

SMARTPHONE USAGE: A BOON FOR RETAIL BUT A DRAWBACK FOR TASTE

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Smartphones negatively impact our well being

- Smartphone reliance has a negative impact on our well-being (Twenge and Campbell 2019)
- Smartphones can increase our levels of stress (Vahedi and Saiphoo 2018)
- Constant availability via smartphones can significantly increase anxiety and stress (Jeong et al. 2016)

Smartphones may increase our psychological well being

- Our phones provide us with comfort (Melumad and Pham 2020; Melumad and Meyer 2020)
- Phones act as a source of familiarity that consumers can turn to for comfort when faced with stressors (Melumad and Pham 2020)
- The mere presence of one's phone is sufficient to impact how consumers think (Ward et al., 2017)

Stressor & Source of Comfort

- If our smartphones provide us with comfort and draw our attention then it explains why our cognitive functions are restricted when we have our phones with us (Sciandra, Imman, and Stephen 2019)
- Without their phones, consumer may exhibit different decision-making processes and behavioral patterns than they would if they had their phones with them.
- We use three studies to explore this question

Study 1

- We explored consumers' varying cognitive abilities with and without smartphones
- 116 psychology students recruited from our subject pool
- Randomly assigned to the phone or no-phone condition

Study 1 - Cognitive abilities (phone/ no-phone)

- 116 psychology students recruited from our subject pool
- Randomly assigned to the phone or no-phone condition
- Digit cancellation task used in neuropsychological batteries, two versions used (Sala et al., 1992)
- Participants were presented with a target number and a row of 50 digits followed by a response box

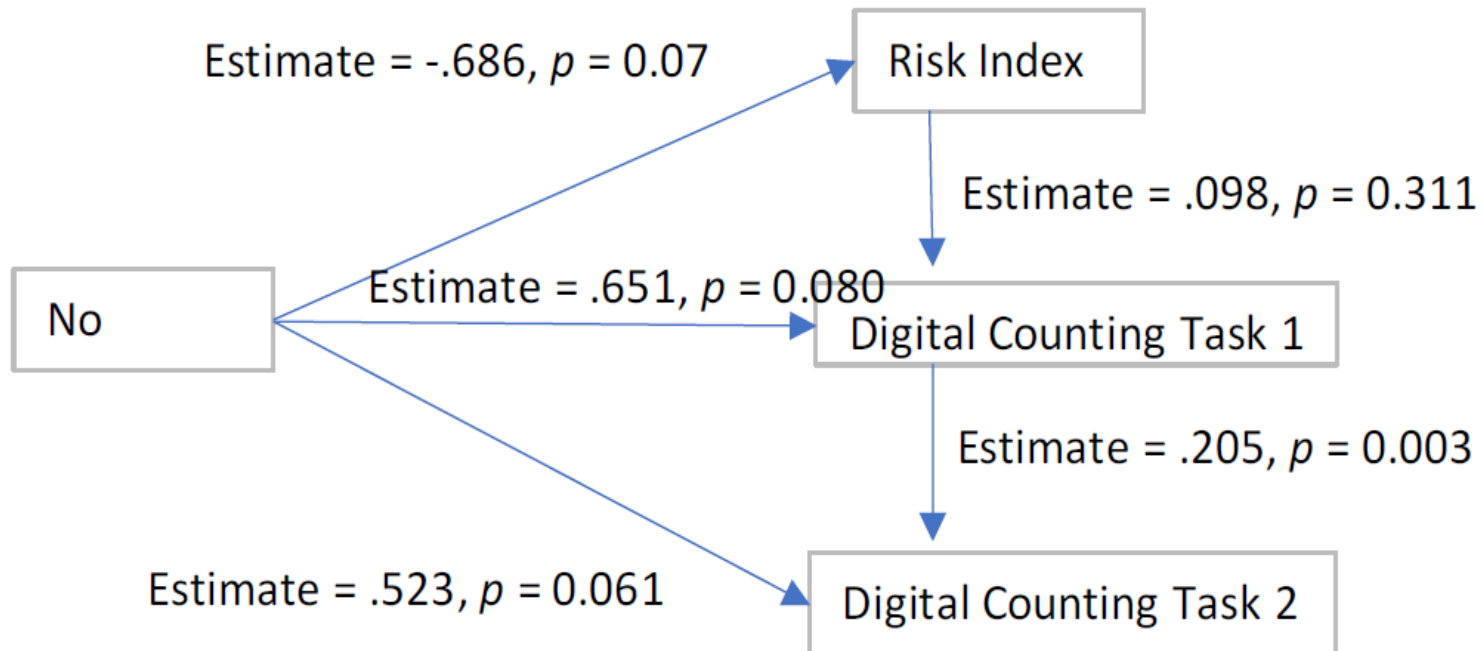
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Study 1

- Participants were asked about a series of hypothetical scenarios involving winning the lottery and having a choice about how the award is being paid – high risk vs. low risk (Weber 1997)
 1. Suppose that you bought a lottery ticket a week ago. You are now informed that you have won and have been given two options of how to receive the money:
 - A. Receive \$500 for sure.
 - B. Flip a coin; receive \$5,000 if heads, or \$0 if tails.

Study 1 Results

Figure 1



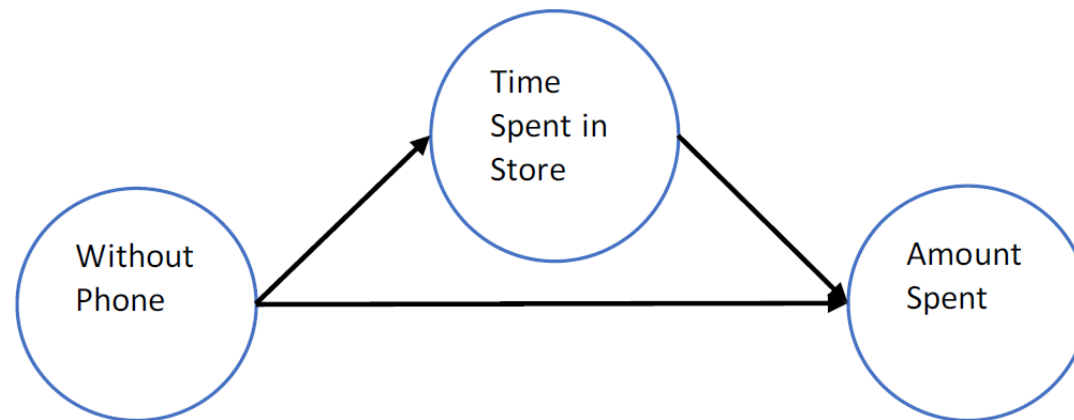
Chi-Square (1.496), high p-value ($p = 0.221$) and the RMSEA (0.065) was below recommended value of 0.80

Study 2

- Sixty participants were recruited from a principles of marketing class, they were told to go on four shopping trips to the same store. Bring your phone on two trips and leave your phone for two, record the amount of time you take in the store, what you purchase, and how much you spent.

Study 2 - Results

Phone condition	No-Phone condition	
Average spent = \$32.50	Average spent = \$27.57	$F = 8.156, p < 0.01$
Average time = 33 mins	Average time = 23 mins	$F = 3.892, p = 0.05$



Mediation of Time Spent in Store ($B = 3.469, 95\% \text{ CI} = [0.3981, 6.5328]$)

Study 3a (to be expanded in Study 3b)

- Tested the effects of having your smartphones on product evaluations
- 64 psychology students from our subject pool randomly assigned to the phone and no-phone condition
- Shown an 8 minute video of “The Office” then asked to try four drinks
 - Orange drink (brand unknown), Blue drink (brand unknown)
 - Orange drink (Orange Gatorade), Blue drink (Blue Freeze Gatorade)

Study 3a Results

Liking measured using a five-item scale, anchored by 1 = Not at all, 7 = Very much

	No-Phone (n = 41)	Phone (n = 23)	F-Statistic, <i>p</i> -value
Drink 1 (Unknown)	5.2866	4.6848	3.156, <i>p</i> < 0.05
Drink 2 (Unknown)	5.3537	4.4239	7.308, <i>p</i> < 0.01
Drink 3 (Orange Gatorade)	5.7073	5.1739	3.268, <i>p</i> < 0.05
Drink 4 (Blue Freeze Gatorade)	5.3902	4.9130	1.675, <i>p</i> = 0.10

Study 3b

- Expansion of Study 3a, with manipulation checks
- Participants may not have realized they didn't have their phone
- The anxiety that consumers may feel can be enhanced if they realize they don't have their phones/ the phone condition becomes the status quo
 - Increasing salience of phone absence: “How many text messages did you receive?”, “how many emails did you receive?”

Study 3b

- We will measure general anxiety before and after in both groups (phone vs. no-phone)
- Other than pre-and-post measures, we will enhance salience of the no-phone condition by asking questions that participants need their phones to answer
- Shown an 8 minute video of “The Office” then asked to try four drinks
 - Orange drink (brand unknown), Blue drink (brand unknown)
 - Orange drink (Orange Gatorade), Blue drink (Blue Freeze Gatorade)

Discussion

- Study 1: **Without our phones** we are more **risk averse**, we also make more accurate judgements
- Study 2: **Without our phones** we are **anxious** to get to them, we spend less time on a shopping task which ultimately leads to us purchasing less
- Study 3: **Without our phones** we are **less critical** in our evaluations, we evaluate products more favorably (phones allow us to be more critical)

Questions/ Comments?

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