

Impact of GSM Communication on Adolescents' Training and Morality in Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to ascertain the impact of GSM communication on adolescents' morality and training in our society. The study investigated the excessive uses of GSM phones by adolescents and the impact it has on their academic performances, social lives, and moral lives. 250 randomly selected adolescents and 250 parents of adolescents using GSM phones for various communication purposes were polled by the researcher. Using Chi Square at 95% level of significance and 1.0 degree of freedom, the researcher found that although GSM phone as an innovation is a blessing to the present generation, excessive use of it has significant negative impacts on adolescents' academic performances, social lives and moral lives in Nigeria. The researcher thereby suggested control and corrective measures to ensure constructive use of this veritable device.

Keywords: GSM Communication, impact, phone, Adolescent, Nigeria, Morals and Training

Aims Research Journal Reference Format:

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1. INTRODUCTION

GSM (Global System for Mobile communications: originally from Groupe Spécial Mobile) according to Wikipedia is the most popular standard for mobile phones in the world. GSM is used by over three billion people across more than 212 countries and territories. Its ubiquity makes international roaming very common between mobile phone operators, enabling subscribers to use their phones in many parts of the world. GSM differs from its predecessors in that both signaling and speech channels are digital, and thus is considered a second generation (2G) mobile phone system. This has also meant that data communication was easy to build into the system.

The ubiquity of the GSM standard has been an advantage to both consumers (who benefit from the ability to roam and switch carriers without switching phones) and also to network operators (who can choose equipment from any of the many vendors implementing GSM). GSM also pioneered a low-cost (to the network carrier) alternative to voice calls, the Short Message Service SMS, (also called "text messaging"), which is now supported on other mobile standards as well.

1.1 Uses Of GSM In Nigeria

The recent development in technology has entirely changed the attitudes of the people. The shift from the conventional two-way verbal communication with A.G. Bell's telephone to the recent mobile communication with the GSM device has shown the impact of technology on the humans' social lives. With the passage of time, people are more inclined towards technology and mobile phone is the burning example of the technological influence upon human being. You can talk with others; record some spectacular moments of life; listen to music; install games, applications; videos etc; transfer data and files to other compatible devices; and visit World Wide Web, - these are the basic qualities of the latest mobile phone which makes life faster and mobile.

Consequently, the business of mobile phone has been increased at fast pace with the inclusion of cutting-edge technology. Therefore, looking at various uses of GSM products and services it brings to mind the great impact and influence the new technology has brought to bear on the lives of Nigerian. In the recent past most formal/informal communications were carried out through letter writing, a process which takes upward of three months to move from one part of the country to another, but it is common place today to call or send short text messages to one or more individuals at the same time. Some folks have become fashionable with trendy handsets and special ring-tones. To this class your handset or ring tone must make a statement as to what class one belongs. They believe that poor folks tend to buy cheap

GSM handsets while the high and mighty carries more expensive handsets. Some GSM handsets are equipped with digital cameras which come handy at occasions where events are recorded for the future. Those who are familiar with the computer environment could transfer such pictures to screen savers, send them to others via the internet or print them with colour printers. GSM handsets have become mobile album of some sorts. The GSM handsets are equipped with calculators that could take up to 12 digits, calendars beyond 2050, time, date, torch light, alarm clock and many more. Advertisers are catching in on the GSM revolution as products and services are regularly advertised through the GSM thereby boosting sales and increasing profits for the growth of the economy. For want of relaxation/fun, facilities like games are abundant on GSM handsets to task minds and relax the individuals.

GSM has reduced the cost of doing business as it has shortened distances, bridged gaps between business associates, facilitate work coordination, manage time effectively thereby increasing productivity. The introduction of the GSM makes appointments more re-assuring as cancellations of meetings are immediately communicated. Businesses in Nigeria have improved with the introduction of GSM, goods and services are delivered in good time, delays are better managed and crisis is timely averted. Families have become closer than ever before through the use of GSM, information is passed easily to members, especially when partners or parents are staying apart due to work, school or other challenges. In the past, sending a letter from Lagos to parents in the home towns used to be a herculean task which could take up to three months but now within minutes messages are passed to old folks back home.

The GSM innovation has gone a step further to providing tracking service for motor vehicles. This makes it possible for users to monitor or locate actual place and time where a vehicle is positioned within the coverage areas thereby assisting the police in the investigation of stolen vehicles. Equally important feature of the GSM is the ability to connect to the internet with the Blackberry. This has made communication a lot easier for businessmen and others who require the internet to do their work. The Blackberry gives access to the World Wide Web in any location within or outside the work environment.

2. EFFECTS OF THE USE OF GSM ON ADOLESCENT

Since the introduction of the GSM in Nigeria, there have been increases in the act of students using the device to cheat during examinations by saving materials in their handsets. This development has become a major threat to our educational system as it has direct bearing on quality of graduates produced by the fraudulent system. It has also been noted that GSM has become some sort of nuisance at public gatherings by its potential to cause unnecessary distractions to others in the group when it rings. Mobile lies have increased astronomically with the GSM which makes it convenient for users to tell lies about their location and other sundry issues. Like the television in the 1950s, wireless communication has emerged as one of the defining media of our time, evidenced by the fact that it has become the fastest growing communication technology ever (Castells, Fernandez-Ardevol, Qiu, & Sey, 2007). This explosive growth, coupled with publication lag, makes it practically futile for scholarly manuscripts to cite the number of mobile subscriptions worldwide. So, it is safe to point out that subscriptions are well into the billions and growing (ITU, 2007). Considering this diffusion rate and, more importantly, the social consequences associated with it, Campbell and Park argued that we have exited the age of the mass media and entered a new age of personal communication technology.

In the 1980s and 1990s there was an important shift from message age to an age that Castells (2000) has characterized as “the network society.” Castells’ basic idea is that advancements in transportation as well as information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as personal computers and the Internet, nourished a fundamental shift in social order – at all levels, from micro to macro – characterized by flexible, decentralized network nodes based on shared interests rather than shared space. In other words, the relationship between communication technologies and their users changed from that of receiving broadcast messages to actively seeking, producing, and distributing content while using the same media for point-to-point networking. Not surprisingly, this change in the relationship between technology and society resulted in a host of new social consequences, including increased alienation and social isolation (Kraut et al., 1998; Nie & Erbring, 2000) to new forms to connecting with others and engaging in one’s community (Bimber, 1998; Katz & Aspen, 1997, Rheingold, 1993).

Campbell and Park argued that the widespread adoption and use of mobile communication technologies mark a new phase in the network society, chiefly characterized by heightened personalization in the relationship between technologies and their users. With these technologies we call to individuals and not to locations. This argument resonates with Castells et al.’s (2007) claim of a “mobile network society”. There have obviously been other forms of point-to-point communication during this period. The traditional landline telephone was actually on the scene before many forms of mass media such as the radio, TV and even film (Fischer, 1992) came to the fore. Personalization can be seen in mobile as well as non-mobile media, with the latter pointing to the mobility of wireless technology.

Whether mobile communication marks the rise of a new personal communication society, mobile network society, or simply a new wave of communication technology, there are a number of social consequences associated with its explosive and widespread growth. It is therefore important to examine some key effects of mobile telephony by reviewing how the use of the technology is changing the way people live their lives. Mobile communication has altered coordination patterns among family members as well, especially in households with two-career and otherwise busy parents (Frissen, 2000). The mobile phone allows family members to identify, relay, and manage unscheduled household errands. In addition, parents are better able to keep tabs on and coordinate activities with their children through mobile communication.

However, the effects of mobile work also have a dark side. Without doubt, it lowers the threshold for communication, thereby making it easier to access resources and fellow workers. However, sometimes that threshold serves a valuable purpose by separating different arenas of social life that are perhaps better off left distinct from one another. Evidence suggests this can be the case when it comes to the boundaries separating work and personal life. In a two-year study of working family members, Chesley (2005) found that mobile communication can cause one’s work life to spill over into the home, creating greater stress for both women and men. These effects were more profound for women in the study because for them the spillover was bi-directional. That is, not only were working mothers experiencing work worries at home, but use of the technology also caused issues of home life to bleed into their work environment.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Research Hypothesis

Ho1: GSM revolution and usage has no significant negative impact on the social life of adolescent in the society.

Ho2: GSM revolution and usage has no significant negative effect on academic performances of adolescent.

3.2 Population

The population of this study covered various parents and adolescents from different tribes and backgrounds. This populace was selected within the southwest region of Nigeria which is Ogun and Lagos states to be precise.

3.3 Sampling Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed at random to selected parents and adolescents, since it was not easy to ascertain their uses of GSM phones until they fill it. This format was selected in order to make the response to the questionnaire faster to fill and the data easier to collate.

3.4 Instrument Of Research

A questionnaire was designed and administered to respondents; the researcher also used interviews especially with respondents who were reluctant in filling out the forms.

3.4.1 Section A

These are sets of questions that contained the bio-data of respondents such as title, sex, age, time spent on GSM phones and occupation. The questionnaires contained five (5) open and closed-ended questions.

3.4.2 Section B

This section sought to know the various uses of GSM by respondents; the pieces of data were collected using Likert scale ranging from Agree (A) Disagree (D) Neutral (N).

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Data derived from the research are presented below.

TABLE 1: Analysis of the respondents' perception on the possibility of positive impact of the use of GSM phones on Academic performances of adolescents.

Respondent Perception	Parent respondent	Percentage	Adolescent respondent	Percentage
Agree	42	16.8	106	42.4
Disagree	142	56.8	88	35.2
Neutral	66	26.4	56	22.4
Total	250	100	250	100

Respondent	Agree	Disagree	Total
Parent	42 (a)	142 (b)	184
Adolescent	106 (c)	88 (d)	194
Total	130	248	378

TABLES 2: Analysis of respondent perception on positive effect of the use of GSM phones on social life of adolescents.

Respondent Perception	Parent Respondent	Percentage	Adolescent Respondent	Percentage
Agree	66	26.4	176	70.4
Disagree	184	73.6	74	29.6
Total	250	100	250	100

Respondent	Agree	Disagree	Total
Parent	66 (a)	184 (b)	250
Adolescent	176(c)	74 (d)	250
Total	242	258	500

TABLES 3 – Decision Based on Observed and Computed Chi Square Analysis

Item	Hypothesis (H ₀)	Computed X ² value	Table Value (T) at 3 df	Comparison	Decision at 0.05 level of Sig.
Hypothesis 1	Excessive use of GSM phones Has no Significant negative impact on academic performances of adolescent.	21.26	0.02	X ² _{cal} > X ² (21.26 > 0.02)	Reject Null hypothesis
Hypothesis 2	Excessive use of GSM phones has no significant negative impact on the social and moral lives of adolescent in the society.	98.44	0.02	X ² _{cal} > X ² (98.44 > 0.02)	Reject Null hypothesis

5. FINDINGS

From this research, it has been discovered that:

1. Excessive use of GSM phones in chatting, browsing and social networking has negatively impacted on the **academic performances** of our adolescent in Nigeria.
2. Excessive use of GSM phones in chatting, browsing and social networking has negatively impacted on the **Moral lives** of our adolescent in Nigeria.
3. Excessive use of GSM phones in chatting, browsing and social networking and the likes has negative impact on the **Social lives** of our adolescent in Nigeria. From the foregoing it is apparent that our adolescents' culture in using GSM phones in chatting, browsing and social networking needs urgent attention and proper adjustment to yield better bred, potentially, technologically well equipped future leaders who do not abuse but properly and gainfully utilize GSM technology.

6. CONCLUSION

It has been discovered that GSM invention is a very viable and useful discovery which can be put to good use or be abused. This research discovered that Nigerian adolescents have largely been negatively impacted socially, morally and academically not specifically by the GSM invention but by their abuse of it, by their inordinate use of it in browsing, surfing, sexting and visiting immoral and pornographic websites, downloading immoral music, violent games etc onto the memory cards of their GSM and by spending inordinate amount of their time attending to such irrelevancies. These have badly impacted on their social, moral and academic lives. The researcher however believes that timely corrective and cooperative intervention of the government, phone manufactures, Internet Service Providers, religious leaders and parents as suggested above under **Recommendations** will go a long way in helping them make good use of this device will curb the negative impacts and promote harnessing the potentials of GSM invention towards nations building.

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