Prevalent Use of Global System of Mobile Phone (GSM) for Communication in Nigeria:
A Breakthrough in Interactional Enhancement or a Drawback?

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ABSTRACT

The main issue investigated in this study was what became of the interpersonal profile of the sampled population in view of their prevalent use of GSM phone, a communication enhancing technological device that came with the millennium encroachment of the global village. The dimensions of investigation covered interactional levels as existed between subjects and the significant others in their social space, value implication of GSM phone use on socio-cultural orientations, general survey of interactional patterns, and focus on gender as a possible predictor of the interaction between interpersonal competence and GSM phone use. Findings did not support any significant debilitating effect of the GSM phone use on interpersonal competence and appropriate socio-cultural norm compliance attitude among subjects, while the interpersonal disposition of respondents showed a positive bias for warmth and affiliation, significant traces of gender variations however existed when measured on certain criterion measures used in the study. On the aggregate, GSM phone use appeared to possess an interpersonal enhancing property which was able to reduce the effect of distance on communication values among social actors.

Key Words: GSM phone use, interpersonal disposition, interaction patterns

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The pace of change brought about by new technologies has had a significant effect on the way people live, work, and play worldwide. New and emerging technologies challenge the traditional process of communication and aided increased access to IT in the home, at work, and in educational establishments. The sense that the world is in the middle of a continuing communications revolution has been strong since the 1960s when television made its great breakthrough. It was then that the Canadian writer on communications, Marshall McLuhan (1964) made his memorable statement that "the medium is the message" and that the world was becoming a global village. It was then too, that the word "media" became part of daily speech, covering not only electronic media, live television, but also older print media, particularly the press.

Competence in communication ability is central to all issues relating to interpersonal relationship. Relationship being an interpersonal process cannot be conceptualized as being fixed (Duck 1982). For this reason, relationships are always in a state of flux, continually going through stages of change and maintenance, growth and retreat (Aronson et al. 1998). This process is developed through communication; hence as individuals define and redefine their relationships, they share their understanding of the relationship with their partners. This ongoing communication about one's feelings and needs creates a sense of a mutually shared relationship (Acitelli 1992; Fletcher & Fincham 1991).

It is a fact that computers and mobile telephones have revolutionized communication and by extension interpersonal relationship hence influencing intimacy and the closeness that exist between people. It is also understood (Smith & Mackie 1995) that interaction helps people master the world, and find connectedness, while at the same time leading to simple familiarity which in turn increases liking. Interesting studies have been conducted where communication enhancing technological devices have been considered as major research variables. For example, it has been suggested that it is possible for people in distributed online multiplayer games to talk to each other. This might not only influence game performance, but also social interaction. Halloran, Rogers & Fitzpatric (2003) in a 10-week study of a fixed group of adult gamers, found that not knowing who is talking affects game performance differently according to the type of game. In team-based war games, it can have a negative effect both on learning and coordination, but in race games, where individual rather than teams compete, it appears generally not to matter. In contrast, the impact of not knowing who is talking on social interaction is the same regardless of game type: while the social experience can be highly enjoyable, it is difficult for gamers to get to know each other.

Another study (Morris, Lundell & Dishman 2004) describes design directions for ubiquitous computing to facilitate social interaction. The study focuses on elders coping with cognitive decline and their caregivers. Social needs and barriers were examined in a qualitative study of 45 households across the U.S. Directions for ubiquitous computing concepts are outlined to address these social needs and barriers. Two example concepts, an ambient display to facilitate joint activity and a social memory aid, are used as independent variables. An underlying principal of these design directions and concepts is the use of computing technologies as catalysts rather than substitutes for human relationships. These concepts are part of an integrated system of home health technologies under development in a multiyear "aging in place" study.

A particular study (Karahalious & Donath 2004) adopted the terminology *Telemurals,* which is an abstract audio-video installation that seeks to initiate and sustain interaction between and within two remote spaces, to improve the social aspects of casual mediated communications by incorporating events into the design of the communication medium that encourage people to engage in interaction when they otherwise would not. Such events as this were called social

catalysts, for they are understood to encourage people to initiate and sustain interaction. The social catalysts introduced in the study were found quite capable of sustaining interaction.

In another study that has a tangential relevance to this paper, Fash (2003) carried out a formal analysis of the behaviour of social agents that can be individual (BDI) agents or aggregations of agents. The central idea examined in the study is that stability and regulation of activity within a multi-agent system can be accounted for by means of a complex web of roles, commitments, obligations and rights. In particular, commitments are considered to be the attitudes that hold a group of agents together. In pursuit of their own objectives as well as in order to support their collective commitments, agents adopt roles and undertake social commitments.

Thoresson (2003) in his study introduces PhotoPhone Entertainment (PPE), applications for mobile and wireless devices with camera functionality, and describes a number of design examples of such applications. He designed the applications for people waiting for a few minutes at a bus stop among whom he found that the design encouraged some form of social interaction such as collaboration with, or competition against users at the bus stop.

SOCIAL INTERACTION PATTERNS

Social interaction is a general term that covers the reciprocal influence between two or more persons or groups in a social system. The units of interaction are clearly defined in a sociocultural system with a view to giving such units its orientation as well as the interaction processes involved in them. The environment in which interaction occurs is a good component of this system. In terms of process, interaction has a two-dimensional perspective to it, namely; the decision (action within each interacting units) and communication (action between units).

Chen, Yang and Wactlar (2004) explained social interaction as capable of producing several visual patterns which are related to many parameters, such as presence (how many), identity (who), relationship (who to whom) and environment (where). Ojewale (1981) in his unpublished thesis identified four interaction systems, namely; (a) a set of units which interact with each other; (b) a set of rules or codes which structure both the orientations of the units and the interacting agents themselves; (c) an ordered or patterned system or process of the interaction itself, i.e. the way an individual understands and practices the dictates of the norms sanctioned by the society; and (d) an environment in which the system operates and with which systematic interchanges take place. This is the fair degree of consistency in which the individual's behaviour harmonizes with his specific personality construct.

References to social interaction pattern in this study shall fall within the context of the explanation under 'd' above, i.e. to what extent can the individual's typical social personality construct be a function of what motivates the most

frequent of his social interaction engagements. Hence, Arthur's (1980) categorizations of social interaction patterns shall be adopted to describe the paradigms of social interaction attribute in this study. These categorizations are; (i) 'instrumental social interaction pattern' which can be explained as a situation where social interaction is divested to achieve a premeditated end, e.g. interacting with an influential member of the society to gain social recognition, or an interaction strictly based on investment-profit business ethics; (ii) 'cooperative social interaction pattern' which describes the most pro-social of the three categorizations. Social interaction, is here, characterized by affiliative inclinations motivated only by the need to associate and interact, e.g. being prominent in a group whose goal is to promote social activities; (iii) 'competitive social interaction pattern' which refers to an interaction governed by an undisguised strong need to attain a goal at the expense of other contenders, e.g. being very visible in a group because it is the winning group or has a potential to win in the nearest future. All these categorizations do often characterize both the individual or group motivation to interact at different social levels.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCALE OF THE STUDY

Nigeria as a nation has the background of an agrarian clustering of the population in towns and villages. However, with the passage of time, cities developed from towns and villages grew into towns while new village settlements emerged. The mainstay of the economy shifted from agrarian outlook to industrial establishments. A rural-urban drift characterized people's movement in compliance with the modern technological trend with which came new ways of doing things and new understanding of the environment. The need to obtain the required expertise to gain mastery of the new methods of doing things made provision of formal education inevitable. People therefore had to go to school to learn about these new ways of doing things. The fallout from dispensing formal education to the people included the emergence of a crop of elites whose training could only be optimally utilized in the newly established industries most of which were located in the cities. This trend in the early 1960s therefore gave vent to the rural-urban drift at a pace never before witnessed in the Nigerian polity.

The extended family system widely practiced by the Nigerian people became more elastic thus leading to a gradual disbandment of what used to be centralized family settings. This disbandment in no small measure affected people's value orientation. A gradual erosion of the value system, owing to lack of central control, paved the way for the emergence of sundry social vices. Family reunion became less frequent as city dwellers rely more on their colleagues at work and neighbours in their various places of abode within the city to provide most of the socio-emotional and economic support hitherto deployed exclusively by family members.

The rural-urban drift recorded as part of its by-products the building of road networks, development of organized system of transportation and the emergence of postal agencies, which in all pursued the purpose of facilitating communication and linkage between the family back at home in the rural community and the city dwellers. This development, however, to a great extent reduced the perceived great distance between the village and the city. This was the picture at the dawn of the Nigerian nationhood in 1960.

The early periods of the new millennium, precisely year 2001, witnessed a revolution in the communication system in Nigeria as some Global Satellite Mobile (GSM) phone service providers were licensed to operate in Nigeria. This revolution has been largely enhanced by the aggressive market promotion of the GSM phone by the service providers who were quick to list various utility advantages of GSM services, ranging from making business transaction easier through facilitating quick information exchange to enhancing interpersonal relationships. Further, the socio-economic advantages of the GSM phone may be assessed as including the following; private investment in the telecom sector which now ranks second only to the oil industry in Nigeria. As the records put it (MTN Online 2004), it is said to be worth USD 2.110 billion as at December 2002, and estimated to have increased to USD 25.050 billion as at June 2003. This growth, they claimed represents a phenomenal 5000% increase in investment in less than 4 years.

The ownership of mobile phones was also believed to have been 'democratised' as attention was pointed to the profile of those wielding GSM phones, which include artisans, students, taxi drivers, etc. A new development which was not the case before when about half of the limited telephone lines available in the country were mainly held by government and corporate organizations.

GSM is also presented as being able to make people to communicate with each other, on real time basis, saving time and money, among other conveniences. Facilitating access to up-to-date information to support real time decisions increases efficiency in environmental monitoring, disaster control and emergency management. Examples given to corroborate these assertions include traffic report by some radio stations in Nigeria which communicates traffic situation to motorists and helps reroute vehicles in case of an unforeseen road blockage that may occur as a result of accidents or flooding. Cited as a case in point was the Ikeja cantonment disaster of 27 January, 2002 in which friends and relatives used the mobile phones to communicate freely with each other and coordinate responses. GSM is also believed to contribute to the improvement in the living conditions of people in the rural areas by allowing them to communicate easily amongst themselves and with relatives, friends and business associates living elsewhere. More rural businesses and better employment opportunities that can greatly reduce the problem of rural-to-urban migration has started to emerge. The GSM operators alone have generated 3,500 direct employment and an estimated 10,000 to 200,000 indirect employment opportunities.

The operators also claimed that tariff has shown remarkable reductions in acquisition costs: the connection cost of fixed telephone line, they insisted, decreased by about 100% from an average of NGN 100,000 in 1999 to NGN 51,000 in 2002, dropping by a further 41% to NGN 30,000 in six months by the end of June 2003. Waiting time for telephone installation was also said to have reduced from months to minutes in the case of mobile phones. By the second quarters of the year 2004, the five leading GSM service providers in Nigeria, namely MTN, V MOBILE, GLOBALCOM, NITEL and MTEL (according to MTN Online 2004) between them had about 5 million subscribers. This means that about 5 million lines are servicing the approximately 120 million Nigerian population (about 4.2% of the population). MTN's signal alone reaches some 54,895,000 people (representing about 46.8% of Nigeria's total population) living in 161,000 km^2 space (about 17.9% of Nigeria's landmass).

This is not anywhere near the average required for describing a nation as having hit the international standard in information technology but for a country that cannot boast of 120,000 land lines before the introduction of GSM, this development is considered significant.

Arising from the above, is the temptation to assume that this development should be able to significantly impact on interpersonal relationship, group activities, business transactions and a host of other social engagements around which the social fabric of the society is wound. It is the objective of this study to put the assumed impact in perspective by attempting to find answers to the following research questions which in turn shall guide the course of this study.

- What is the 'value' rating of subscribers for GSM phone?
- Can Nigerians be adjudged to be warm and affiliative people going by the number of times they call or receive calls and the type of people they call most often?
- Are there gender variations in the interpersonal disposition of Nigerians who use GSM phones?
- Do subscribers consider the prevalent use of GSM phone an obstacle to their natural emission of warmth and affiliation?
- What characterizes the social interaction pattern of Nigerians (instrumental, cooperative or competitive) judging from the use to which they prevalently put their GSM phone?
- Is there a gender variation in the social interaction pattern exhibited?

METHODOLOGY

A survey method was considered appropriate in helping to describe the patterns and the dispositional attitude of subjects to GSM phone use and therefore supply answers to the questions asked above. Subject selection was random but limited to phone users alone. However, when analysed it was discovered that the age range

of subject fell between 16 and 45 years, while the age mean stood at 23.64. Out of the 700 (M = 328, F = 232) questionnaires distributed 660 were appropriately responded to and retrieved. The locale of study was Ile-Ife town, a city in the southwest of Nigeria located in the present Osun state (one of the 36 in the country). Cacao, cereals, and palms are grown in the surrounding area. The chief industries in Ile-Ife include: cocoa and palm processing, cotton weaving and saw milling. Obafemi Awolowo University (1961), a museum of Yoruba art, and the museum of the Institute of African Studies are located here. Population is 289,500 (1995 estimate, Federal Office of Statistics 2004), which is considered ample enough to make a nationwide generalization possible.

INSTRUMENT

A questionnaire (GSM Phone Use Questionnaire) with five sections was designed by the author to tease responses from subjects. The sections devolve on request for supply of such information as biodata, frequency of phone usage, call targets and callers, main objective of call, value label attached to GSM phone use, interpersonal nature of the calls made and subjects description of the essence of GSM phone use. While sections 1, 2, & 3 were in the 'yes and 'no' format the last two sections were in the Likert's format. The questionnaire was tested for validity by administering a general interpersonal skill questionnaire (Hill 1995) on 40 pilot subjects. The aim was to establish a criterion validity rating of the pilot on the subject of interpersonal skill. A significantly high score on the ISQ (mean score = 72%) established this. The questionnaire was also made available to colleagues with cognate expertise in psychological measurement in the faculty of Social Sciences for scrutiny and to comment on the content validity. Their input shaped the present form of the questionnaire. For reliability, both the split-half reliability method (r = 0.67) and 4-week test-retest method (r = 0.71) confirmed the reliability of the test instrument.

FINDINGS

In order to answer the first question which sought to know what type of value rating GSM phone users attach to their phones, data were collected on respondents' disposition to what they will do in case of loss or damage to their phone, and why they will take the action. Using a one-sample test, which compares the scores of respondents with the central overall score, a high degree of fit was recorded at t = 31.575, df = 598, p < 0.001 thus attesting to a high value rating of GSM phone. The following coefficient of relationship was found between the value rating of GSM phone use by respondents and their personality characteristics;

    i.   the level of interpersonal disposition towards significant others; $r = 0.540$, $p < 0.05$

    ii.   disposition towards instrumental social interaction pattern; $r = 0.653$, $p < 0.05$

    iii.   disposition towards cooperative social interaction pattern; $r = 0.11$, $p > 0.05$

    iv.   disposition towards competitive social interaction pattern; $r = 0.57$, $p < 0.05$

    v.   general interpersonal skill competence; $r = 0.523$, $p < 0.05$.

Except for respondents that are high on cooperative social interaction pattern scale and whose predisposition to GSM phone hardly affects their social disposition, the use of GSM phone is considered particularly useful by respondents high on other personality characteristics.

People who are high on affiliative need are understood to be particularly sensitive to relationship with others. They desire to be or to be in contact with their friends more of the time, and alone less often, than people who are lower in need for affiliation (O'Connor & Carnevale 1997). In order to test for the affiliative needs of respondents, the number of times they call or receive calls and the type of people they call most often were taken into consideration. The one sample test conducted to measure the degree of subjects' fit on the dependent variable continuum (interpersonal competence relative to the significant others in the individual's social space) yielded $t = 81.55$, $df = 632$, $p < 0.001$. A rather high score that suggests an equally high degree of affiliative needs in respondents. When the personality social predispositional characteristics of instrumental, competitive and cooperative patterns of social interaction were used as predictors for interpersonal relationship at the level of the significant others, the result was significant at $f = 19.22$, $df = 632$, $p > 0.001$, indicating a significant interpersonal competence level. When the individual values were isolated, the following results were obtained for;

    i.   instrumental; $t = 3.419$, $p > 0.001$

    ii.   cooperative; $t = 5.999$, $p > 0.001$

    iii.   competitive; $t = 4.994$, $p > 0.001$.

This further suggests that individuals that are high on cooperative interaction pattern scale exhibit more interpersonal competence above the other two categories.

The third research question sought an answer to whether there are gender variations in the interpersonal disposition of Nigerians who use GSM phones. Table 1 below displays the gender comparison across all the criteria measures.

Table 1. Gender Comparison across All Criterion Measures

Criterion Measures	Sex	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	df	t value	P value
Interp./Sign. Others	Male	388	17.27	4.523	0.309	366	-2.461	0.014 **
	Female	214	18.35	3.711	0.292	212		
Instrumental	Male	388	0.43	0.777	0.053	366	3.186	0.002 **
	Female	214	0.20	0.576	0.045	212		
Cooperative	Male	388	1.58	0.724	0.049	382	-2.870	0.004 **
	Female	214	1.79	0.550	0.043	212		
Competitive	Male	388	0.58	0.828	0.057	386	0.252	0.801
	Female	214	0.56	0.851	0.066	212		
GSM Value Rating	Male	388	9.17	5.447	0.373	386	0.968	0.333
	Female	214	8.62	5.533	0.431	212		
Gen./Interp. Skill	Male	388	59.53	13.10	0.893	386	0.513	0.608
	Female	214	58.83	13.29	1.038	212		

** Significant values

Gender variations were significant on interpersonal disposition toward significant others (t = -2.461, p > 0.05), instrumental interaction pattern (t = 3.186, p > 0.05) and cooperative interaction pattern (t = -2.870, p > 0.05), while no significant gender difference was recorded for competitive interaction pattern (t = 0.252, p < 0.05), GSM value rating (t = 0.968, p < 0.05) and general interpersonal skill (t = 0.513, p < 0.05).

Table 2. Regression of General Interpersonal Skills on Social Interaction Patterns

		General interpersonal Skills	Instrumental pattern	Cooperative pattern	Competitive pattern
Pearson correlation	Gen./Interp. Skill	1.000	0.48	-0.112	-0.001
	Instrumental	0.048	1.000	-0.209	0.194
	Cooperative	-0.112	-0.209	1.000	-0.326
	Competitive	-0.001	0.194	-0.326	1.000
Sig. (1–tailed)	Gen./Interp. Skill	.	0.178	0.014	0.491
	Instrumental	0.178	.	0.000	0.000
	Cooperative	0.014	0.000	.	0.000
	Competitive	0.491	0.000	0.000	.
N	Gen./Interp. Skill	621	621	621	621
	Instrumental	621	621	621	621
	Cooperative	621	621	621	621
	Competitive	621	621	621	621

Table 3. ANOVA

Model		Sum of square	df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	989.783	3	329.928	1.916	0.126
	Residual	106761.520	620	172.196		N.S
	Total		623			

a. Predictors (constant):. Competitive, Instrumental, Cooperative
b. Dependent Variable: General Interpersonal Skill

Table 4. Level of Interaction between the Predictors and the Dependent Variable (Coefficients)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
1	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	63.507	2.204		28.815	0.000
Instrumt.	0.586	0.988	0.031	0.593	0.554
Cooperative	-2.410	1.095	-0.121	-2.201	0.028
Competitive	-0.735	0.864	-0.041	-0.851	0.396

a. Dependent Variable: General Interpersonal Skill

In providing an answer to the fourth question which focuses attention on whether subscribers consider the prevalent use of GSM phone an obstacle to their natural emission of warmth and affiliation, the results shown in Table 2, 3 and 4 were obtained when the various social interaction patterns (instrumental, cooperative and competitive) were made predictors of general interpersonal skill in respondents.

From the above tables, it is evident that the predictors (instrumental, $t = 0.593$, $p < 0.05$, competitive, $t = -0.851$, $p < 0.05$ and cooperative, $t = -2.201$, $p > 0.05$), when taken together, have little or no effect on the social interaction pattern of subjects. Hence respondents who are high on both the instrumental and competitive social interaction pattern scale did not consider GSM phone use as having any negative effect on their interpersonal competence, though same cannot be said for respondents high on cooperative social interaction pattern.

Question 5 inquired about what characterizes the social interaction pattern of Nigerians (instrumental, cooperative or competitive) judging from the use to which they prevalently put their GSM phone. Answer is provided to this question in Table 5 below which displays the descriptive statistics of respondents' score on each criterion measure.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of the Criterion Measures

Criterion Measures	N	Range	Min.	Max.	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Instrumental	630	2	0	2	250	0.66	0.704	0.496
Cooperative	630	2	0	2	1,240	1.96	0.659	0.435
Competitive	630	2	0	2	234	0.86	0.836	0.699

Table 6. Correlation Coefficients among the Criterion Measures

Criterion	Instrumental	Cooperative	Competitive
Instrumental	1	-0.210**	0.191**
Cooperative	-0.210**	1	-0.322**
Competitive	0.191**	-0.322**	1

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

Table 5 graphically displays a high total sum of score for respondents whose social predisposition is characterized by cooperative social interaction pattern. A similar significant relationship also exists between cooperative criterion and the other two criteria (instrumental and competitive interaction pattern).

Lastly, this investigation was also interested in identifying whether a gender variation exists in the social interaction pattern indicated by respondents. Table 7 below displays the outcome of the data analysis in respect of the finding.

Table 7. Gender Comparison of Respondents on the Criterion Measures of Social Interaction Patterns

Criterion Measures	Sex	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	df	t value	P value
Instrumental	Male	388	0.43	0.777	0.053	366		
							3.186	0.002 **
	Female	214	0.20	0.576	0.045	212		
Cooperative	Male	388	1.58	0.724	0.049	382		
							-2.870	0.004 **
	Female	214	1.79	0.550	0.043	212		
Competitive	Male	388	0.58	0.828	0.057	386		
							0.252	0.801
	Female	214	0.56	0.851	0.066	212		

***Significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)*

In the above table (Table 7) it is clear that gender variation did exist between male and female correspondents on both the instrumental (t = 3.186, p > 0.05) and the cooperative social interaction pattern scales (t = -2.870, p > 0.05). The mean score of male respondents (Mean = 0.43) was higher than that of the female (Mean = 0.20) for the instrumental scale while the reverse was the case for cooperative scale (Female Mean = 1.79 > 1.58, Male Mean).

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provided useful answers to the research questions raised in the body of the work. For example, the question about whether GSM phone use is considered valuable, attracted a significantly affirmative answer. It was discovered that respondents that are high on cooperative social interaction pattern scale, have a unique predisposition to GSM phone use that hardly affects their social disposition. However, the use of GSM phone is considered particularly useful by respondents high on other personality characteristics (i.e., 'instrumental'

and 'competitive'). This finding may be explained as a fallout from the primary characteristics that define 'instrumental' and 'competitive' social interaction patterns, which essentially describes a social personality characteristics that construes social involvement as a means to achieving an end. At the same time, personalities that are imbued with cooperative interaction pattern will seek out involvement in healthy interpersonal relationship with or without the aid of a GSM phone.

Nigerians indeed can be adjudged to be warm and affiliative people going by the number of times they call or receive calls and the type of people they call most often. The significant others that featured prominently from whom respondents receive and send calls include: the father, mother, siblings, casual friends, close friends, lovers, business partners and perceived helpers among others. This perhaps emphasizes the connectedness that Makgoba (1997) expressed in his comment on the African cultural stream. It is also not a coincidence that this particular finding agrees with other such findings like that of Elegbeleye (2003), Erny (1973) and Akbar (1975), who in their various studies and observations upheld the communal centrifugality embedded in the African personality that is not so common among other races.

This study found that gender variations do exist in the interpersonal disposition of Nigerians who use GSM phones. For example, gender variations were significant in respondents' interpersonal disposition towards significant others, instrumental interaction pattern, and cooperative interaction pattern while no significant gender difference was recorded for competitive interaction pattern, GSM value rating, and general interpersonal skill. At each instance where gender variation was found it was discovered that the female subjects project a higher mean score than male subjects except on the instrumental scale where male subjects have a higher mean score. This finding is however consistent with other findings (Elegbeleye 1992; Elkind 1977; Endler & Magnusson 1976) that place female subjects a notch higher on social interaction competence scale than male subjects when the social milieu is devoid of competition and perceived danger to the interactants. But it is important to note that the overwhelming non-significant gender variation among respondents suggests a robust interpersonal competence that would not succumb to certain personality variables.

The explanation for the above finding also holds true for the fourth question which sought to find out whether subscribers consider the prevalent use of GSM phone an obstacle to their natural emission of warmth and affiliation. The overwhelming answer to this question was in the negative, hence further validating the findings prompted by question two.

Regarding what characterizes the social interaction pattern of Nigerians (whether instrumental, cooperative or competitive social interaction pattern) judging from the use to which they prevalently put their GSM phone, it was found that cooperative social interaction pattern fairly represents the social interaction pattern by which respondents can be described. This finding also provides a further wide range of validity to the submission that respondents are warm and

affiliative particularly when considered against the backdrop that cooperative social interaction pattern describes the most prosocial of the three categorizations. It should again be noted that social interaction is under the cooperative categorization characterized by affiliative inclinations motivated only by the need to associate and interact such as being prominent in a group whose goal is dominated by the desire to promote social activities.

CONCLUSION

Going by the findings of this study, it can be safely concluded that even though respondents consider the use of GSM phone quite valuable, they are not in any way bereft of the socially appropriate interpersonal competence required to describe them as being warm and affiliative. There was also a special emphasis on the persons' connectedness which is presumably the precursor of what scholars of African personality constructs often refer to as the rhythmic patterns in African personality.

It can however be affirmed that the prevalent use of GSM phone among Nigerians enhances rather than debilitate interpersonal relationship. It is worthy of note also that the gender variation that existed among male and female respondents at the macro level was not too significant for gender issues to overshadow the inherent social inclination of respondents.

This study again can be safely generalized to describe the interpersonal profile of Nigerians of all social strata and their attitude to the use of GSM phone.

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