Abstract

Cell phone is the outcome of galloping development in the Personal Communication Technology (PCT). It is also the best example of media convergence. The cell phone gadget manufacturing companies are focusing more into converting the gadget as a complete ‘communinfotainment’ (Communication + information + entertainment) experience.

Focus of present study is to analyse the impact of cell phone usage on the behavioural patterns of undergraduate students in Pune. It was also designed to track the socio-cultural ramifications of introduction and wide acceptance of cell phone as a communication medium by the society.

The dynamism in PCTs provided plenty of opportunities to the users to change the socio-cultural environment. This researcher used Theories of Harold Innis namely ‘time and space bias of media’ and ‘technology and social change’, Marshall McLuhan’s ‘Hot and cool media’ and Karl Mannheim’s ‘Theory of Generations’ were used as the touchstone to locate these changes. The nature of study was exploratory, ex-post-facto and descriptive in nature. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed in combination. Using questionnaire as a tool, survey method was employed for quantitative data collection. The qualitative data was collected with the help of interviews and interaction.

The study was conducted on the 582 undergraduate students (305 boys and 277 girls) of to the University of Pune, located in Pune. Statistical tests confirm that there is hardly any gender-difference between the percentages of cell phone-dependent undergraduate students.
Abstract

The major findings of the study were: The undergraduate students take into account cell phone set as one of the qualities of personality. They considered SMS text as a verbal communication in written form. They had deceitful behaviour with their parents, friends and relatives from time to time while they used cell phone.

They frequently gave preference to the cell phone caller than their close friends and/or family members, and also during the formal communication with elders.

The mobile telephony had extended the personal space of the user. In other words, the personal space encroached the social and public space. It blurred the socio-cultural boundaries of behaviour and led to casual approach towards communication. There is a power shift in the family as a social institution.

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