

# **Study of College Students Perception about the Appropriateness of Cell Phone Use in Public And at Social Places**

**By**

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## **Abstract**

Cell phones and smart phones have become a mainstay in the lives of many Indian College students, and this has introduced new challenges into how users and non-users alike approach basic social norms and etiquette. People are sorting through new rules of civility in an environment where one's private conversations can easily be overheard in public places and where social gathering can be disrupted by participants focusing on digital screens instead of their inperson companions. These researches are based on the research done by Pew Research Centre's American Trends Panel on Americans.

One of the key parts of this survey centered on questions about how cell owners use their phones in public places— for instance, whether they use their phones to look up information about where they are going or to avoid interacting with other people nearby. It emerged that people use their phones in a host of ways, many of which are clearly for social purposes. In this research, researcher has gone for collecting the data from the college students.

**Keywords:** college students, smart phones, social, public places.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Mobile devices play a complex role in modern social interactions—many college students view them as harmful and distracting to group dynamics, even as they can't resist the temptation themselves. As a general proposition students view cell phones as distracting and annoying when used in social settings but at the same time, many use their own devices during group encounters.

### **How people use their phones in public**

When they are in public places, cell phone owners say they most frequently use their phones for basic social or information-oriented tasks. For instance: 62.3% say they frequently or occasionally look up information about where they are going or how to get there

**69.2% frequently or occasionally coordinate get together with others**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	29	22.3	23.6	23.6
	occasionally	61	46.9	49.6	73.2
	rarely	24	18.5	19.5	92.7
	never	3	2.3	2.4	95.1
	no answer	6	4.6	4.9	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

**72.1% frequently or occasionally catch up with family and friends.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	42	32.3	34.1	34.1
	occasionally	39	30.0	31.7	65.9
	rarely	32	24.6	26.0	91.9
	never	7	5.4	5.7	97.6
	no answer	3	2.3	2.4	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

When people use their cell phones at a social gathering, how often do you think it hurts the conversation or atmosphere at the gathering?

When asked for their views on how mobile phones use impacts group interactions, 70.7% of adults say that when people use their phones in the setting sit frequently or

occasionally hurts they say that cell phone use in these situations frequently or occasionally hurt the atmosphere of the group. Men are more likely than women to feel that cell use at social gatherings hurts the group: 33.3% of men say it frequently hurts the gathering vs.27.3% of women who say that the same.

**Thinking about the most recent time you are at a social gathering, did you use your cell phone to do any of the following?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	39	30.0	31.7	31.7
	occasionally	48	36.9	39.0	70.7
	rarely	21	16.2	17.1	87.8
	never	10	7.7	8.1	95.9
	no answer	5	3.8	4.1	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

In spite of this widespread feeling that cell phone use during social gatherings can be more of a hindrance than a help, it is almost universally the case that people use their own cell phones during these gatherings and **observe other members of their social groups doing the same.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	98	75.4	79.7	79.7
	no	25	19.2	20.3	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

In this survey, cell phone owners were asked to think about the most recent social gathering they attended and what they did with their cell phone while they were in the physical presence of others.

However, it was more often the case that people used their cell phone in a gathering: 70.8% used their phone to post a picture or video they had taken of the gathering.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	92	70.8	74.8	
	no	31	23.8	25.2	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

Cell phone users frequently use their phones while in public for basic social or information oriented tasks, such as:

- **looking up information about where they are going or how to get there: 62.3% of cell owners do that frequently or occasionally**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	42	32.3	34.1	34.1
	occasionally	39	30.0	31.7	65.9
	rarely	32	24.6	26.0	91.9
	never	7	5.4	5.7	97.6
	no answer	3	2.3	2.4	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

- **coordinating get-togethers with others: 69.2%dothat frequently or occasionally**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	29	22.3	23.6	23.6
	occasionally	61	46.9	49.6	73.2
	rarely	24	18.5	19.5	92.7
	never	3	2.3	2.4	95.1
	no answer	6	4.6	4.9	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
<b>Total</b>		130	100.0		

- **Catching up with family and friends: 73.1%dothat frequently or occasionally**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	46	35.4	37.4	37.4
	Occasionally	49	37.7	39.8	77.2
	Rarely	25	19.2	20.3	97.6
	never	1	.8	.8	98.4
	no answer	2	1.5	1.6	100.0
	Total	123	94.6		
Missing	System	7	5.4		
<b>Total</b>		130	100.0		

Many also report using their phones to pass the time or catch up on other tasks or to get information about the people they are planning to see, but these activities are less frequent.

<b>Avoid interacting with others who are near you</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	7	5.4	5.7	5.7
	occasionally	34	26.2	27.6	33.3
	rarely	43	33.1	35.0	68.3
	never	35	26.9	28.5	96.7
	no answer	4	3.1	3.3	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

Explicitly anti-social behavior while in public is considerably less common. Some

31.6% of cell phone owners say that when they are in public places they use their phone to avoid interacting with others who are nearby at least on occasion. Of course, those around the cell phone user may still experience various uses of cell phones as anti-social, even if that was not the intention of the user.

<b>How often is your cell phone turned off? (With power off)</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	2	1.5	1.6	1.6
	occasionally	18	13.8	14.6	16.3
	rarely	71	54.6	57.7	74.0
	never	31	23.8	25.2	99.2
	no answer	1	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

Just 1.5% of smart phone owners said that they turn their phones off frequently, and 13.8% said they turn them off occasionally. However, “feature phone” owners (those who do not own smart phones) are more likely to turn their phones off at least some of the time. Those who own smart phones are more likely than other mobile phone users to have their phone with them and power on. Some 85.4% of smart phone owners carry their phone with them frequently and 78.4% say they never or rarely turn their

**How often do you carry your cell phone with you?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	2	1.5	1.6	1.6
	occasionally	18	13.8	14.6	16.3
	rarely	71	54.6	57.7	74.0
	never	31	23.8	25.2	99.2
	no answer	1	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missi	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

**How often, if at all, do you use apps on your cell phone — including times you spend playing games, using social networking sites, looking at videos or checking emails — in a typical day?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Continuous app	31	23.8	25.2	25.2
	several times/day	52	40.0	42.3	67.5
	few times/day	26	20.0	21.1	88.6
	once a day	8	6.2	6.5	95.1
	less than once/day	6	4.6	4.9	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100		

In addition, most Smart phone owner take advantage of other features of their device, with 40% reporting they use apps on their phones several times a day and 23.8% saying they use them “continuously.”

**How often, if at all, do you browse the web on your cell phone — using Safari, Chrome or another browser — in a typical day?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	continuous browser	22	16.9	17.9	17.9
	moderate	16	12.3	13.0	30.9
	several time/day	42	32.3	34.1	65.0
	few times/day	20	15.4	16.3	81.3
	infrequent users	4	3.1	3.3	84.6
	once a day	12	9.2	9.8	94.3
	less than once/day	5	3.8	4.1	98.4
	no answer	2	1.5	1.6	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missi	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

Web browsing is somewhat less intense in usage: most smart phone owners browse the web on their phones several times a day, although only 16.9% use their phones’ browser continuously (roughly half the proportion who continuously use apps).

**For no particular reason, just for something to do**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	18	13.8	14.6	14.6
	occasionally	30	23.1	24.4	39.0
	rarely	56	43.1	45.5	84.6
	never	17	13.1	13.8	98.4
	no answer	2	1.5	1.6	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missi	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		



About half of cell phone owners said that when they are in public, they use their phones for no particular reason just for something to do either frequently (13.8%) or occasionally(23.1%).

**To catch up on other tasks you need to accomplish**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	frequently	29	22.3	23.6	23.6
	occasionally	61	46.9	49.6	73.2
	rarely	24	18.5	19.5	92.7
	never	3	2.3	2.4	95.1
	no answer	6	4.6	4.9	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

Similarly, about half (46.9%) of cell phone owners say that they occasionally use their phone to catch up on other tasks when they’re in public spaces, with 22.3% doing so frequently.

**Get information or details about people you are planning to see**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid	Percent Cumulative
Valid	frequently	27	20.8	22.0	22.0
	occasionally	42	32.3	34.1	56.1
	rarely	36	27.7	29.3	85.4
	never	13	10.0	10.6	95.9
	no answer	5	3.8	4.1	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

Around a third of cell phone owners (32.3%) said that they occasionally use their phones to get information or details about people they are planning to see when they’re in public spaces, with 20.8% doing so frequently.

**WHEN IT IS ACCEPTABLE TO USE CELL PHONES IN PUBLIC PLACES**

**When walking down the street**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	generally ok	63	48.5	51.2	51.2
	generally no ok	60	46.2	48.8	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

Roughly half (48.5%) of students say that it is “generally OK” to use a phone while walking down the street.

**On public transportation**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	generally ok	99	76.2	80.5	80.5
	generally not ok	24	18.5	19.5	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

Three-quarters (80.5%) of students say that it is generally OK to use a cell phone on public transportation. Men (81.8%) are more likely than women (78.8%) to say this was generally OK.

**While waiting in line**

			Gender		
			Male	Female	
On public transportation	generally ok	Count	73	26	99
		Expected Count	72.4	26.6	99.0
		% within on public transportation	73.7%	26.3%	100.0%
		% within Gender	81.1%	78.8%	80.5%
		% of Total	59.3%	21.1%	80.5%
		Residual	.6	-.6	
		Std. Residual	.1	-.1	
	generally not ok	Count	17	7	24
		Expected Count	17.6	6.4	24.0
		% within on public transportation	70.8%	29.2%	100.0%
		% within Gender	18.9%	21.2%	19.5%
		% of Total	13.8%	5.7%	19.5%
		Residual	-.6	.6	
		Std. Residual	-.1	.2	
Total		Count	90	33	123
		Expected Count	90.0	33.0	123.0
		% within on public transpo	73.2%	26.8%	100.0%
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	73.2%	26.8%	100.0%

Some 84.6% of students say it is generally acceptable to use a cell phone while waiting in line.

**At a restaurant**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	generally ok	104	80.0	84.6	84.6
	generally not	19	14.6	15.4	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

Some 82.9% of students said that it is generally OK to use a phone at a restaurant. Women (84.8%) are more likely than men (82.6%) to say it is generally OK to use a cell phone in this situation.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	generally ok	102	78.5	82.9	82.9
	generally not ok	21	16.2	17.1	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

<b>At a restaurant * Gender Cross tabulation</b>					
			Gender		
			Male	Female	
At a restaurant	generally ok	Count	74	28	102
		Expected Count	74.6	27.4	102.0
		% within	72.5%	27.5%	100.0%
		% within Gender	82.2%	84.8%	82.9%
		% of Total	60.2%	22.8%	82.9%
		Residual	-.6	.6	
		Std. Residual	-.1	.1	
	generally not ok	Count	16	5	21

		Expected Count	15.4	5.6	21.0
		% within	76.2%	23.8%	100.0%
		% within Gender	17.8%	15.2%	17.1%
		% of Total	13.0%	4.1%	17.1%
		Residual	.6	-.6	
		Std. Residual	.2	-.3	
Total		Count	90	33	123
		Expected Count	90.0	33.0	123.0
		% within	73.2%	26.8%	100.0%
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	73.2%	26.8%	100.0%

**During a meeting**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	generally ok	5	3.8	4.1	4.1
	generally not ok	118	90.8	95.9	100.0
	Total	123	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System	7	5.4		
Total		130	100.0		

Some 4.1% of students said that it is generally OK to use a cell phone during a meeting. Women (9.1%) are somewhat more likely than men (2.2%) to say this was generally acceptable, though few said this overall.

## CONCLUSION:

People's cell phone use has injected itself into public places. This has blurred the line between private and public as often-intimate and occasionally blustering phone conversations have now become a common part of the background noise during bus rides, grocery shopping excursions, picnics, side-walk strolls, waits in airport terminals and many other public venues.

Students in general are of the opinion that it's cool to use mobile phones at various public places, they doesn't mind using mobile phones even if there is no specific reason or urgency. This is a kind of change brought in the Indian Society by smart phones. However, addiction and huge reliance on cell phones carry some risks on human development and health. The risks are emotional, physical, social and psychological. The advancements of modern technology, particularly, handheld devices (HHD) (smart phones, cell phones, and mobile devices, etc.) are tremendous. However, prolonged use of devices may cause symptoms of the musculoskeletal

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