

# A STUDY ON THE TECHNICAL AWARENESS ABOUT SMARTPHONES IN THE PRESENT ERA

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**Abstract :** The year 2019 marks the era of the highest use of digital media and smart gadgets compared to any in the past. More than half of the world uses smart phones and internet today for numerous activities like education, shopping & bill-desks, socializing and entertainment along with the regular communication process. The number of smart phone users was forecast to grow from 2.1 billion in 2016 to around 2.5 billion in 2019. There has been a constant increase in the smart phone penetration rate. Over 40% of the world's population is projected to use a smart phone by the end of 2019, from the 10% which was the statistics back in 2011. Knowledge is expanding and is available to both learners and professionals very easily. However the ultimate question which arises is; is the world population able to keep up with the best technical knowledge available to them and how many are actually aware about all the technical features and benefits their smart gadgets offer? This study tries to understand the awareness ratio of the same between the age group of 15 to 70 years which is further segmented to understand the smartphone usage ratio according to the age. It helps to understand the major features which are popular in the masses and the lack of knowledge of the other important features. It helps to analyse how many people know the complete use of smart phones based on gender, age, kind of use, operating system knowledge along with other features and how many choose smart phones over a laptop or a desk top. Overall the research concludes that the technical awareness among all sections should be given equal importance along with smart phone inventions.

**Index Terms :** Smart phones, technical awareness, phone features

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Information & Communication Technology has suffused in every walk of life, influencing the technology fields such as enabling satellites, businesses, commerce and also social networking. Knowledge is expanding and is available to everyone easily. Both learners and professionals are included in the long list of gainers. So many institutions and facilities, usually inspired by the manufacturers, are available to impart the knowledge and awareness of all technical inventions. New launches and technological advancements are very conveniently available at low costs. It is noted that technology has; improved quality of education, facilitated learning by doing, real time conversation etc. Indeed one can say that although the invention and asserted use of smart phones, along with its disadvantages, has subtly impacted the world mechanism today.

A Smartphone has the power to transform the society in India. It is a key component to everyday life, as amplified by the government's Digital India campaign, launched in July 2015. However, while there will be 690 million smart phones in India by 2020, the GSMA estimates that there will be far fewer active data subscribers. Currently, only 412 million people in India, 31.2 per cent of the population, subscribe to the internet via their mobile phone. This gap definitely depicts an opportunity to create awareness among millions of Indian citizens on how they can use their mobile phones to improve education, employment opportunities and access to financial services and healthcare information. Thus, for everyone to completely realize the benefits of a smart phone and internet and to also be a part of the digital revolution, the barrier of digital illiteracy needs to be demolished immediately.

When people have the necessary skills and understanding to leverage digital technologies, they can easily achieve meaningful social, cultural and economic outcomes. The Indian government launched the National Digital Literacy Mission (NDLM), as an integral part of the Digital India campaign, to help combat the digital skills gap in India. This decision was definitely on the basis of the obvious scope of utmost digital literacy in a super talented forum. The NDLM is set to provide ICT training to 1 million people, in its first phase, and provide critical digital skills training to at least one person in each household by 2020. Definitely it is essential to try and achieve this and there needs to be a broadminded and understanding approach towards technology by all, despite the gender and age differences. If Indian citizens do not understand the fundamental benefits the mobile internet can provide, whether it be searching for jobs or health information, or just watching a music video, they will not be motivated to learn how to use it.

It can indeed be said that if everyone tries to be aware about majority of the benefits their technology and devices offer, one can definitely be heading towards ease in lifestyle!

## 1.1 HISTORY OF SMART PHONES

The time between the years 1992 and 2019 can be marked with the rapid evolution of technology; especially smart phones. The modern smart phones have evolved constantly in its 27-year journey to reach us in 2019. Once the large and bulky luxury items have become small, compact devices we can't live without. India in 2019 stands at a 40% smart phone penetration rate compared to the mere 21.2% in the year 2014. The history and evolution of a smart phone is very essential to seep in as it gives us a glimpse of where we've come from, and of what's coming in the future. That goes for improvements in the technology as well as the consumer trends.

In 1992, IBM revealed a revolutionary device that had more capabilities than its preceding cell phones. This prototype smart phone was known as the Simon Personal Communicator, but it wouldn't see its way to consumers until 1994. The device had many of the modern elements we attribute to current smart phones and mobile devices like touch screen, email, fax, notes & calendar, Apps and other widgets that would become widespread decades later. While it was a bold entry into the market, it wasn't exactly the smoothest starting point for a mobile device. You could say it was ahead of its time, and most consumers didn't jump on board. The Simon was advanced for its time, but has nothing on the smart phones of today. It only had a small monochrome LCD screen and a one-hour battery life.

Then Apple entered the smartphone race. Apple had already begun transforming how people use portable technology with the iPod, and the stage was set for them to launch their latest device in 2007. After that there was no stopping of the steady yet quick increase in the technological advancements and many companies came out with their competitive gadgets with Android being one of the major platforms. There's a large difference in hardware from 2007 to 2018. In short, everything is more advanced. Memory capacity is higher, devices are faster and powerful, one can use multiple applications at the same time, camera quality is at its peak challenging the sales of a DSLR professional camera, music and video streaming is simple and easy like online gaming and to accomplish this all, the battery life is finally enhanced! As mentioned earlier, two major operating systems have evolved within the smart phone market; Google's Android has been adopted by a number of hardware manufacturers to compete with Apple and their iOS and currently Android is leading due to the availability of its interface within a common man's budget. After all in a country like India, it's always necessity over luxury!

## 1.2 EVOLUTION OF SMARTPHONES

In the last many years of the technology introduction, smart phones have completely changed the way we live on as intricate as our daily lives. From checking the weather to running a business, we often rely on these small powerful devices to complete our daily tasks with utmost ease and finesse. Since their first introduction, smart phones have consistently evolved to fulfil our growing needs in the form of faster wireless connections, sharper images and greater memory storage. There are many more functions to it deemed to be explored. Today, we take pride in the always progressing smart phones and feature highlights to understand its transformation to this day.

The term 'smart phone' was first used in the year 1995 but the original smart phone was introduced three years before that. The first camera phone was launched in Japan in the year 2000 and it today has evolved into a must have factor of a smart phone. After 2003, Nokia phones gained tremendous popularity and they became one of the major companies in league in the telecommunications sector. The year 2007 marks the launch of the first 'iPhone' by Steve Jobs and those beauties are still the dream phones for many, now available with the best features a smart phone manufacturing company can collaborate together. Soon after, the first android phone, the 'G1' was launched late in the year 2008. In the absolute next few years, Android had become the most preferred and popular Operating Systems in the entire world! Fast forwarding to the year 2018, companies like Apple, Samsung, HTC, Motorola, Sony, Lenovo, Oppo, Vivo, Micromax and many other companies stand in a break neck competition and we see a launch of a new smart phone by each company every few months.

### 1.3 SOME LATEST SMARTPHONE LAUNCHES

A number of new and upcoming mobile phones in India have been announced recently, making the list of best upcoming phones coming to India, quite interesting. These latest upcoming smartphones offer the newest innovations in mobile technology. These upcoming mobile phones range from flagship devices to budget offerings and thus every kind of buyer would have something to wait for. More importantly these upcoming smartphones in India will also feature the latest mobile hardware and software. Huawei Mate 20 Pro introduces its flagship chipset for 2018 and now comes with a triple-camera setup. With 6GB RAM and 128GB storage, the phone does promise a good performance functionality. With a rear camera of 40 Megapixels and a front camera of 24 Megapixels, one can actually satisfy the needs of various gadgets in just one. There are many other phones by Xiaomi, LG, Nokia and Motorola recently launched in the market.

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## 2. A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In one of the topics in the book 'Introduction to Global Media: Key Concepts', author Terry Flew says, "The technological means of communication constitute the infrastructure that makes media communication possible. While the questions arising from 'how to infrastructure' have frequently been approached from a technical or engineering perspective, rather than through its impacts upon social relations and human interactions (Star and Bowker, 2005), there are influential traditions in media and communications studies which take the technical properties of a medium to be a key starting-point for understanding its social impacts and implications. At their simplest, theories of new media propose that the information and communications technology (ICT) revolution that has gained momentum from the 1980s onward has so transformed the global media environment that we are witnessing the twilight of the 'old' media of print and broadcasting, and the rise of the 'new' media associated with digital technologies, convergence and networking." According to many researches, the global popularization of the Internet in the 1990s marks out the critical point in this debate, as it, most clearly exemplified the qualitatively distinct properties associated with new media, but a considerable range of digital devices-most notably smart phones -have displayed various characteristics of the new media.

There are many subjected yet common things discovered. Smartphone sales tops in comparison to that of Laptops and Tablets. Mobile phones with better configuration are sold because of style statement rather than the actual need of the involved features. People are usually aware about their phone brand but not the model or the version. Majority of the masses do not know the full form of an OS. As per data collected online, surveys and personal feedback, this lack of smart phone literacy is a common notion. On analyzing various articles and also through one-on-one interviews, many in our country think that this lack of complete knowledge is a good aspect as people should spend more time with loved ones rather than with the gadgets. It is a well developed thought that smart phones have become a dangerous addiction and it should not be vibrantly perused. According to Fahad Aldhaban's research, user acceptance of Smartphone technology is a critical key factor to determine its success in todody's raid changing technologies. Therefore, identifying and better understanding key factors that influence users' adoption of Smartphone technology is extremely valuable for all stakeholders. Like every other aspect, there are many negatives yes, but the effort to make the most use of the enticed technology is also very prominent. Monsour Alsaleh, a researcher from the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology

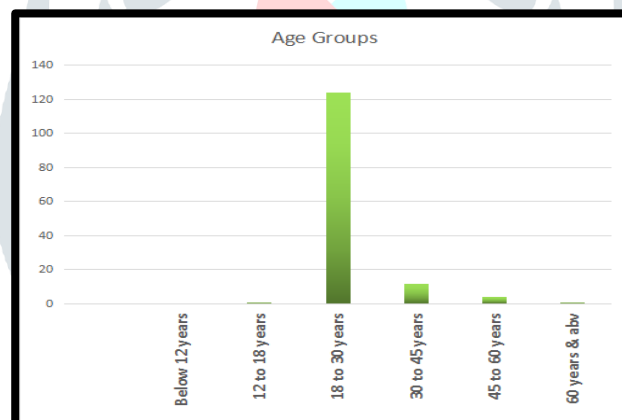
(KACST) Saudi Arabia, proclaims that the mobility, portability, and increasing capabilities of smart phones have significantly contributed to the increasing popularity of these multi-purpose devices. As smart phones begin to replace personal computers because of their advanced features and ease of use, large volumes of sensitive data are now stored and processed in smart phones including contacts, emails, photos, and videos. Hans Friedel, Beth Bos & Kathryn Lee from Texas State University in the US have also observed that the researchers have recognized the potential for these devices to foster collaboration and extend learning opportunities by allowing anywhere-anytime learning

### 3. METHODOLOGY

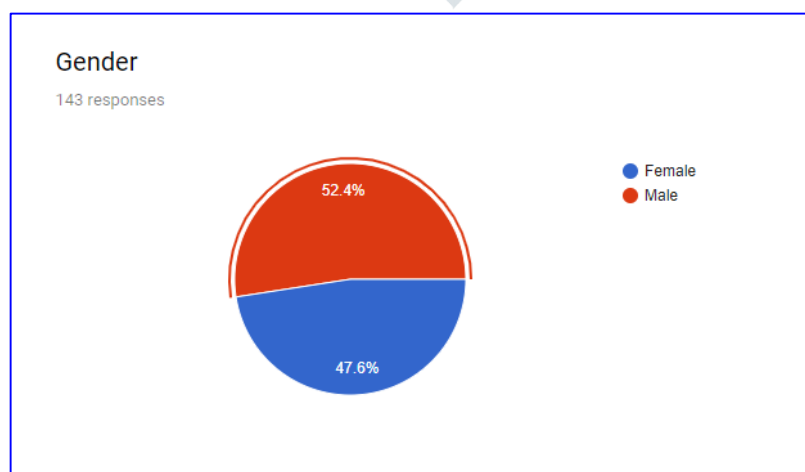
The type of research that was used in this study was quantitative research and the sampling method used was random sampling method to obtain a more scientific result that could be used to represent all of the required classes of people. One-on-one opinion was obtained by asking open ended questions to check and generalize the responses received. A questionnaire was sent across to the targeted age groups but no other specific category was finalized. The questionnaire was inclined to objectify the general technical awareness of smartphones among the targeted audience. The Sample size was 143 individuals.

### 4. RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSES

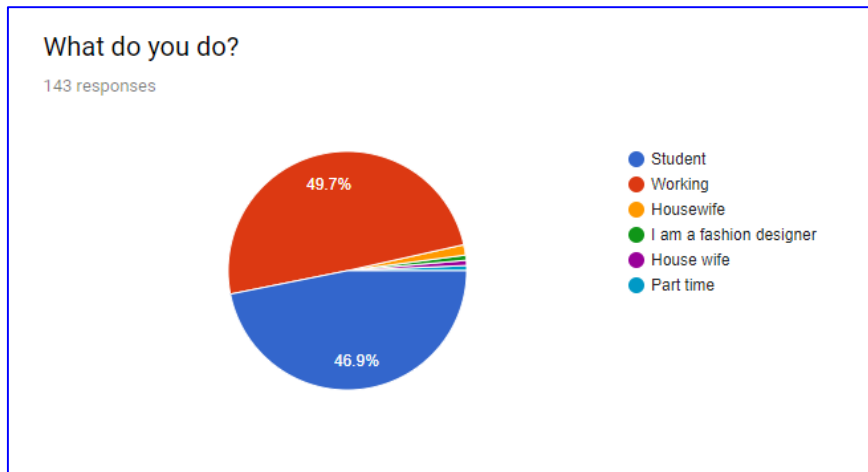
\* Users according to the age



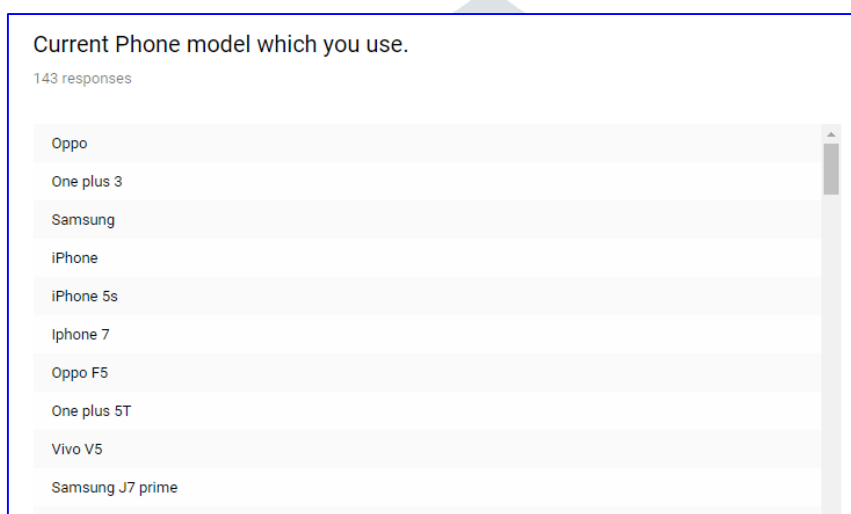
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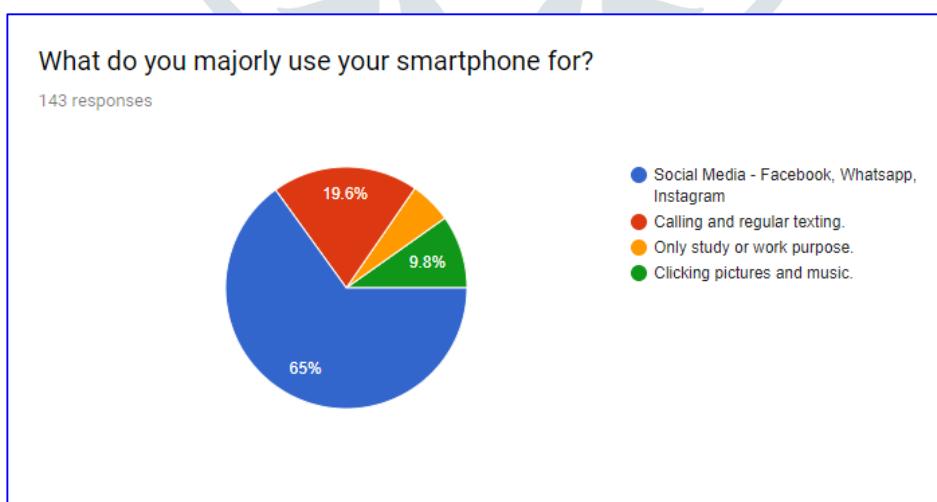
\* Users according to their profile.



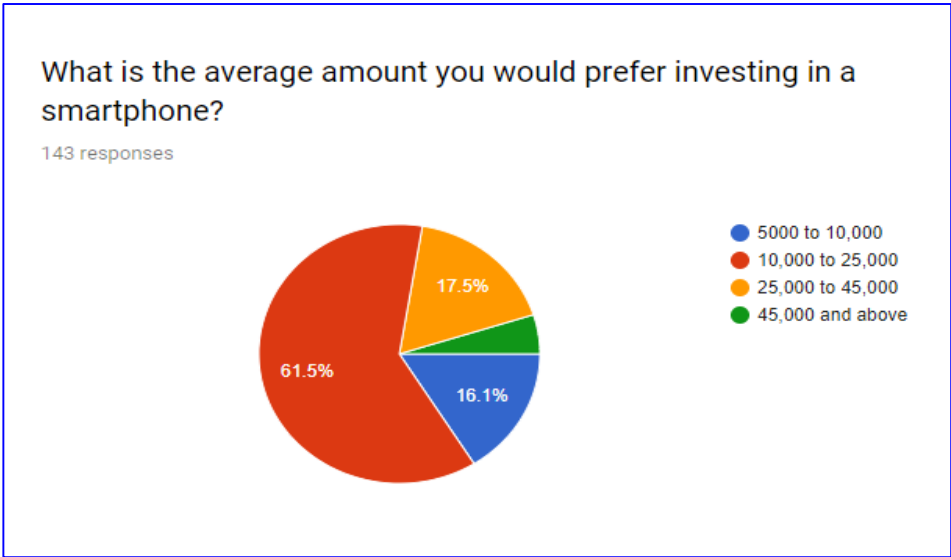
\* Most preferred Smartphone brand.



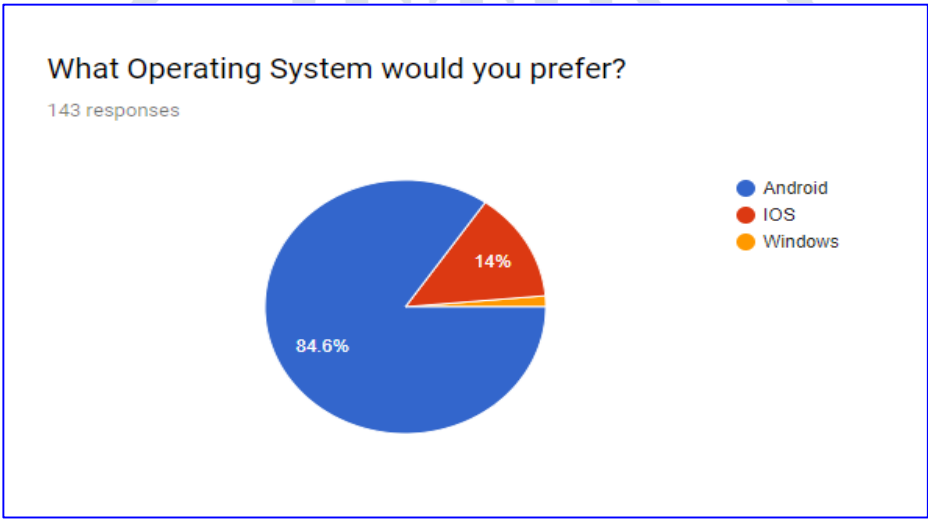
\* Most common smartphone uses



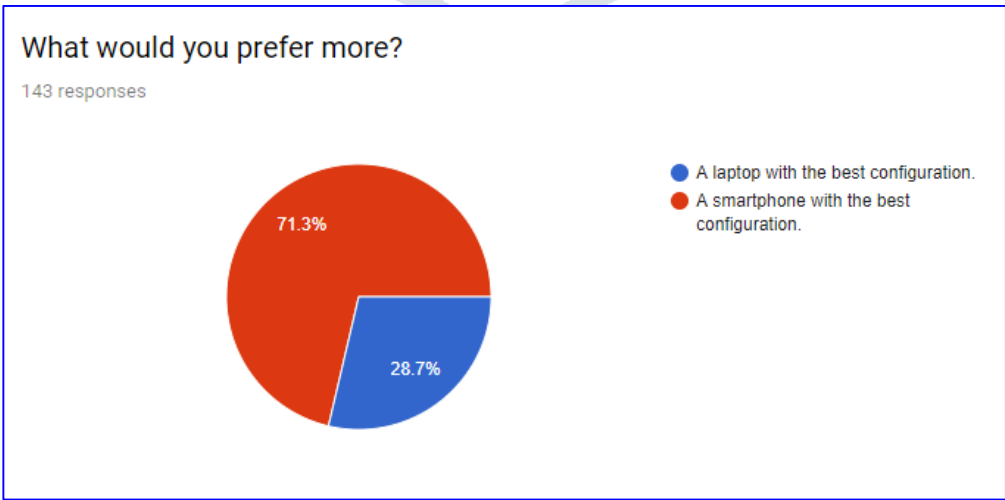
\* Desirable Budget



\* Most preferred Operating System



\* Laptops or Desktops ?



**5. RESULTS**

The above questionnaire and images show the results of the questions asked to 143 individuals. 15% of the people who responded did not know the make or model of the smartphone they used and answered as 'Others'. Only 45% of the rest knew the model number but many were unsure about the Operating system. Many iPhone users commented that they love their android phones. A few mentioned their phone numbers and a few mentioned 'touchscreen phone' as their model number. In spite of the fact that 100% responses were from smartphone users, the maximum uses & functionality of their devices is unknown to most.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The paper concludes that phones depict style statement & the class of the person. People think that the kind of phone one uses determines the financial status and class of an individual. Very few know the difference between Android and IOS. Windows is like no idea for many! Although people 'Google' most of the information needed, only 47% of the 2.1 billion smartphone users access internet constantly. Hence we concluded that although it is the world of smartphones, very few are actually aware of the complete technical aspects and functions of the devices they use.

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