

# Effects of smartphones on economic and subjective quality of life

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## Abstract

Popular characterizations of smartphones presume the benefits of their use. To test this, we used a national survey data ( $n = 1,261$ ) and examined smartphone effects on economic and subjective quality of life. Preliminary analyses revealed significant associations between smartphone use and earnings as well as quality of life. Two-stage least square models, however, suggested that those associations are potentially endogenous, or can be better recognized as ‘chicken-and-egg’ causality. Subsequently, we dissected the relationships into mediating steps and found an indirect effect of a certain feature of smartphone use — texting to diverse people — on earning, signaling that benefits of smartphone are rewarded indirectly through diverse social contacts. We also found the persistent power of socio-demographics in explaining a large variance for subjective quality of life. Taken together, this study aims to take a historical snapshot of smartphone effects at its ‘critical mass’ turn and make a fuller description of how smartphones will be utilized, shedding a light on societal nature of technological benefits.

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