

# Introduction to mobile phones in youth culture media essay



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Mobile phones take a very crucial part in youths' lifestyle nowadays. Mobile phone is now an always-on among youths. The International Telecommunication Union predicts that the number of mobile phone subscribers will reach to four billion by end of the year 2008, mobile phone penetration has grown from 12 percent in 2000 to 60 percent of the world's population in year 2008 (UN News Centre, 2008). It is now so widely in used by the consumers around the world. Based on a research by Audrey N. Selian, 2004, youth market segment is defined as the range of teenagers and young adults between the ages of 12 to 29 years old. They are using almost everything in their own private mobile phones such as going online, games, instant messaging and so forth. Moreover, mobile phones allow people to access various kind of content, such as weather updates, news stories, financial information, sports content, and music videos. From the context it shows that, youths are now independent when they own one mobile phone. It offers the freedom to youths in accessing to any social network they preferred. Great improvement in wireless technology nowadays raises the services and contents to the consumers. In June 2004 survey cited in Michael and Salter (2006), 13% of mobile subscribers reported accessing information via a mobile device. Over 50% of these users sought weather information and 44% searched for sports information. Although few mobile users reported using their devices to obtain entertainment content, Michael and Salter (2006) predicted that creative mobile content has tremendous potential to compete with other content areas, such as news, by 2010.

' Mobile messaging is the modern way to communicate. It's instant, location independent, and personal. That's why the new mobile phone generation has

started to favor messaging, making it one of the fastest-growing segments of the mobile communications industry' (Nokia, 2002). Based on a research, it is estimated that 72.1% of Western Europe own a mobile phone (Katz & Aakhus, 2002) and that over one billion messages of up to 160 characters are sent each month in the UK alone (AOL mobile, 2002). Other studies have found that, in Britain at least, nearly 80% 14-16 year olds own mobiles (NOP, 2001; as cited in Thurlow, 2003), and that it is this teen market that dominates text-messaging, with 90% of teenagers claimed to text more than they talk on their phones (Haig, 2002). From all the evidences shown, we could see that mobile casting which offers SMS text messaging do really influence youths' lifestyle. They prefer sending instant messages instead of interaction in real. Regarding to Dr Carsten Sorensen 2006, " We see that people between the ages of 15 and 17 send and receive an average of 12.5 texts every day, in addition to holding an average of 4.7 mobile phone conversations. Overall, young people text three times as frequently as their parents, and make more calls. There is a constant pinging of messages." Therefore, here we can see that, talking is intrusive and involves a degree of social risk – the recipient at the end of the call may not want to talk, or worse might reject advances. Texting is safer, unthreatening, unobtrusive, and allows social and sexual advances to be made with the minimum of risk and the maximum of discretion (Philip Gould, 2006).

Beside of text messaging, Mobile music is included in the mobile entertainment services mix along with mobile gaming, mobile sports and betting, icon downloads, etc. (Macinnes et al. 2002). In addition, European Commission and Andersen Consulting (2002, p. 5) forecast that on 2006

mobile music market in Europe will worth roughly € 3 billion, while ARC Group (2002, p. 1) predicts that worldwide mobile entertainment users will reach 780 million until 2005. The adoption of mobile music service by consumers is rapidly expanding. On September of 2002, global wireless subscribers were 1. 08 billion (EMC 2002). Therefore, consumers enjoy free download when wireless is provided. The characteristics of mobile network technology such as ubiquity (everywhere), accessibility (anytime and immediately), reachability (users can be reached wherever they are and anytime), localization (content customized to the user's location), and personalization has been improve to adopt in the century now (Baldi & Thaug 2002). In conclusion, consumers nowadays relying extremely much to mobile phone as the services provided made them always-on with their mobile phones.

From the context, we could see that mobile casting influences a lot towards lifestyles of consumers particularly youths. Yet, Internet brought about the same consequences though. Mobile phones seemed to be always-on among youths in this century yet same goes to the Internet. Internet is a global network which linked all the computers together no matter where they are. In other word, it has the function in connecting everyone in a very low cost nowadays. It is now available for almost everyone to in various kind of fields and populations especially students. The Internet is a valuable source of information for students looking for ideas for projects and assignments. With over 50 million web sites on the net the chances are any information however obscure can be found (O. Osunade, 2003). It also serves as a forum which is specially for discussion by many people from large distance. These

group discussions include video conferencing and chat rooms. As mentioned before, Internet allows people to gain a lot of information. Therefore, there is always higher risk for the users to approach loads unnecessary information. They exchange and share information with different kinds of users around the world. Hence, teenagers will have higher chance to get closer to unhealthy information such as pornography. They too have poor time management where they spend almost all hours in front of their computers or laptops. They would rather communicate on the internet, instead of people in real. According to Ru Guangrong, Chinese Information Center for Defense Science and Technology 1998, the Internet advocates western lifestyles. These websites display various aspects of western society and life, and the overwhelming majority of them have positive portrayals of the western life-style. It makes people believe that the West seems to be countries of absolute freedom and paradise for individual achievement where private life is without obstacles and external inferences.

Besides that, another issue that influences youth lifestyle would be the social networking nowadays such as Facebook, Twitter, Friendster and so forth. These are the method that allows teenagers or even adults to communicate, to link with each other, to share their common interest.

It has been reported in a poll that suggests teenagers are checking social network sites more than 10 times a day, posting pictures and videos and partaking in online bullying and hacking into other's accounts (The Sun Daily, 2009). Research has shown a big increase in Facebook with a jump of 24. 8 million in 2008 to 71. 1 million in 2009 (Social Networking Websites Review, 2009). The amount shows three times higher within a year. The number <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-to-mobile-phones-in-youth-culture-media-essay/>

shows that teenagers spend more hours in social networking instead of other activities. They could share common interest on the line and get instant feedbacks from their friends. These make them prefer to stick more hours in front of computers rather than involve themselves in real life interaction.

In conclusion, although mobile phones take almost all parts of a teenager's life, yet research shown that Internet which includes Social Networking does influence a teenager's life in a way. On the other hand, the influences that brought by these media could be in positive or negative ways. In Malaysia, a survey conducted in the year 2008 by the Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), revealed that Malaysia ranked second in ASEAN in term of the number of mobile phone users. The survey further revealed that the main users of the mobile phone were those ranging in age from 20 to 49 years old. While preteens and students below 19 years old make up 20.9% and the elderly consists of 12.3% (MCMC, 2008). In a study as well, Abdullah in year 2004 stated that Malaysian youths claimed that owning a mobile phone is an essential part of their life. The younger generations furthermore, took the mobile phone not just as a tool for communication but, also as a way to express themselves (Ito and Okabe, 2004) and more importantly to look hip and cool (Ling, 2001). Therefore, from all the statements above, we could believe the fact that youth in Malaysia are most likely brought mobile casting into their lifestyle. They are easily influenced by mobile casting in the way they live. This is common when younger generations are digital natives where they are more easily being attracted by the technology advancement. Hence, more researches are needed to test the statement of this research.