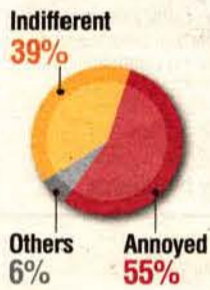


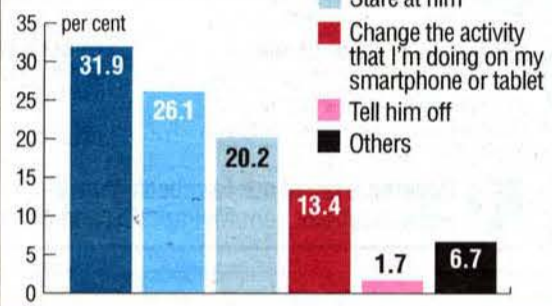
# Commuters peeved by gadget peeking

## » When being peeked at and peeking

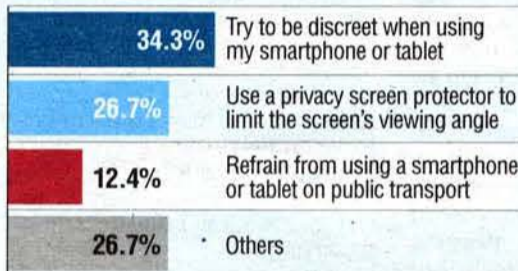
» How do you feel when you notice commuters peeking at your smartphone or tablet?



» How would you react if you notice someone peeking at your smartphone or tablet?\*



» What steps have you taken to protect your privacy when using a smartphone or tablet on public transport?\*



» Do you look at other commuters' smartphones or tablets on public transport?

**YES: 42%** | **NO: 58%**

» How would you react when a commuter notices that you are looking at his smartphone or tablet?\*

Look away	72.3%	Make small talk with him	2.1%
Continue looking at his smartphone or tablet	17%	Tell him off	0%
		Others	8.5%

FIGURES MAY NOT ADD UP TO 100 PER CENT BECAUSE OF ROUNDING OFF

\*RESPONDENTS WERE ALLOWED TO CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER

COMPILED BY ATALIA CHUA, NIGEL CHEN AND WINONA WEE

**BY ATALIA CHUA AND WINONA WEE**

**T**EACHER Elijah Chua gets put off when people sneak a peek at what he is doing on his smartphone when he is on the bus or train.

This is because they are not respecting other people's privacy, he said.

However, Mr Chua, 28, said there are occasions when he accidentally looks at the screen of another commuter's mobile device.

"It is in my **line of vision**," he explained, adding that he would turn away when that happens.

According to a My Paper poll, many Singaporeans – 55 per cent – get annoyed when other commuters **peek** to see what they are doing on their mobile devices while on public transport.

But 42 per cent also admitted to doing so themselves, based on the poll, conducted last month and involving 100 Singaporeans.

The top reason, given by 36.7 per cent of these respondents, is that the devices were in their field of vision, so they could not avoid looking at the screens.

This is followed by 33.3 per cent, who said they were curious, and 20 per cent who said they were bored.

The findings come after a May 9 post on citizen-journalism site Stomp, in which a man on a bus was photographed leaning forward in his seat to look at the screen of another passenger's phone.

The straw poll was done via phone interviews and in areas such as Raffles Place, Orchard Road, Queenstown and Woodlands. The respondents, aged between 18 and 45, owned a smartphone or tablet.

Dr Michael Netzley, academic director of executive development at the Singapore Management University, said many people might peek at other commuters' screens because, on a crowded bus or train, "these screens can literally be right in front of (their faces)".

He added that some commuters might also peek at gadget screens as they see that other people are doing it, too.

Still, some respondents felt that a line should be drawn.

Private-school student Jean Loh, 21,

said "there shouldn't be a need for users to be **discreet** about what they do on their smartphones on public transport" and that it was basic courtesy not to be intrusive and peek at another person's phone.

Others were resigned to the "busybody" nature of many Singaporeans.

"Most likely, they are just bored and being *kaypoh* (Hokkien for busybody)," said marketing coordinator Hazel Lua, 25.

The poll also found that most Singaporeans surveyed would not confront commuters who peeked at their gadgets.

Instead, the No. 1 thing they would do would be to hide their gadget's screen, with 31.9 per cent saying so. This was followed by 26.1 per cent who would do nothing about the matter.

Some 20.2 per cent would stare at peeking commuters, while 1.7 per cent would tell them off.

On the findings, Assistant Professor Trisha Lin, from Nanyang Technological University's Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, said that public transport is considered a public space, but using mobile devices "privatises public spaces".

So, due to the vagueness of what constitutes private and public space in such cases, as well as implicit **social norms**, many people do not like to confront others for peeking at their mobile gadgets, said Dr Lin.

"The concept of mobile 'privacy' in public is still new to society...and mobile-peeking behaviour is not regarded as serious as a moral mistake, just a socially-undesirable act," she added.

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