

College Students' Perceptions of Mobile Gaming in America and Japan

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Outline:

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- Research questions
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- Conclusion
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Significance of the Study:

- When we studied in Japan, we anecdotally learned that some Japanese gamers believed they used superior technology to gamers in other countries. We felt that some of these gamers believed that this supposed superiority was feared by gamers in each country.
- Some Japanese gamers had various social problems such as spending a lot of time and money on game applications.
- We focused on mobile games and wanted to study how mobile games affect college students' lives.

Research Questions:

1. How do American and Japanese college students perceive mobile games and gaming communities?
2. How much influence does mobile gaming have on college students' lifestyles?

Research Background

- Definition of "mobile game"
- History of Mobile Gaming
- Business Models
 - "Freemium"
 - Gacha
 - Ads
- Motivational Factors
 - "Flow"

History of Mobile Gaming: In the World

- First time mobile game: Tetris
- (1994) Hagenuk (Germany)
- To date, about 400 million "Tetris" have been downloaded.
- Snake game (1997) nokia (Finland)
- "Tamapitchi" (1997) Bandai Corporation (Japan)



Development of Mobile Gaming: Global

2000: cameras were installed (Samsung)

2000: smartphones with touch screens appear. (Samsung)

2001: Color displays introduced (Sanyo)

Since 2001: memory of mobile phones expanded to allow more games to be downloaded and stored. (Samsung S-500)

2005 : Apple purchases touch screen technology from Fingerworks (Apple)

2008: Launch of the App Store is the key to today's mobile gaming success.
(Apple)

Development of Mobile Gaming: Japan

- 1970's: Arcade games (in game centers) became more popular.
- 2003: many mobile games were already available.
- 2014: mobile game revenue exceeded home game revenue
- 2018: smartphone users exceeds 70 million, accounting for more than 56% of all users
- The number of smartphone games has grown dramatically in the past seven years
- Japanese game industry has become 70% of the world market.

(Japan Games Market, 2018)

Business Model: Freemium



- "Freemium" is conjunction of free and premium
- A freemium model is a business model that provides basic services and products free of charge, but charges for advanced and special functions.
- It is difficult to enjoy the game without the premium service.

(Frank A., 2018)

Business Models: Freemium Continued

- Example: miitomo (Nintendo's first network app released 2016)
- Communication game with "mii" characters
- Players buy virtual game currency with actual currency
- Attracted over 10 million users worldwide in the first month
- But, premium was too expensive
- Quick drop in popularity
- Abolished all support for the game in May 2018



Business Model: Item Charging

- The user pays a fee upfront
- Even though the game itself can be played for free, players pay actual money to "play another way" and "get something special in the game".
- Often both the consumer and seller will want to spend money.

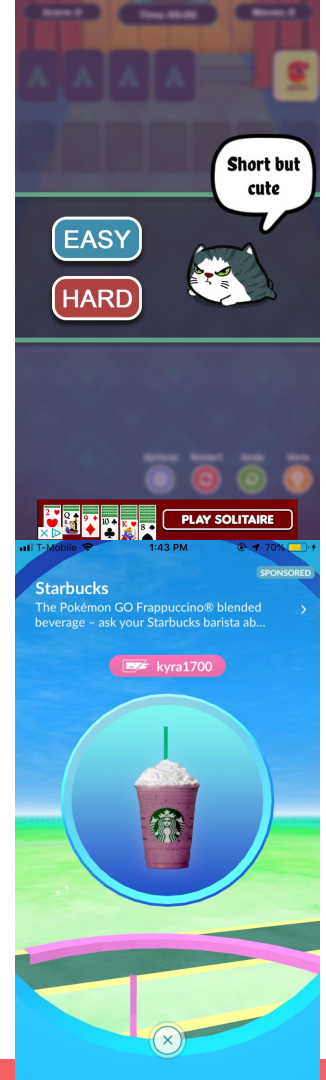
Business Models: Gacha Games

- Gacha
 - “lucky draw” mechanism in Japanese mobile games that build a sense of urgency
 - in-game microtransaction
- Capsule Toys (Gacha), users can obtain rare items by collecting other specific items.
- Users are theoretically happiest with all items collected



Business Models : Ad-Funded Games

- **Ad-funded mobile games**
 - Free for consumers but have a number of ads placed within or around the game
 - Pay to remove the “distraction”
 - Mobile games that generate money from advertising funds
- **Overlap with Freemium Model**
 - Disguised as an upgrade for the game itself
 - Banner-type ads are one of the most common formats of advertisements within mobile games
 - Not all ads are intrusive, Pokémon Go allows players to go to “pokestops” to receive the necessary items at special sponsored locations



Top 3 Mobile Games

America		
1	Monster Strike	918.6 Million USD
2	Fate / Grand Order	815 Million USD
3	Puzzle & Dragons	430 Million USD
Japan		
1	Legend Showdown	170 Million USD
2	Fantasy Westward Journey	130 Million USD
3	Monster Strike	110 Million USD

Research Method

Study Participants

- 80 University Students
 - 35 Japanese
 - 18 Male
 - 17 Female
 - 45 American
 - 25 Male
 - 20 Female

Research Instrument

- Online Survey (Google Forms)
 - Japanese Survey
 - English Survey

Results of the Survey

Question 1:

How do American and Japanese college students perceive mobile games and gaming communities?

Results of the Survey, Research Question 1:

How do American and Japanese college students perceive mobile games and gaming communities?

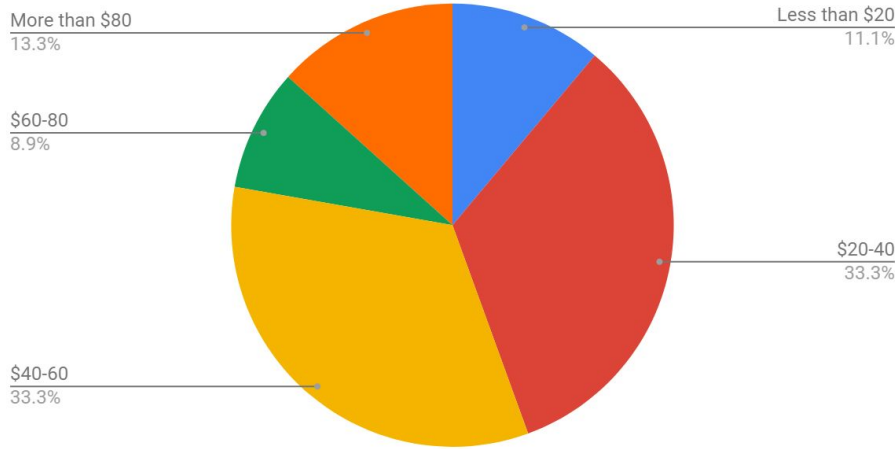
How much do you pay for the service on your phone per month?

America

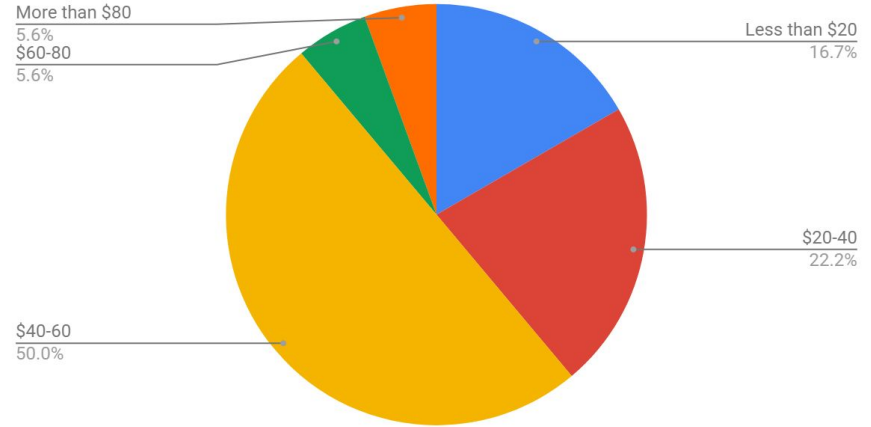
per month?

Japan

5. How much do you pay for the service on your phone per month?



5. How much do you pay for the service on your phone per month?

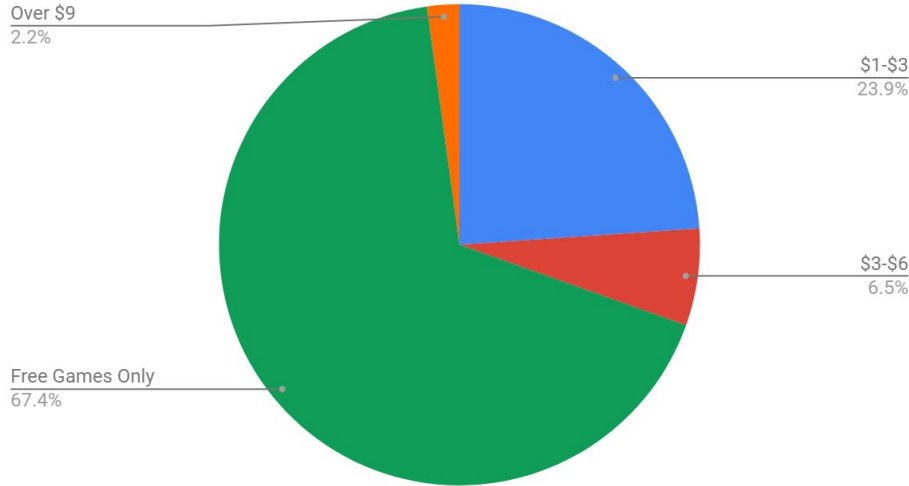


66% of Americans and 72% of Japanese pay \$20-60 USD monthly for mobile phones.

How much do you spend on in-game purchases per month?

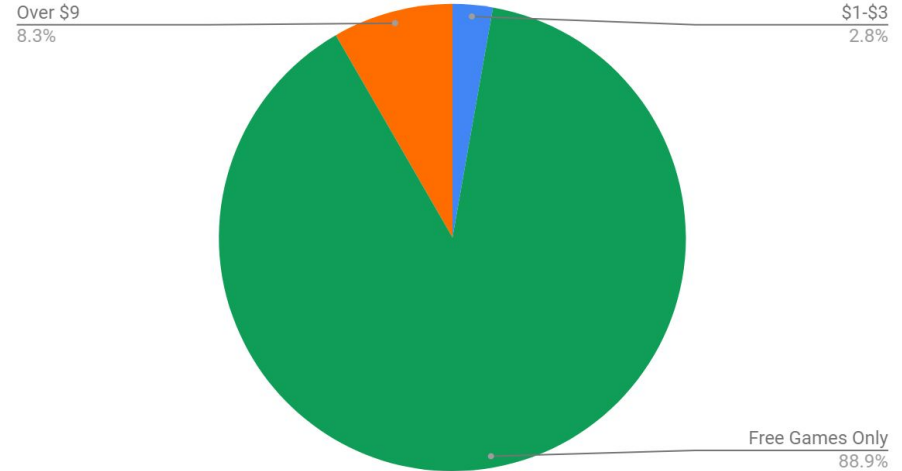
America

How much do you spend on in-game purchases per month?



Japan

How much do you spend on in-game purchases per month?



Both American and Japanese respondents primarily play free games.

Which games do you play?



Free

America: 64%
Japan: 50%



Free

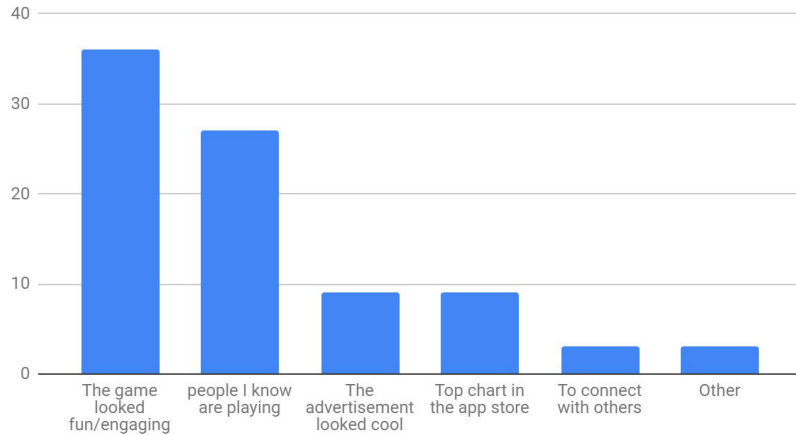
America: 36%
Japan: 30%

The most popular game in either country is Pokemon GO, followed by Animal Crossing: Pocket Camp.

Why did you choose the games you play?

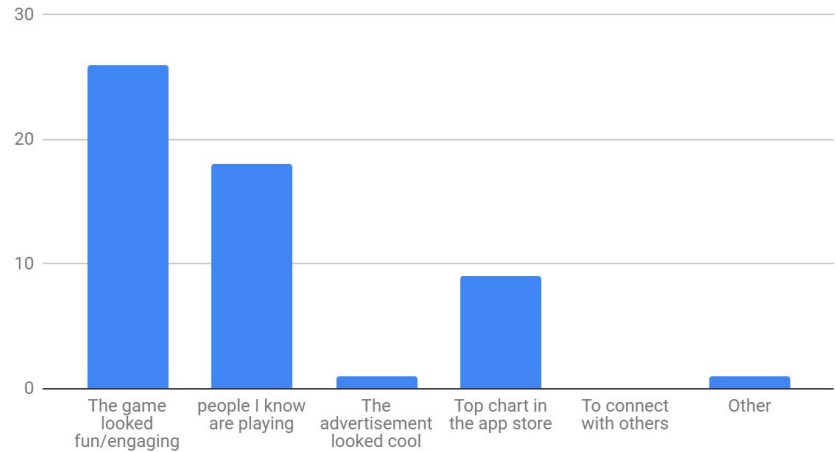
America

Why did you choose the games you play?



Japan

Why did you choose the games you play?

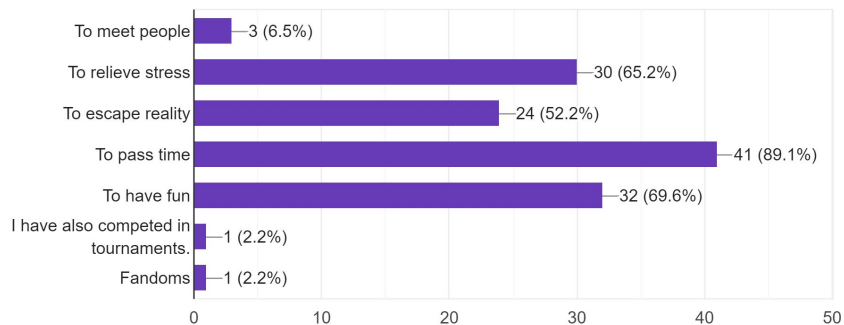


The top reason in both America and Japan for playing a game is “because the game is fun.”

Why do you play a mobile game?

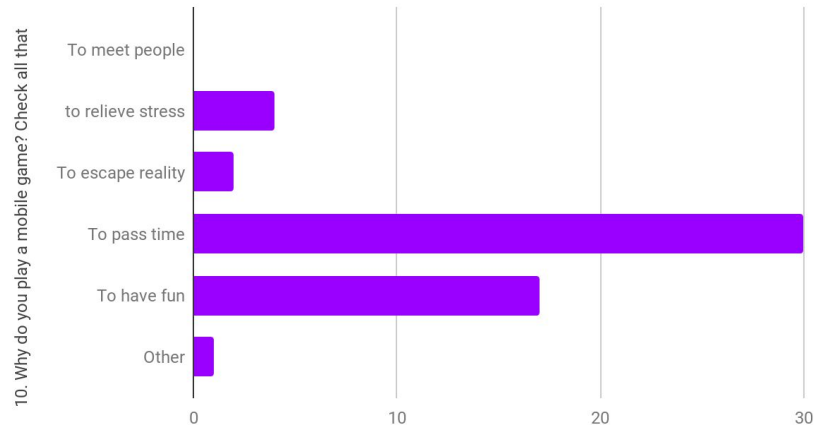
10. Why do you play a mobile game? Check all that apply.

46 responses



America

10. Why do you play a mobile game? Check all that apply.

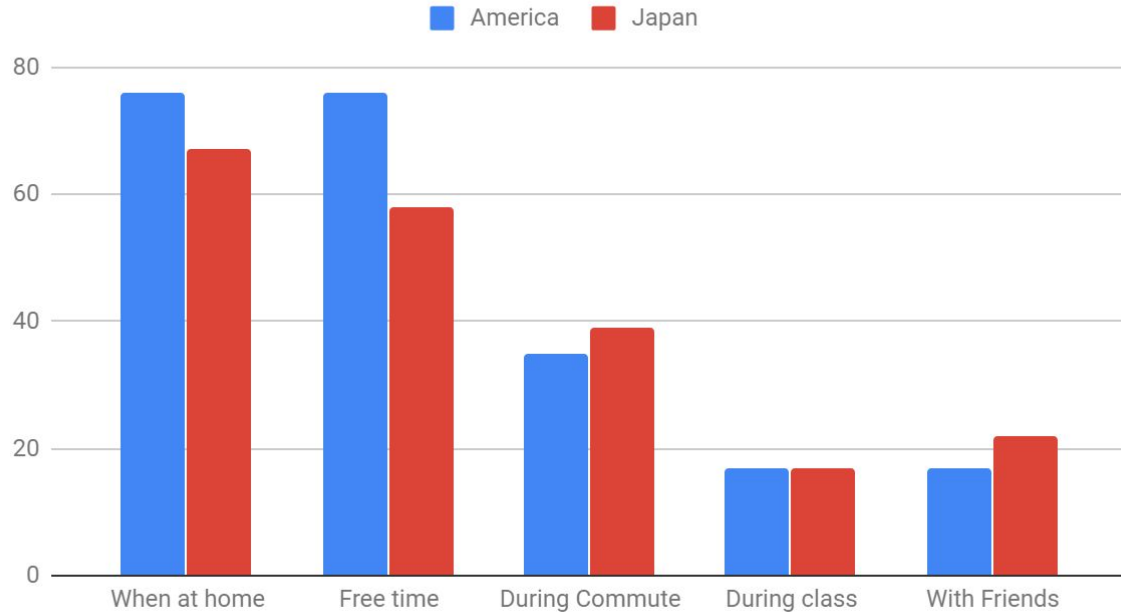


Japan

In both America and Japan, the top reason for playing a game is to “kill time”. The second reason is to “have fun”.

When do you play mobile games?

9. When do you play mobile games?



Both Japanese and American students play games mainly at home and during breaks.

Summary of Research Findings 1

- Both Americans and Japanese spend some money on mobile phones. Most people only download free games.
- Many Americans and Japanese see mobile games as a means of killing time.
- Both Americans and Japanese play games in moderately while still having fun.
- Both Americans and Japanese often play games during breaks and at home.

Results of the Survey

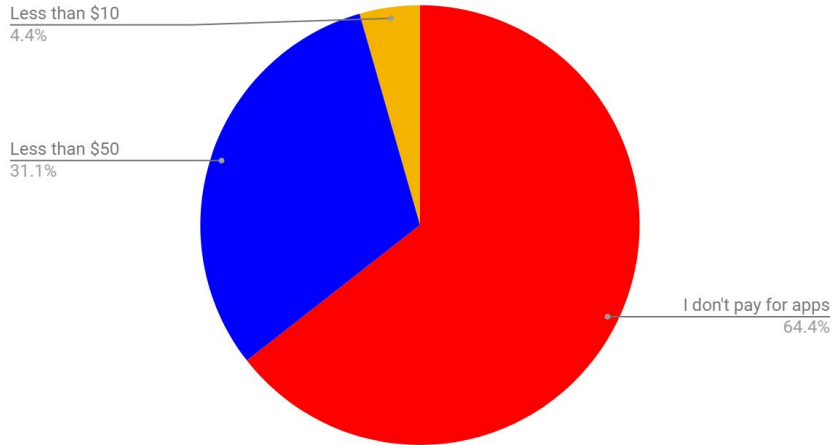
Question 2:

How much influence does mobile gaming have on college students' lifestyles?

How much do you spend for game apps monthly?

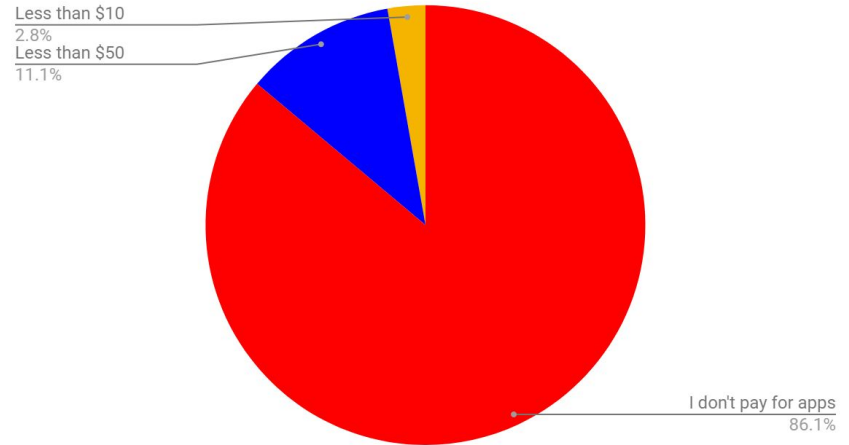
America

12.How much do you spend on gaming apps each month?



Japan

12.How much do you spend on gaming apps each month?

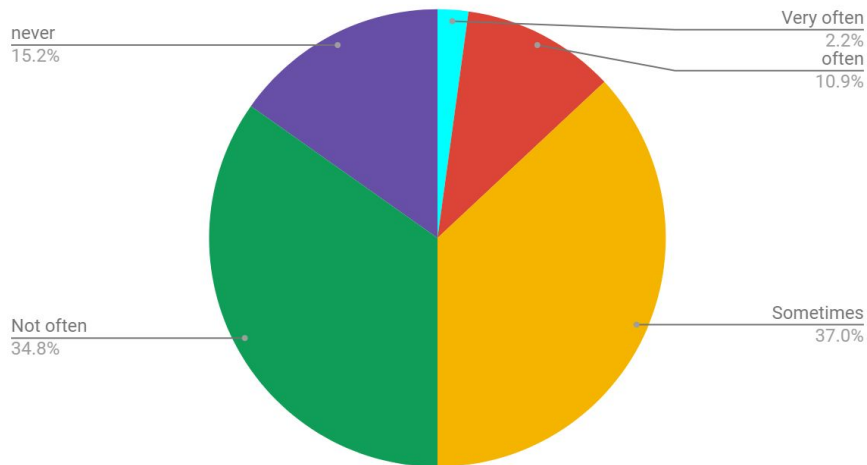


Both in Japan and the United States, most college students don't spend money on gaming app services, but Americans are generally spending more money than Japanese.

How often do mobile games come up in conversation for you?

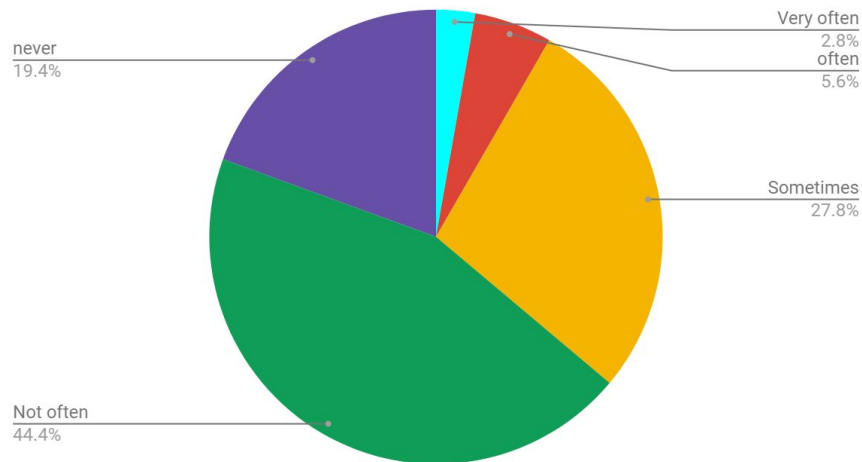
America

How often do mobile games come up in conversation for you?



Japan

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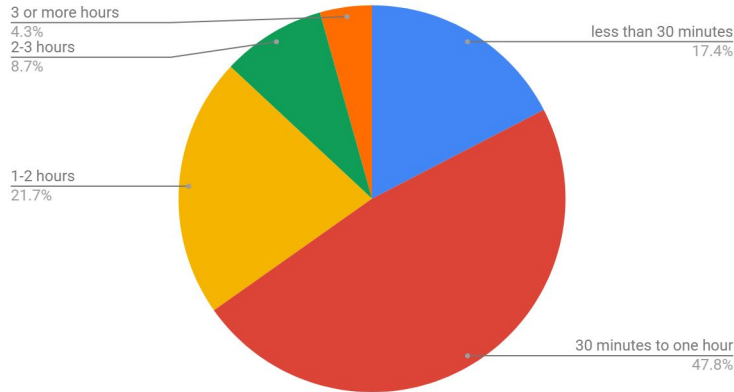


Half of the Americans said that the topic would be a topic, and about 65% of the Japanese said it is not.

How long do you play games on your phone per day?

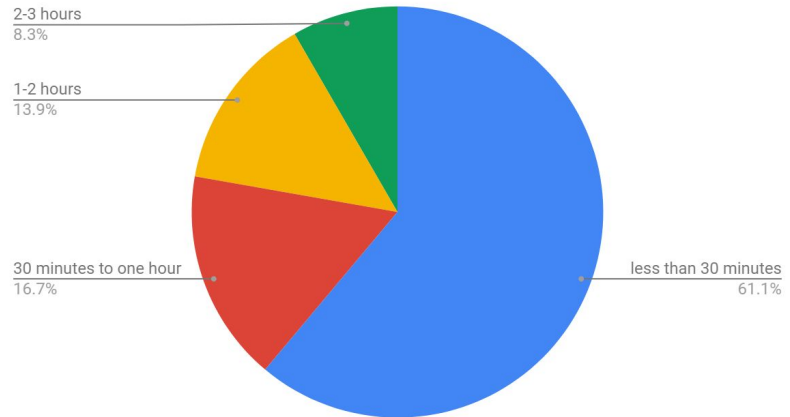
America

16. How long do you play games on your phone per day?



Japan

16. How long do you play games on your phone per day?



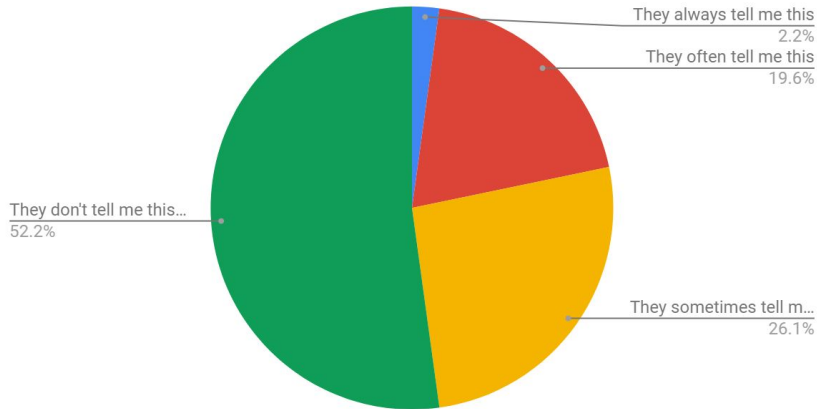
About 17% of Americans and 61% for Japanese claim that they play less than 30 min.

About 48% of Americans and 17% for Japanese answered that they play 30 min to 1 hour.

Do your family and friends think you spend too much time on mobile games?

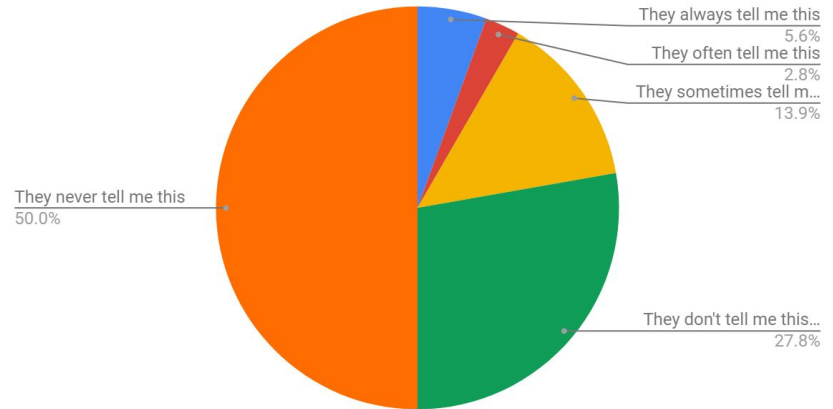
America

15. Does your family/friends think you spend too much time gaming on your phone?



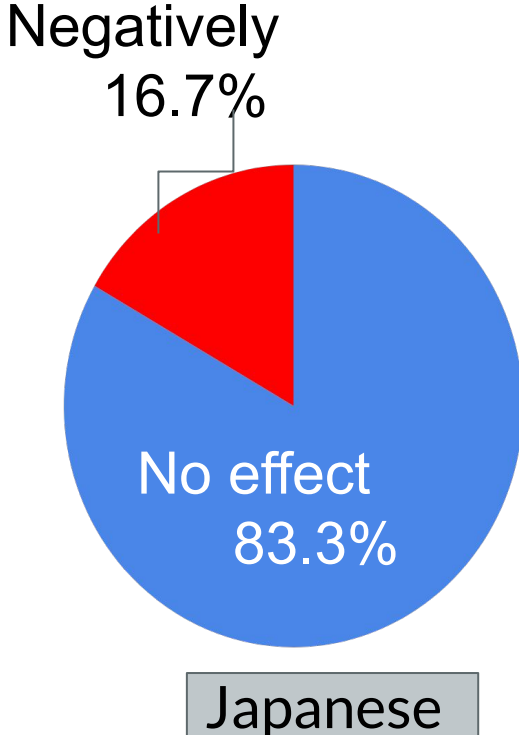
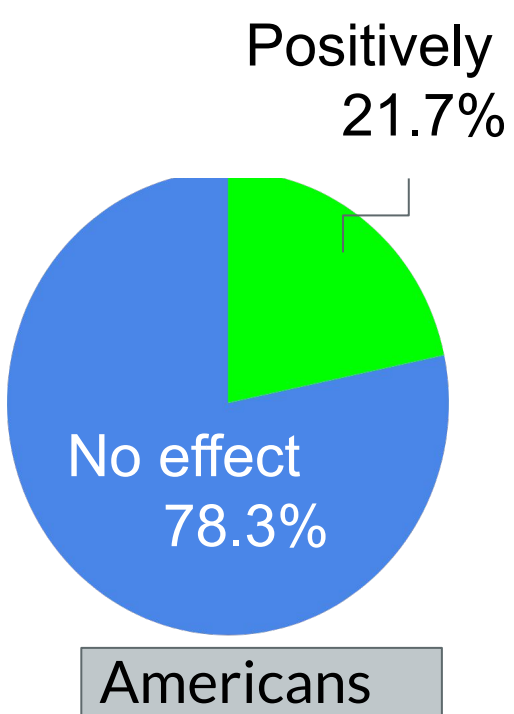
Japan

15. Does your family/friends think you spend too much time gaming on your phone?



Most respondents don't believe they spend too much time on their gaming, but respondents think that 2% of Americans and 8% of Japanese are spending too much time.

How does mobile gaming affect your social standing?



About 22% of Americans said that games have a positive impact on social status and position, an opinion shared by none of the Japanese respondents. 0% of Americans and 17% of Japanese reported that they had a negative effect.

What is the first word that comes to mind when you think of a "mobile gamer"?



America

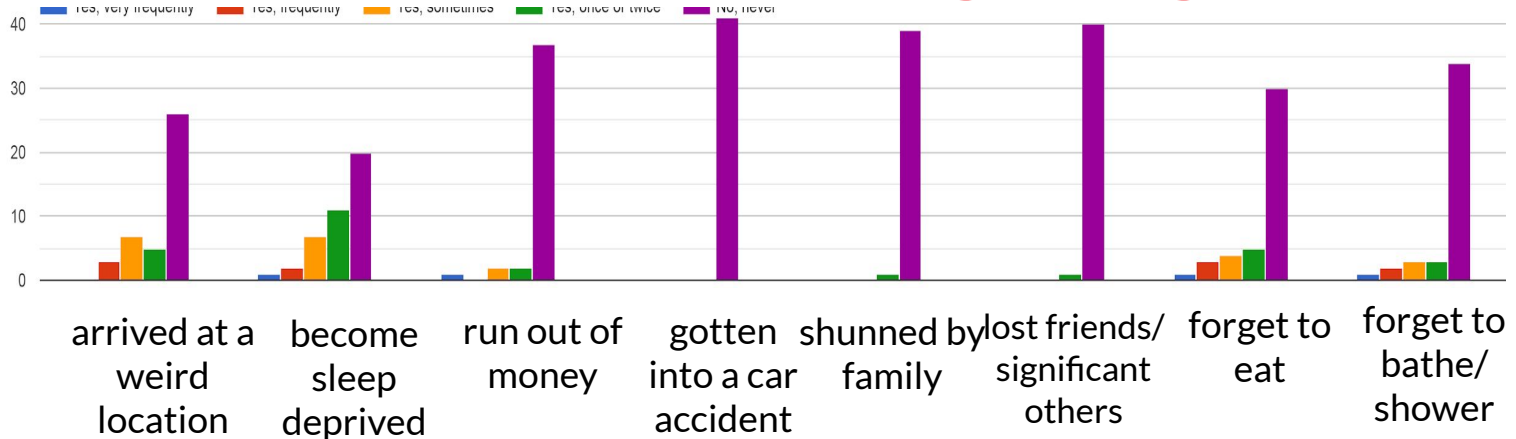


Japan

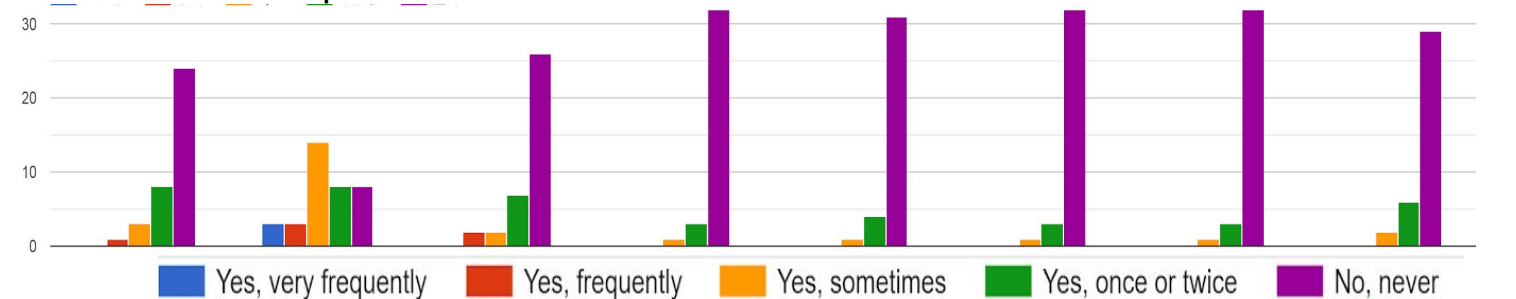
Americans think of "mobile gamers" as "casual", "gamers" and "geeks", while Japanese think of the words "geeks", "bills" and "loafers".

Have you ever been in any of the following situations because of mobile gaming?

America



Japan



Most respondents don't have bad experiences aside from acute sleep deprivation.

Summary of Research Findings 2

- Most Americans and Japanese spend less than an hour playing games, and they spend little to no money on in game purchases.
- For both Americans and Japanese, few people have experienced problems that arise from mobile games.
- While Americans have a relatively positive view on mobile games, Japanese tend to have a slightly more negative view.

Conclusion

- Both American and Japanese students have fun and enjoy mobile games
- Contrary to our initial hypothesis, students in both countries spend little to no money on mobile gaming and control their time playing
- Very few participants believe they have experienced personal problems from mobile games
- Interestingly, Japanese have a generally more negative view of mobile games compared to Americans

Limitations of the Study and Future Research

- There were not enough participants interested in mobile games
- Need more participants
- Investigate not only university students but also elementary school students, junior high school students, and high school students
- Investigate not only smartphones but also various portable games played on other devices

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