

Only for the Young at Heart: Co-Viewing on Mobile Devices and Viewing on the Go?

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Abstract

With the relative ease and accessibility of a variety of content available to users of smartphones and tablets, there has been a subtle behavioral change in how people use these devices. The concept of viewing together or having more than one viewer for a mobile device is a phenomenon referred to as “co-viewing” and is a new area that warrants further investigation. Very little information is available on who is likely to engage in co-viewing behaviors, what types of mobile devices are used, what content is likely to be viewed and if those who engage in this activity / behavior are fundamentally different than those who are less likely—what are the behavioral or demographic differences among those who participate in these activities. Thus the focus here is to examine and provide a baseline understanding around the concept of co-viewing with specific focus of content viewing on the “go” or away from home . Lastly, a national representative survey was conducted where previous sampled respondents were asked a series of questions about if they watched video on mobile devices, how often they watch away from home, how often do others watch when away from home and the last time they shared with others when away from home. All respondents (N = 5,400) received a monetary incentive for completing the survey. Responses from these survey questions are discussed in terms of how these respondents differ (if any) from those who are less likely to engage in this behavior, the frequency in which co-viewing and out of home viewing occur, types of devices used and the frequency of sharing. Findings here and any difference noted, will provide a barometer of understanding of this type of behavior as it pertains to mobile device usage, location and media consumption.

Key Words: Mobile research, co-viewing, out of home viewing, shared mobile devices

1.0 Background

With the relative ease and accessibility of a variety of content available to users of smartphones and tablets, there has been a subtle behavioral change in how people use these devices. The concept of viewing together or having more than one viewer for a mobile device is a phenomenon referred to as “co-viewing” and is a new area that warrants further investigation. Very little information is available on who is likely to engage in co-viewing behaviors, what types of mobile devices are used, what content is likely to be viewed, and if those who engage in this activity are fundamentally different from those who are less likely to engage in these activities. Thus the focus here is to examine and provide a baseline understanding around the concept of co-viewing with specific focus of content viewing on the “go” or

away from home. A national representative survey was conducted where previously sampled respondents were asked a series of questions about if they watched video on mobile devices, how often they watch away when away from home, how often do others watch when away from home and the last time they shared with others when away from home. All respondents (N = 5,400) received a monetary incentive for completing the survey. Responses to these questions are discussed in terms of how respondents differ (if any) from those who are less likely to engage in this behavior, the frequency in which co-viewing and out of home viewing occur, types of devices used and the frequency of sharing. Findings here and any difference noted, will provide a barometer of understanding for this type of behavior as it pertains to mobile device usage, location and media consumption.

2.0 Methodology

In this study, we utilized a nationally representative sample of previous sampled respondents taken from the television and radio measurement. In total, the dual frame sample consisted of 34,115 sampled respondents who were asked to complete an online survey fielded from June – August, 2014. The survey assessed a wide variety of behaviours asking respondents about how they use their computers, tablets, smartphones and iPod touch in and outside of their home. Though there were numerous behavioural questions related to “usage”, the focus of this paper is limited to questions where we ask questions around the concept of co-viewing with specific focus on (1) viewing on the “go” or away from home, (2) frequency of device sharing and (3) duration of device sharing of others. There were four key questions that were of particular interest for this paper to help understand device sharing and co-viewing behaviors by device type (smartphone, tablet, iPod Touch):

- Do you watch videos on the mobile devices?
- How often do you watch videos on any of these mobile devices when you are away from your home? This can include places such as at school, work, or another public place such as a mall, on a train or bus, library, airport etc.
- How often do other people who are not members of your household use your mobile device(s) to watch videos away from your home?
- The last time you shared a device with someone when you were not at home and the person was not a member of your household, how long did they watch video on your mobile device? Situations like this might include, lending or sharing your device with a friend, coworker or someone at school to watch a video. You may or may not have been near them at the time.

Respondents were mailed a letter with the website link to complete the online survey followed with a reminder mailing two weeks later. Respondents who completed the survey received a monetary incentive. Responses to these survey questions are discussed-- if respondents who engage in device sharing specific to co-viewing are different from those who are less likely to engage in this behavior.

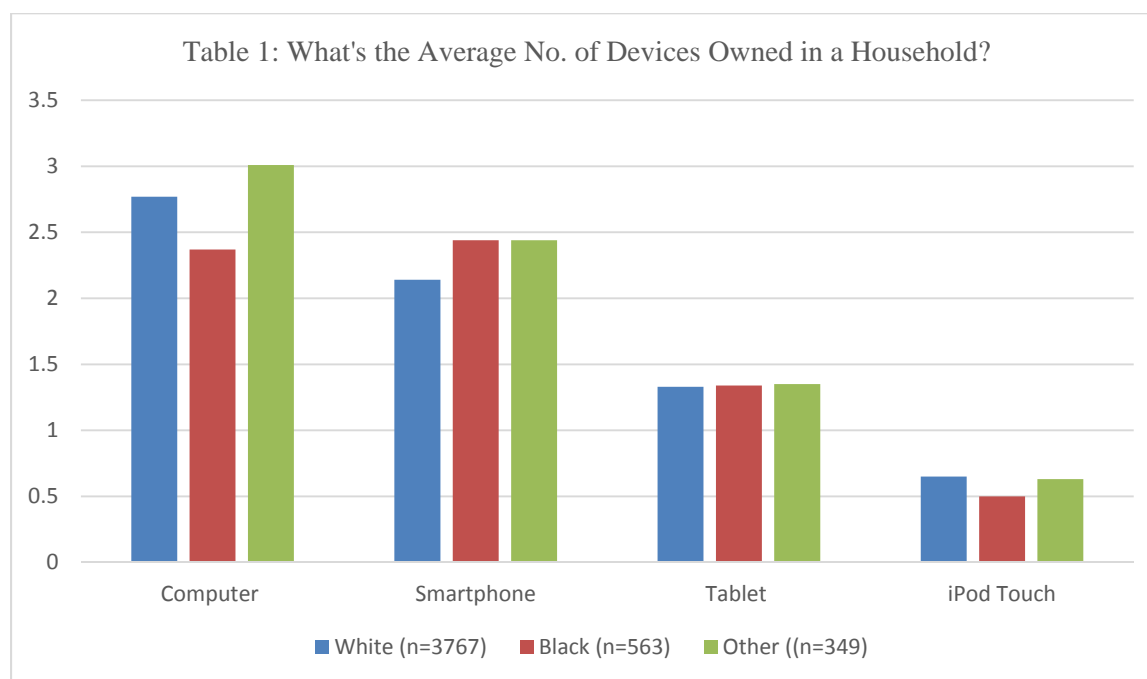
3.0 Findings

Response rates for completion of the online survey was 16.8% (n = 5,400 completed surveys). Of those respondents who completed the survey, 70% were white (n = 3767), 10% were black (n = 563) and 7% indicated some other race (n = 349). Twelve percent (n = 656) indicated that they were Hispanic with nearly 27% indicating that Spanish is the predominantly language used in the home (n = 180; only Spanish or mostly Spanish in the home). For age, respondents were evenly distributed between three age

groups (18-34 cohort = 31%; 35-49 cohort = 29%; 50+ cohort = 30%) and 10% of responders were 17 years of age or younger.¹

3.1 Device Ownership.

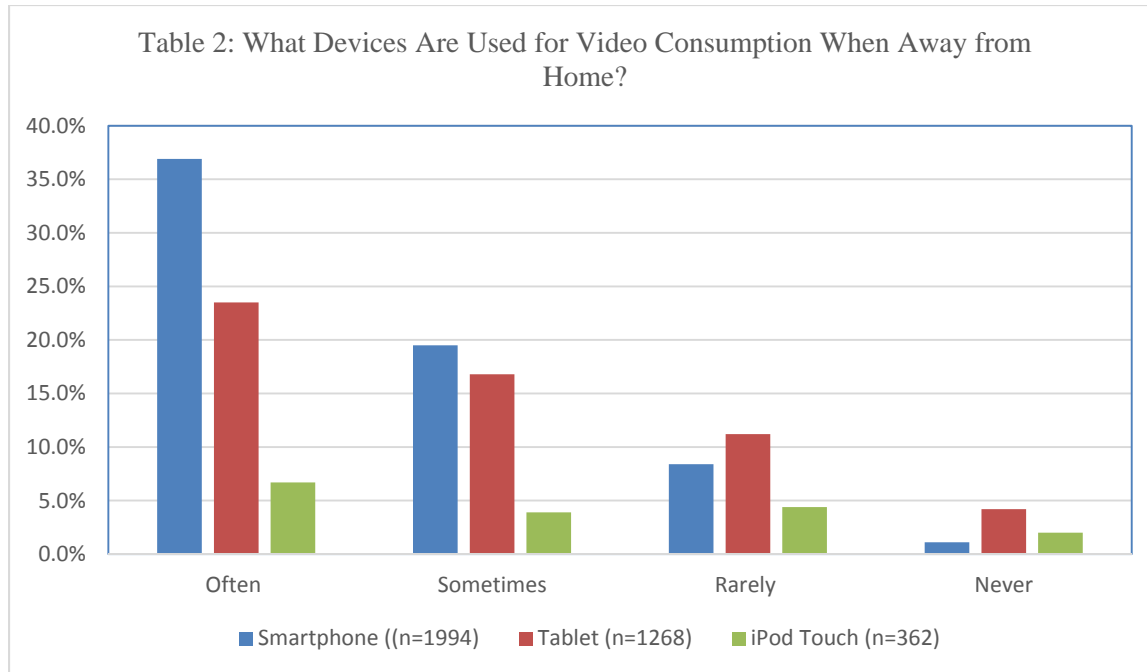
Respondents were asked the question, “How many devices do you have in your household (including devices owned by people that live with you as well as devices that are owned by an employer or a school that may be used at home),” and on average a given household indicated they had three computers, one tablet, two smartphones and less likely to have an iPod Touch in their residence (see Table 1).



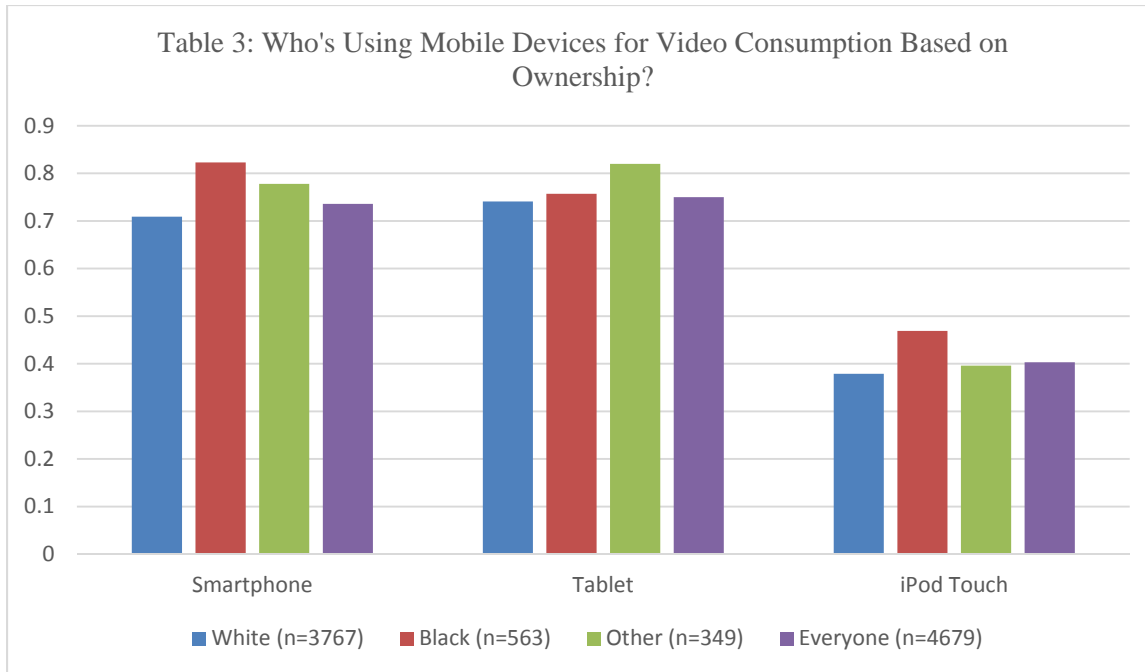
3.2 Device Usage & Frequency of Watching Away From Home.

Respondents when asked about how “frequently” they watch videos when away from home, a large majority indicated that they used their smartphone or tablet often (at least few times per week) for video consumption (smartphone = 36.9%, tablet = 23.5%) with less viewing reported on the smaller iPod touch device (6.7%). See Table 2 for video consumption on the “go” away from home by device.

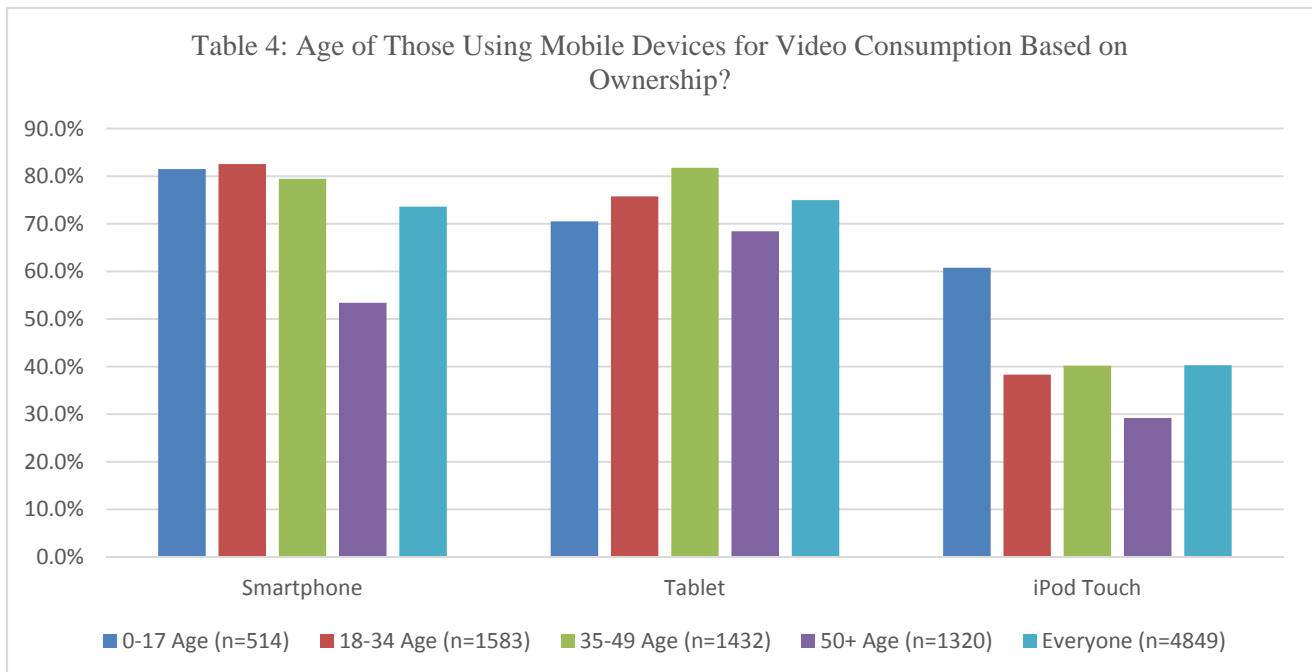
¹ The results discussed in this paper are unweighted.



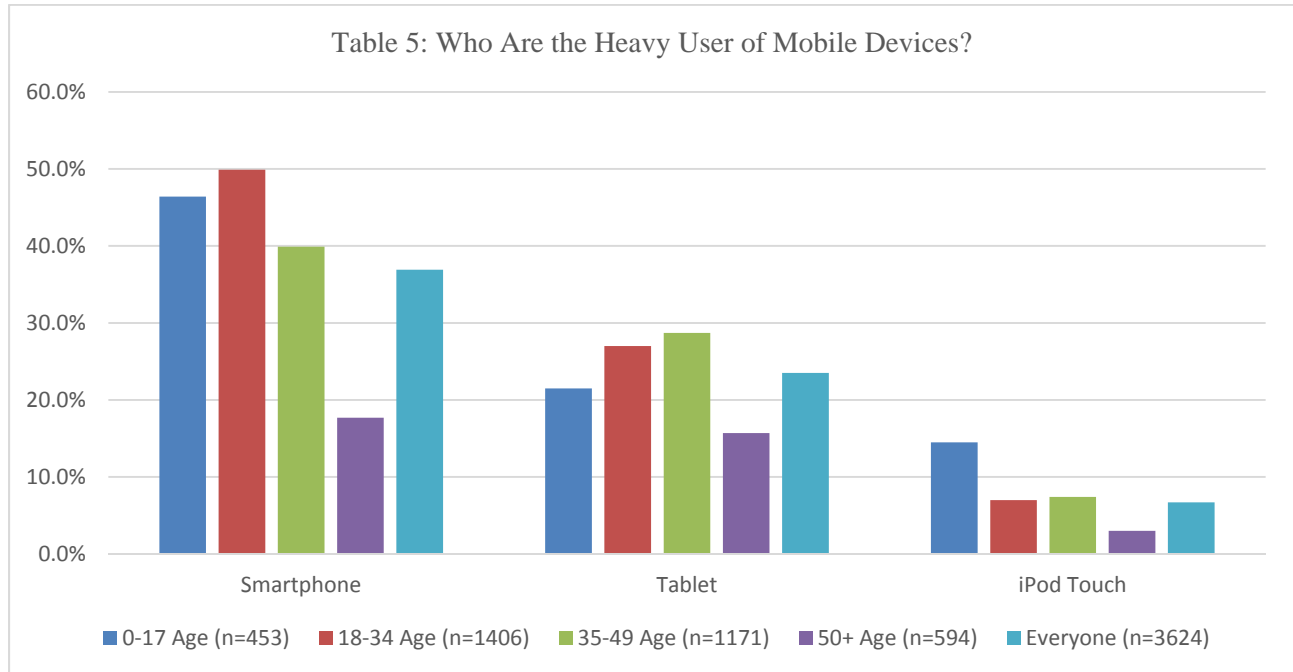
When respondents were asked if they watch videos on their mobile devices, the smartphone and tablet were the preference of choice across (See Table 3.)



When looking at age and device preference, data indicate three underlying notions: 1) smartphones are likely to be used fairly similarly by all age cohorts except for the 50+ cohort, 2) tablets are readily used by all age groups, and lastly the iPod Touch is used more by the youngest cohort (0-17 group) for video consumption (See Table 4).



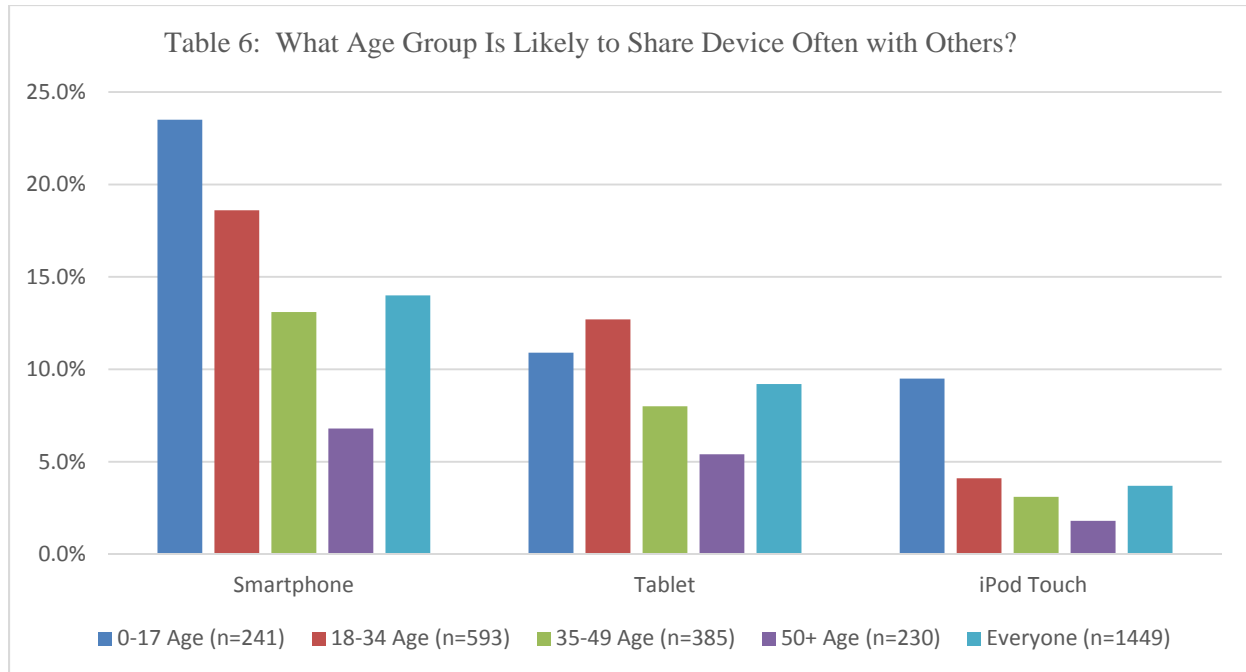
With respect to age and frequent usage, smartphone and tablets are used often (at few times a week) by three of the 4 age groups (See Table 5). And in fact, the two younger cohorts (0-17 & 18-34 cohorts) are more likely and willing to view videos on the go away from with their smartphone. Lastly, the 50+ group are not “heavy users” of video consumption on the “go” on any type of mobile device.



3.3 Device Sharing, Co-Viewing and Frequency

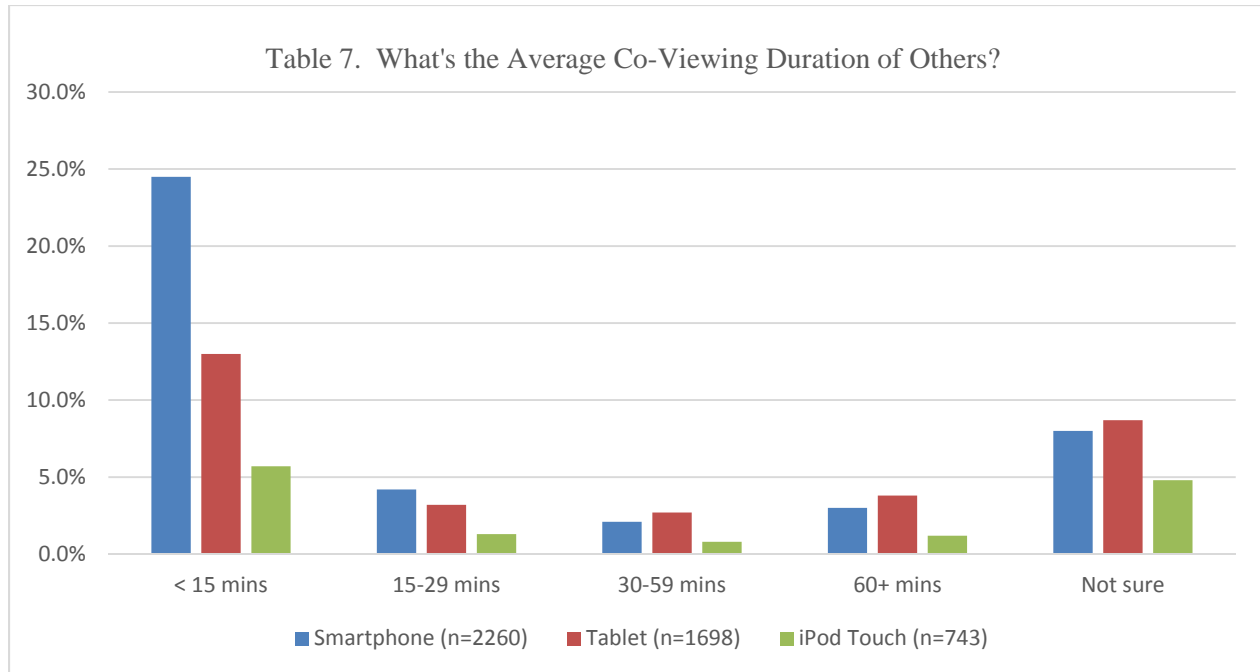
When asked about non-household members and the frequency in which “others” watch, responses collected indicated that the smartphone (14%) is most likely to be shared, followed by the tablet (9%) and then the iPod Touch (2%).

Age was a driving factor of whether or not a respondent shared their mobile device with others. For example, the younger cohorts were more likely to share their smartphone with others compared to the older cohorts and also more likely to any device like their smartphone, tablet or iPod Touch with others. For tablets, the rate of sharing was relatively similar for the 0-17 cohort and 18-34 cohort (See Table 6).



When co-viewing did occur, all devices were shared mostly around 15 minutes or less in duration. For example, 24% indicated they shared their smartphones, 13% indicated they shared their tables and 6% shared their iPod Touch on average for 15 minutes or less (See Table 7).²

² A Logistic regression analysis was conducted to look at co-viewing and influences of demographic variables (like age and race). Results were not compelling towards a specific model and indicated that race (i.e., being white) and age were important contributors to co-viewing but this can be a result of respondents who have these characteristics were simply more likely to complete the survey and subsequently were over represented in the sample.



4.0 Discussion

In general, initial data (see Tables 4-6 above) suggest that the potential of “co-viewing” may indeed be young at heart. It was the age cohorts (0-17, 18-34 and 34-49 age groups) that indicated that they were more likely to view and consume video away from home. Subsequently, the two youngest cohorts (0-17 and 18-34 age groups) were also more likely to share their device with others when away from home which naturally lends itself more to the potential for co-viewing to occur among viewers.

From the responses gathered, we do know a little bit more about the profile of who is likely to view video on the go and away from home, what devices are typically used for this behavior, sharing characteristics, frequency and duration of viewing that occurs around this behavior. For example, the data suggest that the person is likely to be very young, likely to use their smartphone or tablet and device sharing is very common for them. Preliminary data also suggests that the 35-49 age cohort can be perceived to be “young at heart” in that they too consume video on the go away from home and often engage in device sharing with others.

One limitation of the question asked here is related to frequency of others who watched and that is the verbiage around the question suggests that the owner of the device may or may not be present when shared with another person.³ So at most, we cannot conclude with 100% certainty that co-viewing occurred but can infer that it is highly likely given the device was shared with another person. More research on the co-viewing phenomena is needed to understand this behavior whether it is self-reported or observational in nature.

³ Question asked was, “How long did non-household member watch video on your mobile device away from home? (Situations like this might include, lending or sharing your device with a friend, coworker or someone at school to watch a video. You may or may not have been near them at the time).

Lastly, whether or not co-viewing on mobile devices on the go is only for the young of heart, it's still up for debate. Though the older cohort (50+ cohorts) were less likely to engage in sharing behaviors with others, when they did share the amount of viewing consumption was impactful and consistent with the data observed with the younger cohorts—all in same direction just on a slightly smaller scale.