.
- Majority of the college woman students are experienced and thinks that mobile phone is helpful to keep in touch with parents especially when they are out of home.
- All the respondents of the college woman students said, through their experience and assumption, mobile phone is very helpful to study especially in the exam time.



- Majority of the respondents felt safe and secured to have mobile.
- Mainly of the respondents felt mobile phone is useful to seek help and support from friends and families.
- Mainly of the college woman students are helpful in getting political awareness through social media applications through mobile phones.
- Mainly of the college woman students are receiving and forwarding lots of social awareness oriented information through social media applications.

## Conclusion

Mobile phones are primarily used for talking, sending SMS, and entertainment purposes. These are common communication and leisure activities. Smartphones are actively used for social work and for gaining political awareness through social media applications.

Additionally, smartphones are used for academic purposes, including studying and collecting study materials. Even students without smartphones rely on their friends' devices for academic resources. Despite the reported disturbances caused by mobile phones, the study suggests that owning and using mobile phones contribute to capacity building and empowerment among college women students. Mobile phone usage makes college women students feel secure, particularly when they are away from home. It helps them stay in touch with parents and friends, reducing feelings of loneliness.

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