





Heads down, worlds apart: A study of student perceptions and experiences with phone use in social interactions

Pinky Claire B. Ombayan¹ , Riel Hendrix A. Gomez² , Cristan Vincent B. Aliday² ,
Evan P. Taja-on^{1*} 

¹School of Education, San Isidro College, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, PHILIPPINES

²School of Arts and Sciences, San Isidro College, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, PHILIPPINES

*Corresponding Author: etajaon@sic.edu.ph

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ABSTRACT

In today's social landscape, mobile phones are essential tools for student communication, facilitating meet-ups and real-time sharing but complicating interactions by dividing attention between the physical and digital worlds. The dual role of phones as both enhancers and disruptors of social engagement highlights the increasing issue of problematic phone use, which can lead to social isolation and impaired communication. Despite the prevalence of phone use, there is a significant knowledge gap in understanding students' specific perceptions and experiences, which this study aims to address comprehensively. The study employed a phenomenological approach and purposive sampling to explore the experiences of ten students with phone use in social interactions. Data were gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews using a validated researcher-made instrument and analyzed using narrative analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns. The study found that college students have mixed perceptions of mobile phone use, seeing it as essential for communication, academic assistance, entertainment and potential detriment to real-life interactions. Experiences with phone use highlighted issues like social isolation, lack of quality time, and feelings of disrespect and rejection. To manage its impact, students employed coping strategies such as proper communication, confrontation, ignoring, and minimizing phone use.

Keywords: problematic phone usage, student perception, social interaction, phone in social setting

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INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary social landscape, mobile phones have become ubiquitous, notably influencing how students interact with each other. Phones are essential communication tools, enabling students to stay connected through calls, texts, and social media (Buctot et al., 2021). They often coordinate meet-ups, share experiences in real-time, and provide a sense of security and accessibility in social settings. However, the presence of phones during social interactions introduces a dynamic where the physical and digital worlds intersect, affecting the quality and nature of in-person communication (Dwyer et al., 2018).

Using phones in social interactions among students reflects a blend of convenience and complexity. On the one hand, phones facilitate instant information sharing and entertainment, enhancing conversations and bonding over shared digital content (Pearson et al., 2017). On the other hand, their pervasive presence can lead to divided attention, where individuals might prioritize virtual interactions over the immediate social environment (Ito & Kawahara, 2017). The dual role of phones—connectors and potential disruptors—highlights how

digital technology is integrated into students' social lives subtly and significantly shapes their interactions (Song & Hollenbeck, 2018).

In recent years, the issue of problematic phone use among students has become increasingly evident, raising concerns about its impact on social interactions (Reyes et al., 2018). Students often find themselves compulsively checking their phones during face-to-face conversations, leading to distractions and declining the quality of in-person engagements (Carbonell et al., 2018). The constant connectivity can result in social isolation, reduced empathy, and impaired communication skills, as the immediacy of digital interactions overshadows the depth and authenticity of real-life connections (Dalvi-Esfahani et al., 2021; Hao et al., 2020; Romero-López et al., 2021). The pervasive nature of this behavior underscores the need to understand its causes and consequences.

Despite the growing prevalence of phone use in social contexts, there remains a significant knowledge gap regarding students' perceptions and experiences with this phenomenon. Much of the existing research has focused on the general impact of digital technology on communication (Carbonell et al., 2018). However, few studies have yet to delve into how students navigate their phone use during social

Table 1. Demographic profile of the participants of the study

Participant	Sex	Age	Department
P1	Female	21	Accountancy
P2	Female	22	Nursing
P3	Male	21	Arts and sciences
P4	Female	25	Information technology
P5	Female	26	Information technology
P6	Female	22	Engineering
P7	Male	22	Arts and sciences
P8	Male	22	Arts and sciences
P9	Female	21	Education
P10	Male	21	Education

interactions. This study aims to fill this gap by thoroughly exploring students' perspectives and experiences, offering insights that could inform interventions and educational strategies.

The study aims to explore student perceptions and experiences with phone use in social interactions. It seeks to comprehensively understand how phone use affects the quality and dynamics of their social engagements.

Statement of the Problem

The study delves into the multifaceted relationship between students and their mobile phones during social interactions. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following:

1. What are the perceptions of the students towards the use of phones?
2. What are the experiences of the students towards phone in a social setting?
3. How do the participants cope with others who use their phones in social settings?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research utilized a phenomenological approach (Larsen & Adu, 2021) to deeply explore and understand students' lived experiences regarding phone use during social interactions. Phenomenological design is well-suited for the study as it aims to capture the essence of students' subjective experiences and perceptions, providing rich, detailed insights into how they navigate the interplay between digital and actual communication. The study seeks to provide an understanding of the complexities and nuances of students' interactions in an increasingly digital world through the phenomenological lens.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The study employed purposive sampling (Tongco, 2007) to select participants who could provide rich and relevant data due to their specific experiences with phone use in social settings. The sampling technique aligns with the study's goal of obtaining in-depth insights into the phenomenon from individuals actively engaging in the examined behaviors. The sampling technique allows the researchers to focus on individuals who can offer the most pertinent information, enhancing the depth and quality of the findings.

The study consists of ten participants, four males and six females, aged between 21 and 26 years old (Table 1). These participants are enrolled in various programs within the college department, ensuring a

diverse range of academic backgrounds and social contexts. The diversity allows the study to capture a broad spectrum of experiences and perceptions of phone use in social interactions, providing a comprehensive understanding of how these behaviors manifest across different student demographics. The selected age range and academic diversity contribute to a well-rounded exploration of the topic, reflecting how phone use influences social dynamics among college students.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data for the study was gathered using in-depth semi-structured interviews (Boyce & Neale, 2006). A researcher-made instrument designed for this study was used to guide the interviews. Three experts validated this instrument to ensure its relevance and reliability in capturing students' experiences and perceptions (Asoodeh, 2022). Each interview lasted approximately 18–23 minutes and was conducted in a quiet, private setting to facilitate open and honest communication. Participants were first briefed on the study's purpose and provided with detailed information regarding informed consent, ensuring they understood their rights and the confidentiality of their responses.

Data Analysis

The data collected from in-depth semi-structured interviews were analyzed using narrative analysis (Oliver, 1998). The approach involved meticulously transcribing the interviews to capture the participants' verbatim responses. Each transcript was then carefully examined to identify recurring themes, patterns, and stories illustrating the participants' experiences and perceptions regarding phone use in social contexts.

The analysis focused on understanding each participant's narrative's personal and social dimensions, considering their stories' context, sequence, and meaning. The method allowed for a rich, detailed exploration of individual experiences, highlighting the diversity and commonality within the participants' accounts. The findings were synthesized to construct a comprehensive narrative that reflects the collective insights of the study, providing an understanding of the role of mobile phones in students' social lives.

Ethical Consideration

The study adhered to stringent ethical standards to protect and respect participants' rights. Before participating, participants were thoroughly informed of the study's purposes, procedures, and potential risks. The participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without any consequences (Bhutta, 2004). Data privacy was rigorously maintained by anonymizing all interview transcripts and securely storing them to prevent unauthorized access. Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities, and any identifying information was removed from the data (De Capitani Di Vimercati et al., 2012).

Additionally, the study employed member checking to enhance the credibility and accuracy of the findings. Participants were allowed to review their interview transcripts and the initial interpretations to confirm that their experiences were accurately represented. The process ensured the participants' perspectives were accurately captured and the final analysis reflected their true experiences and perceptions (McKim, 2023). The study ensured a respectful, transparent, and trustworthy research process through these ethical practices.

Table 2. Summary of the themes generated regarding the participants perception towards the use of phones

Themes	Participant	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Essential	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, P10	9	90	1
Communication	P3, P4, P5, P9, P10	5	50	3
Educational/academic assistance	P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, P10	8	80	2
Entertainment	P8	1	10	4
Not essential	P6	1	10	4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study explored the students' perceptions and experiences with phone use in social settings. The study used frequencies and percentages to treat the data and analyzed the participants' narrative responses qualitatively. Additionally, participant sample statements are given to supplement the generated themes, which are in English or are given English translations.

Perceptions of the Students Towards the Use of Phone

Table 2 summarizes the participants' perceptions towards the use of phones. Based on the interview, five themes were formed from the students' responses to the students' responses.

Within the thematic category regarding the participants' perception towards the use of phones, nine of the participants indicated that phones are *essential* (P1 and P5):

P1: "... I think smartphones is necessary ..."

P5: "... Yes, especially now that technology is emerging, I think that having a smartphone could be a big help ..."

The theme of *essential* emerged prominently from the interviews, highlighting that college students perceive their phones as indispensable tools in their daily lives. The convenience and multifunctionality of phones make them an integral part of students' routines, facilitating everything from communication to navigation (Lefebvre, 2017). This perception underscores the deep integration of mobile technology into the fabric of student life, where the absence of a phone would significantly disrupt their ability to function efficiently and stay connected with peers and family (Parasuraman et al., 2017).

Five of the participants indicated that phones are used for *communication* (P3 and P8):

P3: "... nowadays cellphone is very important because of messenger...the important announcement and information are already sent through online and be seen through cellphone ..."

P8: "... the basic reason is that it is used for communication ..."

Communication was identified as a theme, reflecting students' views on phones' vital role in keeping them connected. Participants mentioned that their phones are essential for connecting with friends, family, and others through calls, texts, and social media (Harari et al., 2020). This connectivity is about convenience, maintaining relationships, and ensuring community and support (Otto & Kruikemeier, 2023). The ability to instantly share information and experiences was highlighted as a key benefit, reinforcing the perception that phones are crucial for effective and timely communication (Ahmed et al., 2019).

Eight of the participants indicated that phones are used for *educational purposed and academic assistance* (P7 and P10):

P7: "... because it helps in my academic, easy to access everything that requires in research, and it is handy to use ..."

P10: "... it's like a minicomputer you can carry anywhere ... even for studying and it just makes everything so much easier ..."

The *educational/academic assistance* theme revealed that students perceive phones as valuable tools for their academic pursuits. Participants noted that phones provide easy access to educational resources, online research, and academic apps that support their learning and organization (Garcia, 2017). The ability to quickly look up information, collaborate with classmates through messaging apps, and manage schedules and deadlines enhances their academic efficiency (Buctot et al., 2021). This perception emphasizes the supportive role of mobile phones in facilitating students' educational goals and improving their academic performance (Paterno, 2023).

On the other hand, one of the participants indicated that phones are used for *entertainment* (P8):

P8: "... I use my smartphone when I am bored and for entertainment ..."

Entertainment emerged as a theme, illustrating how students view their phones as primary sources of leisure and relaxation. The participants often cited using their phones for activities such as streaming videos, playing games, and browsing social media to unwind and entertain themselves (Otto & Kruikemeier, 2023). Using phones for entertainment helps students balance their academic and social demands, providing a necessary outlet for stress relief and enjoyment (Hung et al., 2021). The perception of phones as entertainment hubs underscores their multifunctional nature and their role in enhancing the overall quality of student life.

But one participant indicated that phones are *not essential* (P6):

P6: "... For me it is not necessary to have a smartphone because you don't need one for communication, you can communicate with them personally, second is if it is for study purposes, we have computer and books in the library that they provided for the students ..."

Contrastingly, *not essential* theme surfaced, indicating that some students perceive phones as non-critical for their daily existence. The participant argued that while phones offer convenience and various benefits, they are only indispensable, and life could proceed with them. They emphasized the importance of face-to-face interactions and expressed concerns about the potential for phones to distract and detract from real-life experiences (Parasuraman et al., 2017). This perspective highlights a more critical view of phone dependency, advocating for a balanced approach to mobile technology use.

Table 3. Summary of the participants' personal experiences of using phones in a social setting

Themes	Participant	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Creates social isolation	P1, P3, P4, P7, P9, P10	6	60	1
Develops a sense of disrespect	P5, P9	2	20	3
Instills a sense of rejection	P8	1	10	4
Disables self-expression	P7	1	10	4
Form of distraction	P1, P8, P9, P10	4	70	2
Establishes dependence	P2, P7	2	20	3
Encourage laziness	P2	1	10	4

Table 4. Summary of the participants' personal experience of others towards using phones in a social setting

Themes	Participant	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Creates a lack of quality time	P1, P5, P7, P8, P9	5	50	1
Enables bullying	P2	1	10	4
Distracts from social settings	P3, P6, P8, P9	4	40	2
Shifts from actual to virtual communication	P2, P4, P9, P10	4	40	2
Minimizes social exchanges	P4, P6, P7	3	30	3
Weakens social connection	P6, P8, P10	3	30	3

In summary, the indispensable role of phones in enhancing communication, academic assistance, and entertainment is a critical perspective that questions the necessity of constant phone use (Otto & Kruijemeier, 2023). While many students view their phones as essential tools that facilitate various aspects of their lives, a notable subset believes that phones, though convenient, are not critical and can sometimes hinder authentic social interactions (Hamidi & Chavoshi, 2018; Parasuraman et al., 2017). This dual perception underscores the complexity of mobile phone use in contemporary student life, reflecting its profound benefits and potential drawbacks.

Experiences of the Students Towards Phone in a Social Setting

Table 3 summarizes the participants' personal experiences of using phones in a social setting. Based on the interview, seven themes were formed from the students' responses.

Table 4 summarizes the participants' experience of others using phones in a social setting. Based on the interview, six themes were formed from the students' responses.

Within the thematic category regarding the participants' personal experience and regarding others towards using phones in a social setting, six indicated that using phones *creates social isolation* and five indicated that socially using phones *creates a lack of quality time* (P1 and P2):

P1: "... As what I observed in our home there are no time para mag bond together with my family because most of the time is kanang mag sige nalang ang uban ug gamit ug smartphone [for bonding with my family because most of the time they will use their cellphone ...]"

P2: "... instead na mag chikahanay kay mag isig dungo raman sa cellphone [instead of talking to each other they only focused on their cellphone] ..."

The theme of *creates social isolation* highlights students' experiences of feeling detached from those physically present due to phone use. Participants reported that constant phone engagement often leads to loneliness, even in social settings (Tateno et al., 2019). Similarly, the theme *creates a lack of quality time* emerged, emphasizing that phones can detract from meaningful interactions (Misra et al., 2016). These

insights suggest that phones, while keeping students connected digitally, can undermine the quality of in-person social interactions (Lefebvre, 2017).

Two indicated that using phones develops a *sense of disrespect* and one indicated that socially using phones *enables bullying* (P2):

P2: "... having a phone like keypad could lead you to be bullied by other who have smartphones ..."

The theme *develops a sense of disrespect* illustrates how phone use during social interactions is perceived as rude and inconsiderate. When individuals check their phones mid-conversation, it can be seen as disrespectful and dismissive (Kadylak et al., 2018). Additionally, *enables bullying* indicates that phones to facilitate negative behaviors like cyberbullying, creating an environment where harmful interactions can occur more easily (Méndez et al., 2020). These experiences highlight the darker side of phone use, contributing to disrespectful behavior and fostering harmful interactions.

Furthermore, one indicated that using phones *instills a sense of rejection* and four indicated that socially using phones *distracts from social settings* (P5 and P8):

P5: "... food are blessings and disrespectful na lang lagi sila kay naka cellphone or mas pinaprioritize pa nila mag cellphone [food is a blessing, and it is disrespectful that they are always on their phones, and they prioritize it] ..."

P8: "... I feel sometimes rejected or kanang murag ma ignore usahay samot nag naa koy I chika [I sometimes feel rejected or ignored especially if I have something to say] ..."

The theme *instills a sense of rejection* reflects students' feelings of being ignored or unimportant when their peers prioritize phone use over actual communication (Perna, 2020). *Distracts from social settings* further emphasize how phones divert attention from the present moment, making it difficult to fully engage in the social environment (Misra et al., 2016). These perceptions underscore the negative emotional impact of phone use, contributing to feelings of rejection and distraction.

Table 5. Summary of the participants' coping strategies with others who use their phones in the social setting

Themes	Participant	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Proper communication	P1	1	10	3
Confrontation	P5, P6, P9	3	30	1
Ignoring	P3	1	10	3
Connecting with other individuals	P3, P8	2	20	2
Minimizing the usage of phones	P7, P10	2	20	2

One indicated that using phones *disables self-expression* and four indicated that socially using phones *shifts attention from actual to virtual communication* (P7 and P9):

P7: "... they are vulnerable for depression because they lack self-expression for themselves ..."

P9: "... as individuals may prioritize online interaction over real-world relationships ..."

Disables self-expression emerged as a theme as students felt that phone use limits genuine self-expression and authentic conversations (Williams & Cendon, 2019). The shift from actual to virtual communication, highlighted by the theme *shifts from actual to virtual communication*, shows that students often prefer digital interactions over face-to-face meetings (Misra et al., 2016). These experiences reveal how phone use can hinder true self-expression and shift the focus from real-life interactions to virtual communication (Ito & Kawahara, 2017).

Four indicated that using phones is a *form of distraction* and three indicated that socially using phones *minimizes social exchange* (P1 and P8):

P1: "... dili usahay maminaw ang uban ug sugoon kay mag dula man sa cellphone [they do not usually listen when they're asked to do something because they're playing with their smartphone] ..."

P8: "... they get easily na mag lagot or masuko kay gaka distract sila or dili ka focus kay naa na sila lain gu huna huna [they get annoyed or angry easily because they are distracted, or they cannot focus because they are thinking about something else] ..."

The theme *form of distraction* illustrates how phones are major distractions in social settings, diverting attention from meaningful conversations (Aagaard, 2016). The theme *minimizes social exchanges* highlights reducing the depth and frequency of social interactions due to phone use (Song & Hollenbeck, 2018). These insights suggest that phones significantly diminish the quality and quantity of social exchanges, making it harder for students to engage deeply with one another (Romero-López et al., 2021).

One indicated that using phones *establishes dependence* and *encourage laziness* (P2 and P7):

P2: "... people nowadays who use smartphone are becoming lazy and dependent to it ..."

P7: "... kana bitaw family nga mag kita kita mag tagsa tagsa rapud ug cellphone [even if there is a family gathering, each of them is using their cellphone] ..."

The theme *establishes dependence* indicates that students often feel reliant on their phones for social interactions, leading to a sense of loss without them (Lopez-Fernandez et al., 2017). The theme *encourages laziness* reflects the perception that phones promote a passive approach to socializing, reducing the effort needed to maintain real-life interactions (Mallawaarachchi et al., 2022). These experiences highlight how phone use can lead to dependency and reduce the motivation for active social engagement (Larsen & Adu, 2021).

Lastly, three indicated that socially using phones *weakens social connection* (P10):

P1: "... and spending too much time on smartphones can take away from physical interaction and weaken social connection ..."

The theme *weakens social connection* encapsulates the overarching sentiment that phone use deteriorates the strength and quality of social bonds (Chan, 2015). This perception underscores the broader impact of phone use on diminishing the depth and authenticity of social relationships among students, weakening their connections because they are not fully present with each other (Misra et al., 2016).

The study identified thirteen themes related to students' experiences with phone use in social settings. Collectively, these themes highlight the complex and often negative impact of mobile phones on student interactions (Larsen & Adu, 2021). While phones facilitate communication and connectivity, they also introduce significant challenges to the quality and authenticity of social experiences, underscoring the need for a balanced approach to phone use in social contexts (Ito & Kawahara, 2017; Romero-López et al., 2021).

Coping With Others Who Use Their Phones in the Social Settings

Table 5 summarizes the participants' coping strategies with others who use their phones in the social setting. Based on the interview, five themes were formed from the students' responses.

Within the thematic category regarding the coping strategies with others who use their phones in the social setting, one indicated *proper communication* and three indicated *confrontation* as their coping strategies with others who use their phones in the social setting (P1, P5, and P6):

P1: "... pinaagi sa pagpanghagad sa akong family especially sa akong mga pag-umangkon nga mag laag sa among mga relatives or mag dula [through asking my family especially my siblings to visit our relatives or to play] ..."

P5: "... I'd also talk to my parents about the issue, hindi dapat I tolerate [I'd also talk to my parents about the issue, it should not be tolerated] ..."

P6: "... I would tell them if they would spare some time away from their phone ..."

The themes of *proper communication* and *confrontation* reveal that students often address the issue of phone use in social settings by directly engaging with the person involved (Misra et al., 2016). *Proper communication* involves politely asking peers to put their phones away to enhance interaction quality, demonstrating a preference for direct and respectful dialogue (Chan, 2015). Conversely, *confrontation* reflects more assertive actions where students' express frustration or demand attention, highlighting a more immediate and sometimes contentious approach to addressing phone use (Dwyer et al., 2018). These themes indicate a proactive stance among students to mitigate phones' impact on social interactions, showing their desire for more meaningful connections (Hung et al., 2015).

However, one indicated ignoring and three indicated *connecting with other individuals* as their coping strategies with others who use their phones in the social setting (P3):

P3: "... I just focus on myself and find someone who can communicate with me in actual sense ..."

The theme of *ignoring* and *connecting with other individuals* suggest alternative coping strategies when faced with phone use in social settings. *Ignoring* involves choosing not to react to phone use, avoiding conflict, and potentially fostering a sense of detachment (David & Roberts, 2017; Dwyer et al., 2018). In contrast, *connecting with other individuals* means shifting focus to engage with others who are present and not using their phones, thereby seeking to maintain social engagement and connection through more receptive individuals (Chan, 2015). These approaches highlight varying adaptability and resilience among students navigating phone use disruptions (Misra et al., 2016).

Moreover, two indicated *minimizing the usage of phones* as their coping strategies with others who use their phones in the social setting (P7):

P7: "... I cope with this issue by minimizing using my smartphone. I show them an example of how beautiful and important it is to express to others by talking with them ..."

The theme of *minimizing the usage of phones* illustrates a personal strategy where students consciously reduce their phone use to set an example and encourage others to do the same (Chan, 2015). This approach reflects an internal coping mechanism to foster a more engaging social environment by prioritizing actual interactions over digital distractions (David & Roberts, 2017). It underscores a proactive and self-regulatory method to counteract the negative impacts of phone use in social settings (Misra et al., 2016).

The study identified five coping strategies students use to manage phone use in social settings. These strategies range from direct engagement and assertive actions to passive approaches like ignoring or shifting focus and setting personal examples by reducing phone use (Misra et al., 2016). These themes highlight the diverse and adaptive methods students employ to maintain the quality of their social interactions, demonstrating their desire for more meaningful and connected experiences despite the pervasive presence of mobile phones (David & Roberts, 2017; Larsen & Adu, 2021).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study explored the multifaceted views of college students regarding their mobile phone usage. The research highlighted a clear dichotomy: On the one hand, students perceive phones as indispensable tools for communication, academic assistance, and entertainment. The students find that phones facilitate staying connected with friends and family, provide easy access to educational resources, and serve as primary sources of leisure and relaxation. On the other hand, a segment of students considers phones non-essential, emphasizing the importance of actual interactions and expressing concerns over the potential for phones to distract from real-life experiences.

In exploring the students' experiences, the study revealed several negative impacts of phone use in social settings. Students frequently reported feelings of social isolation and a lack of quality time with those physically present due to the pervasive presence of phones. Additionally, phone use was often perceived as disrespectful, fostering a sense of rejection and enabling negative behaviors like bullying. The distraction caused by phones was seen to limit genuine self-expression and shift focus from actual to virtual communication, weakening the quality and depth of social bonds among students.

Despite these challenges, students demonstrated adaptability by employing various coping strategies to manage phone use in social settings. These strategies included engaging in proper communication and confrontation to address phone use directly, choosing to ignore or connect with others present, and minimizing their phone usage to set a positive example. These findings highlight the complexity of mobile phone use in contemporary student life, reflecting its profound benefits and potential drawbacks. The students underscore the need for balanced phone use, promoting awareness and proactive measures to enhance the quality of social interactions in both social and academic environments.

Recommendation

In social settings, it is crucial to foster awareness about the potential negative impacts of excessive phone use to help students develop healthier phone habits and enhance the quality of their face-to-face interactions. Universities and colleges could implement programs and workshops that promote face-to-face communication skills, emphasize the importance of being present in social situations, and teach strategies for managing phone use during social interactions. Encouraging students to engage in phone-free gatherings and creating designated zones can also help mitigate the negative impacts of phone use. Peer-led initiatives can effectively promote respectful phone use among students.

In academic settings, educators could integrate guidelines on appropriate phone use into their teaching methods to encourage students to leverage mobile technology for academic purposes while minimizing distractions. Furthermore, creating opportunities for students to engage in collaborative, phone-free academic activities can help them build stronger interpersonal skills and enhance their learning experiences.

Future research could explore the long-term effects of phone use on social skills development and investigate interventions that can help students better manage their phone use in various contexts. A quantitative approach to the study could provide more generalizable data on the prevalence and impact of phone use among a larger student

population. Surveys and structured questionnaires could gather data on specific behaviors, perceptions, and outcomes related to phone use, allowing statistical analysis to identify trends and correlations. This approach can complement the qualitative insights from the current study, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the issue and informing more targeted interventions.

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Data availability: Data generated or analyzed during this study are available from the authors on request.

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