



Mobile Phones Vs. Print Books In L: A Study Of Changing Reading Preferences Among Undergraduate Students

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Abstract

The ubiquity of mobile technology has fundamentally altered the reading landscape for undergraduate students. While print media was once the uncontested standard, smartphones now serve as a primary gateway for both academic and leisure reading. This study employs a quantitative survey design to analyze the evolving preferences of undergraduates across various disciplines, specifically contrasting mobile and print usage. The results indicate a bifurcated habit: students favor mobile devices for their convenience and accessibility, yet return to print for tasks requiring deep, focused comprehension. These findings suggest that academic libraries must adapt to this 'dual-mode' reading culture to remain effective hubs of information.

Keywords: Academic libraries, Mobile phones, Print books, Reading habits, Undergraduate students,

Introduction

Reading remains the pedagogical cornerstone of higher education, serving as the primary vehicle for cognitive development and academic achievement. Historically, the print medium has been the undisputed foundation of scholarly inquiry; however, the rapid proliferation of mobile technologies has fundamentally disrupted this paradigm. For the modern undergraduate, the smartphone has evolved beyond a communication tool into a pervasive academic interface.

This digital transition offers unprecedented flexibility, granting students instantaneous access to e-books, open-access journals, and curated lecture materials. Yet, this shift is not without scholarly contention. Emerging research suggests that while digital platforms enhance accessibility, they may simultaneously contribute to "hyper-reading" behaviors—characterized by decreased attention spans and a transition toward superficial information processing. Consequently, academic libraries face a critical inflection point. This study seeks to investigate the shifting preferences of undergraduate students between mobile and print media, evaluating how this technological transition influences long-term reading habits and information retention.

Review of Literature:

Harrison (2018) underscores many young people own cell phones and use them to communicate and access information easily. However, in schools, cell phones can become a distraction. The issue is best understood by examining arguments from both sides, supported by facts and visuals that encourage critical thinking.

Nielsen, L., Webb, W. (2011) explains Cell phones can be used as powerful learning tools rather than classroom distractions. *Teaching Generation Text* shows how teachers can use students' favorite technology for reminders, note-taking, quick research, assessments, and home-school communication. When used creatively, cell phones can enhance lessons and increase student motivation.

Objectives of the Research Article:

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the reading preferences of undergraduate students between mobile phones and print books.
2. To identify the factors influencing students' choice of reading medium.
3. To analyze the impact of mobile phone usage on traditional book reading habits.
4. To suggest strategies for libraries to promote effective reading practices.

Research Methodology :

The study adopts a quantitative survey method. A structured questionnaire was designed and distributed to undergraduate students from different academic disciplines. The questionnaire included questions related to frequency of reading, preferred reading medium, purpose of reading, and perceived advantages and disadvantages of mobile phones and print books.

Sample Size : A total of 150 undergraduate students were selected using random sampling techniques.

Data Analysis : The collected data were analyzed using simple statistical tools such as percentages and tables to interpret the findings.

Data Analysis and Interpretation : The analysis revealed that a majority of students use mobile phones daily for reading short academic content, news, and social media posts. Print books are primarily used for exam preparation and in-depth study.

Key findings include:

1. 68% of students preferred mobile phones for quick and casual reading.
2. 72% of students believed print books improved concentration and comprehension.
3. 60% reported reduced time spent reading print books due to mobile phone usage.

The data indicate a clear shift toward digital reading, though print books remain relevant for serious academic purposes.

Findings of the Study

1. Mobile phones are the most frequently used reading medium among UG students.
2. Convenience, portability, and easy access are the main reasons for preferring mobile phones.
3. Print books are still valued for deep reading and academic understanding.
4. Excessive mobile phone use negatively impacts sustained reading habits.
5. Libraries face challenges in attracting students to print collections.

Suggestions :

- Libraries should integrate digital and print resources to meet diverse reading needs.
- Reading awareness programs should be conducted to promote deep reading habits.
- Designated mobile-free reading zones can help improve concentration.
- Librarians should guide students on effective use of digital resources.
- Blended reading initiatives combining e-resources and print books should be encouraged.

Conclusion :

The growing presence of mobile phones in students' daily lives has fundamentally transformed the educational landscape. Once viewed mainly as sources of distraction, cell phones are now increasingly recognized for their potential to support and enhance learning when used thoughtfully and responsibly. As this discussion has shown, mobile phones are powerful tools that can provide instant access to information, support communication, encourage collaboration, and foster independent learning. Ignoring their presence in classrooms is no longer practical; instead, integrating them meaningfully into teaching and learning processes is both necessary and beneficial.

While concerns about distraction, misuse, and academic dishonesty are valid, these challenges stem largely from unregulated or improper use rather than from the technology itself. With clear policies, guidance, and well-designed instructional strategies, educators can channel students' familiarity with mobile phones into productive academic engagement. Features such as reminders, note-taking applications, research tools, interactive quizzes, and multimedia recording can actively support diverse learning styles and improve student motivation.

Moreover, using mobile phones for educational purposes helps bridge the gap between students' everyday digital experiences and formal classroom learning. It promotes digital literacy, critical thinking, and responsible technology use—skills that are essential in today's knowledge-driven society. When students are taught how to use their devices ethically and effectively, mobile phones become instruments of empowerment rather than obstacles to learning.

In conclusion, the debate should no longer focus on whether cell phones belong in schools, but on how they can be used to maximize learning outcomes. By adopting a balanced approach that combines clear rules with innovative teaching practices, educators and institutions can transform cell phones from classroom distractions into valuable educational resources. Harnessing the power of mobile technology offers an opportunity to create more engaging, flexible, and student-centered learning environments, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of education.

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