

MOBILE PHONE USAGE AS DETERMINANT OF ACADEMIC DISTRACTION AMONG STUDENTS IN NIGER DELTA UNIVERSITY, WILBERFORCE ISLAND, BAYELSA STATE-NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study on mobile phone usage as a determinant of academic distraction among students in the Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, adopted a descriptive survey research design. A sample which consisted of 325 respondents, from the Faculty of Education were selected for the study through stratified random sampling technique. The researchers developed an instrument titled: "Mobile Phone Usage and Academic Distractions Questionnaire Among Students" (MPUADQAS) which addressed the four research questions that were posed to respondents. 20 Likert type items were presented for the respondents to seek their opinions. The responses to the research questions collated were analyzed using mean scores, standard deviation and percentages. Data analysis revealed that students agreed that mobile phones had affect their academics negatively, implying that mobile phone usage had actually served as a major distraction to students academic activities in the Institution. The researchers recommended among others that all stakeholders in the education sub-sector should reason together and check the on-going trend in order to save the academic quest of the students.

KEYWORDS: Academic Distraction; Determinant; Mobile Phones; Students; Usage.

1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is characterized by rapid changes in technological growth, and increased influence of digital media on virtually every aspect of human life. The use of gadgets has revolutionized nearly all spheres of man's daily life to the extent that the current period is regarded as the "digital age". Mobile phones which is one the digital tools, have become a ubiquitous companion platform for communication; a gateways to ease of information, and wellsprings of distraction. It is observed that due to the multiple uses of mobile phones, people unnecessarily spend more time on the phone. One is tempted at times to conclude that 90% of youths and students specifically are into mobile phone usage for the better part of each day. A significant reality is the fact that mobile phones are essential accessories and a indispensable learning/leisure tools that has radically reshaped how students experience academic life.

At the tertiary institutions level, mobile phone usage among students is nearly inseparable or integral to the daily routines of students. Unlike before its' advent, students could spend the whole day searching for materials in the library for their studies. Clearly, mobile phone usage empowered students through instant internet access to obtain valuable learning aids and materials such as Chat GPT, enabling quick retrieval of lecture notes, access to scholarly articles, and seamless communication with peers and lecturers. This position is clearly supported by Sumath, Laksoni and Kundhavai, (2018). Sumath et al posited that the use of mobile phones among students in higher learning can influence high academic performance. Their worry however is that although most high school learners (students) own mobile phones, its largely clear that students have low use of it for academic endeavors. The same ideas are also inconsonant with submissions from Kibona and Mgaya (2015) and Twum (2017, with respect to their digital behaviours in higher educational institutions.

Pin pointedly, Eserinume (2015) citing Tindell and Bchlander (2011) explicitly stated that mobile phone usage has become a serious distraction. The researchers having studied College students from New Hampshire College, reported that students most students at least seek for information within every one to five times during class periods. Eserinume found evidences to the effect that mobile phone usage during classes affects students' grades and distracts classmates from concentration while lectures are on-going. The level of distraction could be much to the extent that even the attentive students misses out when their classmates fiddle with their mobile phone. Mobile phones can as well result to quick fixing of challenging academic tasks without critical reasoning. Behaviours such as these no doubt can led to students low cognitive development among learners.

Mobile phones could serve in resource limited environments like Nigeria which is still believed to be growing. The availability of phones had helped to bridge the learning infrastructural gaps in many respects. According to Taiwo, Olowookere, and Adewale (2022), mobile phones had made teaching flexible and broaden access to learning materials among students. Similarly, Aina's (2025), maintained that among pre-service teachers in Nigeria, had enabled frequent academic and social media usage particularly on WhatsApp and Facebook, highlighting both its educational utility and usage patterns that warrant regulation. Moreover, a study by Ozuzu (2025), revealed that student's level of awareness on the positive impact of mobile phone usage had significant positive impact on facilitating effective study habits and improving their academic performance. The question that comes to mind however is whether the students are actually being using the mobile phones for academic purposes or it is a source of distraction for them?

The two sided nature of the mobile phone will help us identify both the positive and negative sides of its use among students. Mobile phones support learning as it leads to easy access of information; supports instructional processes and in simple terms creates personal convenience for user. On the other hand, its adverse effect include distractions in a classroom; many also belief that mobile phones could be a major reason for reduced cognitive abilities among learners; it may as well contribute to students' indulging in cheating during examinations; lead to poor writing skills; addiction and possibly cyber bullying among young ones.

It is important to note that the very features that make mobile phones powerful educational tools also cultivate avenues for academic distraction for them. Academic distraction is seen as a situation where rather than using the mobile phone for learning; students apply the same tool for purposes that are not beneficial to their academic pursuits. A systematic review by Paterna (2024), across 29 studies ($n \approx 48,490$) revealed a small but significant negative correlation between problematic phone use and academic achievement ($r = -0.110$). Findings from the study indicated that use of phone can negatively affect students academic engagements. At the University of Padova in Italy, Agostini and Petrucco (2023), in their study found that over 75% of students used their phones during class for social media or messaging; this behavior correlated strongly with tendencies toward procrastination and diminished exam performance. These patterns emerge globally. Within Nigeria, data also underscore the duality of mobile phone influence. Okore, Offor, and Idahosa (2023), reported that services such as WhatsApp chatting, music downloading, playing video games and browsing during lectures negatively impacted students' time management and concentration in institutions across southern Nigeria. Similarly, distractions from mobile phones are not limited to digital time-wasting alone; they manifest cognitively. Digital distractions undermine focus and classroom engagement even in tech-rich environments. In the light of the above, Pérez-Juárez, González-Ortega, and Aguiar-Pérez (2024), noted that students can sustain concentration for only about 14 minutes before succumbing to phone-related interruptions, with social media on boarding as a particularly aggressive destructor.

From the literature review so far, it is obvious that mobile phones occupy complex roles in academic life, capable both of empowering and disrupting students' academic life at the same time. This duality is especially salient in university settings, where the stakes of focus and disciplined study are high, yet regulation is often weak, since nobody actually controls them like the case at the primary and secondary schools. Within Niger Delta University where internet connectivity and mobile phone is readily owned by almost all students, the challenge is twofold; the first is recognizing mobile phones' academic potentials while the second is mitigating their distracting influence among students. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine mobile phone usage as academic distracter among students in Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State – Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The use of mobile phone has moved from being a luxury to becoming an essential companion of daily life, especially among young people and students precisely. Within the Nigerian university system, the mobile phone has become almost inseparable from students' existence, serving multiple purposes ranging from

communication, social networking, and entertainment. As a gadget with multiple devices, phones support learning through academic research for easy retrieval of information. For students in tertiary institutions, mobile phone usage may not only be a tool of convenience but also an ever-present fixture in lecture halls, hostels, libraries, and recreational spaces.

While the usefulness of mobile phones in facilitating access to knowledge and academic resources cannot be overstated, their tendency to serve as sources of distraction has emerged as a growing concern. The problem stems from the fact that mobile phones are designed not just for learning but for multifunctional engagement. Social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and X (formerly Twitter), etc. constantly captivate students with notifications, updates, and interactive contents. The lure of entertainment; streaming videos, playing online games, chatting with friends, or endlessly scrolling through feedbacks often interrupts study routines and diverts attention away from academic responsibilities such as studying, concentrating during class room lectures, among others. A common observation of students in the university campuses indicates that irresponsible Mobile phone usage may impair good study habits among most students. Many students in tertiary institutions, who may have initially picked up their phones to check lecture notes or read a research article, may often find themselves spending hours in non-academic activities, leaving little time for sustained concentration on their studies.

Lecturers across Nigerian universities frequently complain about students' divided attention during classes, with some students surreptitiously engaging with their phones while lectures are ongoing. In hostels, instead of using quiet time for revision or group discussions, many students appear to be absorbed in online conversations or digital entertainment rather than focusing on their studies. This trend raises the fear that, rather than being an aid to education, mobile phones are increasingly undermining students' ability to focus, manage their time effectively, and achieve academic success. The paradox here is that the same device which can be used to enhance knowledge and facilitate communication with lecturers is also the same device that tempts students into procrastination and distraction. The problem of distraction situated through mobile phone use obviously is not just within selected individual students but fast becoming systemic. As the student population increasingly embraces mobile technology, the overall academic culture risks being diluted by students with divided attention and declining concentration levels. Thus, the problem of the study is to investigate mobile phone usage as a determinant of academic distraction among undergraduate students in the Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate mobile phone usage as a determinant of academic distraction among students in Niger Delta University. Specifically, the study seeks to;

1. Examine the extent of mobile phone usage among students in Niger Delta University and the level of academic distractions.
2. Identify the major purposes for which students in Niger Delta University use mobile phones and academic distractions.
3. Investigate the extent to which mobile phone usage contributes to academic distractions during lectures, study hours, and other academic activities.
4. Analyze if there is any relationship between mobile phone usage and its induced academic distractions in Niger Delta University.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. To what extent is the level of mobile phone usage attracting the students towards academic distractions in Niger Delta University?
2. What are the major purposes for which students in Niger Delta University use mobile phones; does this distract their academic experiences?
3. To What extent is the mobile phone usage contributing to academic distractions during lectures, study hours, and other academic activities?
4. Is there any relationship between mobile phone usage and academic distractions among students' in Niger Delta University?

1.5 Theoretical Review: Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Self-determination theory was developed in the 1980s by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan, two psychologists who were interested in understanding human motivation and behavior. Deci and Ryan's work on self-determination theory has since become one of the most widely studied and influential theories in

psychology, with applications in various fields such as education, health care, sports, and organizational management is widely accepted. Self-Determination Theory (SDT), emphasizes that human motivation is guided by the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2020). In academic settings, when these needs are met, students are more likely to engage in learning with intrinsic motivation and self-regulation. Conversely, when these needs are frustrated, students may seek alternative outlets such as excessive mobile phone use to fulfill those unmet needs, even if it results in distraction or poor academic outcomes.

Self-determination theory is a psychological phenomenon that focuses on motivation based on people's choices and behaviors. It posits that individuals have innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which drive their motivation and well-being. Accordingly, people are more likely to be motivated and engaged in activities when they feel a sense of autonomy (the ability to make choices and have control over their actions). Again, the theory entails that human's desire competence (feeling capable and effective in their actions). The third concept is on relatedness (which is a feeling of connected to others and a sense of belonging). In the context of mobile phone usage and academic distractions, among students in tertiary institutions, Self Determination Theory provides a valuable framework to understand the psychological motivations behind students' behaviors. Many students use their phones during study or class periods to maintain social connection (relatedness), exercise freedom of choice (autonomy), or avoid academic tasks when they feel inadequate (competence frustration). Such behaviors, while seemingly irrational or unguided, usage of digital tools often reflect, deeper unmet psychological needs that desires to be settled. Studies have shown that autonomy-supportive environments and motivation-based interventions significantly reduce classroom distractions and improve academic focus among learners (Howard, 2021; Flanigan & Babchuk, 2022). This study adopts Self Determination Theory as a guiding theory to explore how mobile phone usage is not only a behavioral issue but a reflection of underlying motivational dynamics. It assumes that high levels of distraction may be linked to students' attempts to satisfy unmet psychological needs through digital engagement. Therefore, understanding mobile phone usage of academic distractions through the Self Determination Theory serves as a lens which reflects deeper insights into how institutions can create supportive academic environments that meet students' motivational needs while minimizing off-task behaviors that can cause distractions to their academic pursuits.

1.6 Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population for this study comprises all undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State. The stratified random sampling technique was used to get a sample size of three hundred and twenty-five (325) undergraduate students. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure fair representation of students across the Faculty's Departments, and student's various levels of study. Within each stratum, respondents were randomly selected to avoid bias. The instrumentation for data collection was a researcher-structured questionnaire developed by the researchers, titled "Mobile Phone Usage and Academic Distractions Questionnaire Among Students" (MPUADQAS). The three hundred and twenty-five (325) questionnaires were distributed by the researchers personally to the respondents in the eleven (11) Departments in the Faculty of Education. The instrument was made up of two parts namely, Sections "A" and "B". Sections "A" covered Respondents Demographic details while Sections "B" comprises 20 Likert type-items. For each item respondents can tick either SA – (Strongly Agree); A – (Agree); D – (Disagree); or SD – (Strongly Disagree).

The instrument was administered using the direct delivery method where the researchers, with the support of two research assistants, gave the sampled respondents the instrument during lecture period after obtaining permission from the Course Lecturers. The filled-out copies of the instrument were collected on the spot immediately after completion (this was to avoid attrition). Data collated from the respondents, were analyzed using descriptive statistics (precisely, frequency distribution tables, percentages, mean and standard deviations). Items with a criteria mean score of less than 2.50 were rejected, while mean scores above 2.50 were accepted to be correct as showing that students are experiencing academic distractions due to mobile phone usage at the Niger Delta University.

MOBILE PHONE USAGE AND DISTRACTION AMONG STUDENTS DATA ANALYSIS**Section A: Demographic Information****Table 1:**
Gender of Respondents

Gender	N	Percentage
Male	132	40.62%
Female	193	59.38%
Total	325	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 1 shows the demographic information of the gender of the respondents. A total of 325 respondents served as respondents for the study. 132 respondents constituting 40.62% are male; while 193 respondents were females representing 59.38% of the total sample.

Table 2:
Age of Respondents

Age Range	N	Percentage
Below 18 years	17	5%
18 – 22 years	195	60%
23 – 27 years	87	27%
28 years and above	26	8%
Total	325	100

Source: Field Survey, 2026 Table 2 indicates the ages groups of the respondents in the sample. 17 respondents which is 5% of the sample are below 18 years of age. Furthermore, 195 respondents representing 60% of those sampled are aged between 18 – 22 years (those in these age group appear to be more in many higher institutions of learning, this is mostly because majority of them complete their Secondary school education at 18 years and engage in higher learning without breaks). Next are those between ages 23 – 27 years; 87 of them served as sample in the study representing 27%. Respondents from age 28 years and above are 26, they make up 8% of the sample.

Table 3:
Departments of Respondents

Departments	N	Percentage
Educational Foundations	22	6.77%
Agricultural Science Education	29	8.92%
Arts Education	31	9.54%
Business Education	30	9.23%
Counselling and Educational Psychology	18	5.54%
Educational Management	36	10.76%
Human Kinetics and Health Education	37	11.38%
Library and Information Science	35	10.76%
Science Education	35	10.76%
Social Science Education	33	10.15%
Technology Education	19	5.6%
Total	325	100

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 3 represents the respondents from each of the Departments within the Faculty of Education. Beginning from Educational Foundations Department where 22 respondents were selected as sample, this figure constitutes 6.77% of the total respondents sampled for the study. From the Department of Agricultural Science Education, 29 respondents were sampled, they serve as 8.92% of the total respondents. Arts Education was represented with 31 respondents in the sample standing for 9.54%. Business Education Department had 30 respondents, corresponding to 9.23% of the total sample. The Department of Counselling and Educational Psychology had 18 respondents as sample; these figure represents 5.54% of the entire sample. Educational Management Department was made up of 36 respondents, constituting 10.76% of the sample. The Department of Human

Kinetics and Health Education provided 37 respondents which serves as 11.38% of the total sample size. The Department of Library and Information Science was represented by 35 respondents making 10.76% of the sample. Science Education Department had 35 respondents too with 10.76% sample as well. Department of Social Science Education had 33 respondents constituting 10.15% of the total sample. The Department of Technology Education had 19 respondents making up 5.6% of the sample.

Table 4:
Academic Levels of Respondents

Level	N	Percentage
100 Level	75	23.08%
200 Level	82	25.23%
300 Level	86	26.46%
400 Level	82	25.23%
Total	325	100

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 4 represents the sample distribution in terms of the Students' Academic Levels. As shown 75 respondents, representing 23.08% were drawn from 100 Level. 82 respondents constituting 25% are students from 200 Level. From 300 Level, 86 respondents making up 26.46% of the total sample was obtained. 400 Level had 82 respondents, which is 25.23% of the sample.

Section: B Responses towards Mobile Phone Usage and Academic Distractions

Table 5:
Extent of mobile phone usage common among students in Niger Delta University

SN	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	I cannot stay without my mobile phone for two hours in a day	78 (312) 24%	86 (258) 26.5%	111 (222) 34.2%	50 (50) 15.4%	2.59	1.016	Accepted
2	I spend more than three hours daily on my mobile phone.	127 (508) 39.1%	128 (384) 39.4%	57 (114) 17.5%	13 (13) 4%	3.14	0.843	Accepted
3	I frequently use my mobile phone even during lectures.	43 (172) 13.2%	95 (285) 29.2%	134 (268) 41.2%	53 (53) 16.3%	2.39	0.912	Rejected
4	I find it difficult to stay without chatting with my phone for two hours.	67 (268) 20.6%	76 (228) 23.4%	121 (242) 37.2%	61 (61) 18.8%	2.46	1.019	Rejected
5	I am incomplete without my phone	111 (444) 34.2%	96 (288) 29.5%	60 (120) 18.5%	58 (58) 17.8%	2.80	1.101	Accepted
Grand Mean/Standard Deviation						2.68	0.978	

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 5 represents the analysis of the result of Research Question 1: To what extent is the level of mobile phone usage distracting the students towards academic distractions in Niger Delta University? The result of the analysis indicated that Items 1; 2; and 5 were accepted while Items 3 and 4 were rejected. In items 1; 2 and 3 the respondents scored a Mean Score of more than 2.50 in the analysis. The respondents admitted that they cannot stay without their mobile phones for more than 2 hours in a day; they also accepted that they spend more than three hours daily on their mobile phones and maintained that they are incomplete without their mobile phones. The grand Mean score is equally 2.68 which is above the 2.50 categorization. This indicates mobile phones are a source of distractions to most students in the university.

Table 6:***Major purposes for which students in Niger Delta University use mobile phones.***

SN	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev.	Decision
6	I use my mobile phone mainly for academic purposes such as research and assignments.	24 (96) 7.4%	31 (93) 9.5%	136 (272) 41.8%	134 (134) 41.2%	1.83	0.881	Rejected
7	I frequently use my phone for social networking (e.g., WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok).	26 (104) 8.0%	34 (102) 10.5%	148 (296) 45.5%	117 (117) 36.0%	1.90	0.882	Rejected
8	I often use my phone for entertainment (music, movies, or games).	27 (108) 8.3%	34 (102) 10.5%	158 (316) 48.6%	106 (106) 32.6%	1.94	0.873	Rejected
9	I rarely use my phone for communication with friends, family, and classmates.	80 (320) 24.6%	88 (264) 27.1%	85 (170) 26.2%	72 (72) 22.2%	2.54	1.090	Accepted
10	I really use my phone to access academic platforms (Google Scholar, e-learning, online libraries, etc.).	35 (140) 10.8%	54 (162) 16.6%	127 (254) 39.1%	109 (109) 33.5%	2.05	0.966	Rejected
Grand Mean/Standard Deviation						2.05	0.938	

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 6 shows the analysis of Research Question 2: What are the major purposes for which students in Niger Delta University use mobile phones; does this distract their academic experiences? The results obtained indicated that Items 6; 7; 8 and 10 were rejected. Only Item 9 was accepted. The respondents were frank enough to state that in Item 6, they do not use their mobile phones for academic activities only. In Item 7; the respondents admitted again that they use their phones for other activities beyond social matters and in Item 10 the respondents did truly agree that they rarely use their phones for academics or its related Applications such as Google Scholar. The Grand Mean Score here is just an abysmal 2.05 far less than the 2.50 category. The rejection of Items 6;7;8 and 10 is a clear indication therefore that University students in most instances use their mobile phones for other purposes which are not related to academics. They use their phones less for educational research purposes and learning that could profit them.

Table 7:***Extent to Which Mobile Phone Usage Contributes to Distraction During Lectures, Study Hours, and other Academic Activities.***

SN	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev.	Decision
11	I get distracted by mobile phone notifications while reading or studying.	101 (404) 31.1%	125 (375) 38.5%	65 (130) 20%	34 (34) 10.5%	2.90	0.960	Accepted
12	I often check my mobile phone in the middle of lectures.	66 (264) 20.3%	121 (363) 37.2%	93 (186) 28.6%	45 (45) 13.8%	2.64	0.957	Accepted
13	My attention span during academic activities reduces because of mobile phone usage.	71 (284) 21.8%	83 (249) 25.5%	100 (200) 30.8%	71 (71) 21.8%	2.47	1.061	Rejected

14	I sometimes miss important information in class because I am using my phone for nonacademic purpose.	61 (244) 18.8%	59 (177) 18.2%	114 (228) 35.1%	91 (91) 28%	2.28	1.067	Rejected
15	I can hardly concentrate most of the time on my studies without being tempted to use my mobile phone to watch friendly feeds.	78 (312) 24%	78 (234) 24%	102 (104) 31.4%	67 (67) 20.6%	2.51	1.070	Accepted
Grand Mean/Standard Deviation						4.67	1.023	

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 7 explains the analysis of Research Question 3: To What extent is the mobile phone usage contributing to academic distractions during lectures, study hours, and other academic activities? The result of the analysis indicates from Items 11; 12 and 15 that mobile phones contributes to a large extent to academic distractions among students during lecture periods, study hours and other academic actives. The Mean scores for the above 3 Items shows 2.90; 2.64 and 2.51 respectively. The respondents however rejected Items 13 and 14. They refuse to admit that using their phones while lectures are on reduces their attention span. They also disagree that important information could be missed because they use their mobile phones for non-academic purposes. Despite these positions, the Grand Mean shows a wide margin of 4.67. This Grand Mean score is a clear indicator that mobile phone usage contributes to academic distractions during lectures, study hours and other academic activities since it is far more higher than the Mean score of 2.50.

Table 8:

Analyze the relationship between mobile phone, induced distraction and students' academic performance in Niger Delta University.

SN	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std. Dev.	Decision
16	I am sure that my frequent use of mobile phone is negatively affecting	78 (312) 24.0%	94 (282) 28.9%	94 (188) 28.9%	59 (59) 18.2%	2.59	1.043	Accepted
17	I sometimes submit assignments late due to excessive phone usage.	58 (232) 17.8%	45 (135) 13.8%	109 (218) 33.5%	112 (112) 34.5%	2.15	1.087	Rejected
18	I often spend time on my phone instead of studying.	70 (280) 21.5%	126 (486) 38.8%	86 (172) 26.5%	43 (43) 13.2%	2.69	0.956	Accepted
19	I am sure that my grades would improve if I reduced the amount of time spent on my mobile phone.	112 (448) 34.5%	111 (333) 34.2%	59 (118) 18.2%	43 (43) 13.2%	2.90	1.024	Accepted
20	I have hardly manage my time well due to mobile phone distraction and this is affecting my academic performance negatively.	83 (332) 25.5%	65 (195) 20%	118 (236) 36.3%	59 (59) 18.2%	2.53	1.061	Accepted
Grand Mean/Standard Deviation						2.57	1.034	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 8 describes the analysis of Research Question 4: Is there any relationship between mobile phone usage and academic distractions among students' in Niger Delta University? Items 16; 18; 19 and 20 indicates that there is a relationship between mobile phone usage and academic distraction among students in the Niger Delta University. The Mean scores of the respondents in the various items show 2.59 for Items 16; 2.69 for Item 18; 2.90 for Item 19 and 2.53 for Item 20 respectively. Only Item 17 had a Mean score of 2.15. The Grand Mean of 2.57 show that there is a relationship between mobile phone usage and academic distraction. The Research Question is therefore accepted. Students' gets seriously distracted from their academic activities due to mobile phone usage.

Discussion of findings

The findings of this study, indicates that students are distracted due to the use of mobile phones. The Grand mean score of the research questions indicate that the use of mobile phones among students in the Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island is a major source of academic distraction for many of them (students). The Grand Mean of 2.57 stands accepted detailing that more students are distracted as a result of the use of their mobile phones for other activities other than academic tasks that can help them address their study needs. This conclusion is in line with the findings of Ozuzu (2025), which revealed that student's level of awareness on the positive impact of mobile phone usage had significant positive impact on facilitating effective study habits and improving their academic performance. The implication here is that many undergraduate students may not actually understand how useful their mobile phones can serve them as a tool for their academic pursuits. Instead, many of them see the mobile phone only as a source social interaction and entertainment. Spending quality time to seek for meaningful academic information from their phones will help improve students' learning skills.

Despite the above, it is indicated from the analysis in items number 3,4 and 10 that most students can stay without using their phones in the class during lectures for chatting with others for more than two hours or more. At least more than 10% of the students strongly agree that they use their phones for academic purposes. This implies that many of the students still realizes the reason for their leaving their parents home for the university. They can therefore discipline themselves to face their academic challenges by being focused on learning which ordinarily, is the primary objective for their stay in the university. Syeda, and others (2022) in their submissions emphasized that given the required opportunities, students can make impactful use of their smartphones for classroom use to improve their study habits. The teachers can be of support for such students by enlightening them on the use of these tools.

In items 6, the students made bold to reject the research question as to whether they use their mobile phones especially for academic purposes. The Mean score of 1.83 indicated that for most students the phone serves as a tool for relaxation, entertainment, watching of sports, Face-booking, chatting and other multiple endeavors. Interest in using the mobile phone for other activities and lack of time management may be a leading cause for the phone serving as academic distraction for students. Again, this result may be in support of what the literature found in the studies from Pérez-Juárez, González-Ortega, and Aguiar-Pérez (2024), who noted that students can sustain concentration for only about 14 minutes before succumbing to phone-related interruptions, with social media on boarding as a particularly aggressive destructor. Agostini and Petrucco (2023), in their study found that over 75% of students used their phones during class periods for social media or messaging; this behavior correlated strongly with a trend toward procrastination and diminished exam performance. It is evidenced from the findings of Wang, Hsieh and Kung (2022) students who utilize phones positively for academic purposes do much better than low users for the same reason. This is a pointer to the fact that the phone can be a distraction when not used for the right reason.

Majority of the items of the present study agree that as much as mobile phone remains an indispensable academic tool aimed at producing positive learning outcomes to the students, misuse of the gadget have led many undergraduate students to exhibit below expected academic standards. Mohammed, Michael and Christian (2023) like the present study found that as informative as mobile phones could be, students had experienced distraction, addiction and academic misconduct with respect to how they interact with mobile phones. In the light of the above, it is essential that university administrators, policy makers, the lecturers and parents needs to ensure through constant orientation programmes collaborate to educate the students on ensuring that the mobile phone be applied for the academic progress of the students.

2. CONCLUSIONS

This study considered the place of the mobile phone in the academic life of students in the Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State. Mobile phones have become an integral part of the everyday life of not only students but the entire society at large. For the students however, knowing its usefulness to their

studies is essential. Results from the analysis of the study indicated that majority of the students are not making adequate or maximum use of their phones to enhance their academic pursuits. Mobile phones could be of tremendous support for learners when used appropriately and that is the essence to this study. The researchers are of the submission that rather than using phones to watch entertainment videos, chat, view films that are trending and other forms of communication that may serve as distractions; it could be most essential that students see their mobile phones as a source of mobile library (a companion for reading) where they could browse and seek academic information which no doubt will help them succeed academically. From the analysis, it's evidenced that many students are yet to know what to do with their phones which is a gadget that can help them learn without borders or the classroom alone at all times. Mobile phones can help students seek and re-invigorate their academic life if they actually understand what kind of intellectual assistance it can provide them. Essentially for now, rather than serve as a facilitator for learning, mobile phones distracts learning among students and there is an urgent need for correcting this anomaly.

Recommendations

The researchers had deemed it necessary by providing the under listed recommendations for the students and the entire academia who will be privileged to study this article.

1. The use of mobile phones should be discouraged during lecture periods in the university system. Students should only use such digital tools perhaps to record and create voice lesson notes for them to use or listen to later for academic purposes.
2. There is need for lecturers to give students assignments via their mobile phones. This will keep the students well engaged. The students can be encouraged to realize that there are Academic Applications students can download for them to be abreast with current trends and realities.
3. Schools can intentionally introduce school-wide policies dedicated to digital technology. Such policies can consider changes that can support improvements in the curricular. Deliberate programmes can be introduced to train the lecturers in digital technology. Remember, one cannot give what one does not have. Well trained teachers will be motivated enough to teach their student when to use their phones.
4. Mobile phones could assist students to draw up designed road maps for their private studies. Students who are studious will learn ahead of their lecturers and prepare adequately for their lessons through effective and intentional phone use for educational purposes.
5. Thinking of the place of the mobile phone, the researchers are of the opinion that students should not believe in all contents they see on their phones. They should be able to distinguish between artificial intelligence (AI) contents that are real and do critical thinking before drawing their conclusions on academic matters in order to avoid dishonesty.
6. Scholars are encouraged to carry out further studies on the effects of academic distraction by comparing or broadening the scope of their studies with several institutions using other advanced statistical techniques.

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MOBILE PHONE USAGE AND DISTRACTION AMONG STDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE (MPSSQ)

This study investigate “Mobile Phone Usage as a Determinant of Distraction among Students in Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Amassoma, Bayelsa State”. This questionnaire is designed purely for academic purposes. All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and used only for this study. Please read each item carefully and indicate your level of agreement by ticking (✓) the option that best reflects your opinion. There are no right or wrong answers; your honest opinion is highly valued.

Response Key

SA – Strongly Agree

A – Agree

D – Disagree

SD – Strongly Disagree

Section A: Demographic Information

(Please tick ✓ the option that applies to you)

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Age Range: ☐ Below 18 years ☐ 18 – 22 years ☐ 23 – 27 years ☐ 28 years and above

3. Department: _____

4. Level of Study: ☐ 100 Level ☐ 200 Level ☐ 300 Level ☐ 400 Level

Section B: Research Questions

Awareness of Guidance and Counselling Services

SN	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
	To what extent is the level of mobile phone usage common among students in Niger Delta University and academic distractions?				
1.	I cannot stay without my mobile phone for two hours in a day				
2.	I spend more than three hours daily on my mobile phone.				
3.	I frequently use my mobile phone even during lectures.				
4.	I find it difficult to stay without chatting with my phone for two hours.				
5.	I am incomplete without my phone				
	What are the major purposes for which students in Niger Delta University use mobile phones?				
6.	I use my mobile phone mainly for academic purposes such as research and assignments.				
7.	I frequently use my phone for social networking (e.g., WhatsApp, Facebook,				

	Instagram, TikTok).				
8.	I often use my phone for entertainment (music, movies, or games).				
9.	I rarely use my phone for communication with friends, family, and classmates.				
10.	I really use my phone to access academic platforms (Google Scholar, e-learning, online libraries, etc.).				
	To What extent is the mobile phone usage contributing to distraction during lectures, study hours, and other academic activities?				
11.	I get distracted by mobile phone notifications while reading or studying.				
12.	I often check my mobile phone in the middle of lectures.				
13.	My attention span during academic activities reduces because of mobile phone usage.				
14.	I sometimes miss important information in class because I am using my phone for nonacademic purpose.				
15.	I can hardly concentrate most of the time on my studies without being tempted to use my mobile phone to watch friendly feeds.				
	Is there any relationship between mobile phone induced distraction and students' academic performance in Niger Delta University?				
16.	I am sure that my frequent use of mobile phone is negatively affecting				
17.	I sometimes submit assignments late due to excessive phone usage.				
18.	I often spend time on my phone instead of studying.				
19.	I am sure that my grades would improve if I reduced the amount of time spent on my mobile phone.				
20.	I have hardly manage my time well due to mobile phone distraction and this is affecting my academic performance negatively.				

Thank You.