

**USING OF MOBILE PHONES AMONG THE RURAL PEOPLE IN SALEM
DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU**

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Abstract

Mobile phone is widely used by all the sections of people irrespective of gender, caste, religion, race and nation. In India, this mobile telecommunication was introduced in the year 1994 through establishment of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) by enactment of National Telecom Policy. Before the establishment of TRAI, the central government provided the service to the general public through landline mode and that too owned by government. But after the establishment of TRAI, the central government opened the door to the private network services to provide best services to the general public. It means that due to the competition, the private companies come forward to provide best services at a cheap rate. This enables the general public to purchase mobile phone on their own and communicate easily as well as quickly with others as they wish. Therefore mobile phone is the part and parcel of everyone's life and it became an unavoidable instrument for everybody. The present paper is an attempt to study the using of mobile phone among the rural people in Salem District of Tamil Nadu.

Introduction: India's telecommunication network is the second largest in the world based on the total number of telephone users (both fixed and mobile phone). It has one of the lowest call tariffs in the world enabled by the mega telephone networks and hyper-competition among them. It has the world's third-largest Internet user-base.

Telecommunication technology Introduced in India in 1882, now the total numbers of mobile phone subscribers have reached 875.48 million as of October 2013. The mobile tele-density had increased to 70.96per cent in October 2013. In the wireless segment, 4.90 million

subscribers were added in October 2013. The wire line segment subscriber base stood at 29.08 million. According to Unnithan and Swatman (2001) mobile phones have become a significant communication tool for every person throughout the world. India's rural areas accounted for 191 million mobile subscribers at the end of March in comparison to 393 million subscribers in urban areas, according to TRAI. According to the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), with about 74 per cent of its population living in its villages, India has perhaps the largest potential rural market in the world. The Indian rural market with its vast size and demand base offers great opportunities to Companies. Two-thirds of Indian consumers live in rural areas and almost half of the national income is generated here. It is only natural that rural markets form an important part of the total market of India (Akarte and Arora, 2012).

Although rural telecom is a very challenging sector but holds enormous business potential for mobile telecom service providers. For economic, social development and generating awareness communication has a great role to play with the rise in income level of rural farmer (Banerjee, 2011). The paper "Rural India Different Meaning to Different People" authored by Madaswamy Moni (2008) highlights the gradual development taking place in rural India. The present study has conducted with the aim of the usages of mobile phone among the rural people in Salem District.

Materials and Methods: The universe for the present study is the people who are living within the boundary of the Sangeethapatty Village Panchayat of Omalur Taluk in Salem District of Tamil Nadu. From the universe the researchers have selected only 30 respondents for the present study by using purposive sampling method. Because, the researchers purposively taken the respondents who are using the cell phones as their medium of communication. The researchers have used the structured interview schedule for the present study. The interview schedule contains socio-economic details of the respondent, details of mobile phone that are using by the respondent and the usage of mobile phone.

Results: With regard to age of the respondents, 76.67 per cent of the respondents are belonging to the age group of below 49 years, 23.33 per cent of the respondents are belonging to the group of 50 year and above. Among the total respondents, that more than two-thirds of the respondents (73.33 %) are males and remaining nearly one-third of the respondents (26.67 %) are females. While considering the community of the respondents, 13.33 per cent of the respondents are belonging to the most backward class, 33.33 per cent of the

respondents are belonging to the backward class and remaining 53.34 per cent of the respondents are belonging to schedule castes.

As far as the occupation of the respondents is concerned, out of the total respondents 33.33 per cent of the respondents are working as cooley, and 40 per cent of the respondents are working as agricultural based workers, 10per cent of the respondents are housewives, 16.67 per cent of the respondents are business men and woman. With regard to the income of the respondents, 33.33 per cent of the respondents are earning less than -Rs.4999 per month, 67.67 per cent of the respondents are earning more than Rs.5000 per month.

While considering the size of the family, 53.33 per cent percentages of the respondents are having a family size of up to 4 members, 33.33 per cent of the respondents are having a family size of up to 5 members in the family and 13.33 per cent of the respondents are having a family size of up to more than 7 members in the family. As far as the type of family, 73.33 per cent of the respondents are living in the nuclear family and remaining 26.67 per cent of the respondents are living in the joint family.

With regard to using of mobile phone, 40 per cent of the respondents are using mobile phone less than 3 years, 60 per cent of the respondents are using more than 3 years. Among the total respondents, 80 per cent of the respondents using ordinary mobile phone, 20 per cent of the respondents are using smart phone as their mobile phone. While considering the amount used by the respondents to recharge or top-up, 76.67 per cent of the respondents are spending less than 100 rupees for their mobile phone recharge monthly and 23.33 per cent of the respondents are spending more than 100 rupees for their mobile phone recharge monthly. As far as the amount of time spend in the mobile phone, 40 per cent of the respondents are spending averagely less than 15 minutes per day for mobile phone communication, and remaining 60 per cent of the respondents are spending averagely more than 15 minutes per day for mobile phone communication.

Table No. 1: Distribution of the respondents based on their Purpose of mobile phone using

S. No.	Purpose of mobile phone	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Only Calling	16	53.33
2	Texting	5	16.67
3	Internet	6	20
4	Music	3	10
	Total	30	100

The above table explains that 53.33 per cent of the respondents mentioned that the purpose of using mobile phone is only for calling, 16.67 per cent of the respondents are using mobile phone for both calling and texting, 20 per cent of the respondents are using mobile phone for both calling and using internet, 10 per cent of the respondents are using mobile phone for both calling and listening music. With regard to the purpose of using mobile phone, 60 per cent of the respondents are using mobile phone for business purpose, 20 per cent of the respondents are using mobile phone for other purpose like making conversation with family members and relatives and 10 per cent of the respondents are using mobile phone for listening music.

Conclusion: It is concluded from the above results, the mobile phone penetrate in the life of the rural people also. Due to the economic conditions, they are spending minimum amount for recharging the mobile phone and also spending little amount time for conversing. Similarly most of the respondents are using mobile phone for business purpose by either calling or texting the message to the respective persons. At the same time some of the farmers are also contacting the agricultural call centres for clarifying their doubts while cultivating their fields. These are the good signs of the Indian economy. Because the mobile phones used in the right perspective, the benefits not only goes to the concerned individual but the benefits will go all the people who directly or indirectly related with the individual.

Limitations: The researchers collected the required data for the present study only from 30 respondents and in order to make any justifications the sample size should be increased.

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