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Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Nigeria

## **NEW MEDIA AND INSINCERITY IN COMMUNICATION: GSM ABUSE**

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### **Abstract**

Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs) have greatly radicalized the information and communication pattern of the society as well as engendered the following: enhanced human activities in education, trade and commerce; bridged the distance in relationships; and enabled faster communication using platforms such as GSM (Global System for Mobile Communication). However, this new media has its own shortcomings. This paper examines the new media and the increasing insincerity in communication. The focus of the paper is on the abusive use of the GSM. A total of 100 participants selected from staff and students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka were used for the study. The techniques for data collection are in-depth interview (IDI) and focus group discussion (FGD). Findings from the study demonstrate that GSM has become a global necessity, used popularly to meet many communication and business needs. Ironically, it is in this use that one encounters one of the greatest short comings, its abuse, in creating misinformation and miscommunication at the same time. However these short comings are tolerated in the Nigerian context. Finally the study recommends that although video calls and Skype are now available, phone manufacturers should widen the accessibility of such devices so that it will be readily available to every user. In this way, the value of GSM phones as a communication and tracking device will not only increase but the abuse and use for negative business transactions will be hugely minimized.

**Keywords:** Information Communication, Mobile Communication, New Media, Insincerity

### **Introduction**

In July 22, 2012 the Nigerian audience were shocked with the news of the murder of Cynthia Osokogu. Cynthia was allegedly lured by supposed friends to Lagos (South-West Nigeria) using mobile connection via Facebook from Nasarawa State (North – East Nigeria) where she was undergoing a Masters degree programme. Four men: Okwumo Nwabufo, 33; Olisaeloka Ezike, 23, Orji Osita, 33; and Nonso Ezike 30, are standing trial over the incident. She was allegedly raped and murdered at Cosmilla Hotel, Lakeview Estate, FESTAC Town, in Lagos Hotel. This ugly incident has raised serious concerns on the various negative ways Information & Communication Technologies are now put to use in the country. As these new communication devices continue to proliferate in the society, empirical inquiry on the various uses and impact in the society such as Nigeria becomes relevant.

It is no longer in doubt that the emergence of Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs) have radically transformed the way information is created,

disseminated and consumed by individuals. ICTs have created an information superhighway that occupy a central position in every conceivable aspect of society, as well as, democratized the public forum; anyone can write a blog post and contribute their voice to the public debate. Anyone is an author. No wonder, Ukonu, Okoro, & Agbo, (2013) state that with the emergence of ICTs, human communication has reached another milestone - an era in which the various technology platforms have united culminating into a situation that enhances human interaction and participation in every conceivable aspect of human endeavour.

The GSM (Global System for Mobile Communication) such as the mobile or cellular phone is among the popular communication platform provided by ICTs. Mobile telephones have revolutionized the act of communication as evident from literature. Mobile phones initially were only used for communication, now as the technology continues to evolve the shapes, types and uses have tremendously changed. They are now used for entertainment, business, academics, social interaction, tracking, surveillance and office work. Chatterjee (2014) captures these uses this way: "The ubiquity of mobile phones and the popularity of the device are signifiers of a new social order in which anyone and almost can make their presence known by sending, messages, photos and videos that potentially can be accessed by a huge number of people. Mobile phone can be a positive technological tool; yet if used in the wrong way can become quite a problem in today's society." There is no doubt that the mobile phone is a very useful tool and a major part of society. But every technology that provides such benefits as argued has some drawbacks. However, the unique features of ICTs; easy accesses, multiple platforms, portability and anonymity of the end users also bring with it, the problem of insincerity especially in its fundamental use as a communication device.

Insincerity comes in when there is any form of falsehood in communication. Falsehood distorts information and it affects the society socially, economically and otherwise. Insincerity in using GSM becomes possible due to these characteristics earlier mentioned. Due to these features GSM can be used in these insincere ways – false text messaging, false information concerning –location, activities, feelings and achievements, false identity/image, false photographs. Because the usage of mobile phones has re-shaped, re-organised and altered the way communication is done it has also made it easy to be used negatively and to be abused. With the social outcry of this perceived use of GSM in negative ways especially in communication, this paper investigates the extent of insincerity in GSM use and its abuse, by selected Nigeria audience in South- East Nigeria. And as well explores strategies that could possibly help ameliorate the effects.

Merriam Webster Dictionary (2013) defined abuse as the improper usage or treatment of an entity, often to unfairly or improperly gain benefit. Abuse can come in many forms, such as: physical or verbal maltreatment, injury, assault, violation, rape, unjust practices; crimes, or other types of aggression. In this context, abuse is the improper use of something to unfairly or improperly gain benefit with respect to the use of GSM. This paper examines what can be considered dysfunctional use of the mobile phone. Since they are devices that are now present in a variety of contexts, and can be remotely and unpredictably activated, and also surrounded by actors who can as a

group and as individuals play a role in the social world , mobile phones therefore becomes the subject of social scrutiny .

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were addressed in the course of this work:

1. To what extent are people insincere in communication through GSM?
2. Which gender is more likely to abuse the use of GSM?
3. To what extent does occupation affect the rate of insincerity in communication through the use of GSM?
4. What strategies can reduce the rate of insincerity through the use of GSM?

### **A Review of Literature**

ICTs development in the society has provided the audience with various social media communication platforms that has radicalized communication. Social media have democratized the public sphere in such a way that anyone can contribute their voice to public debate ( Hobler, Tepper & Duffy 2014). And anyone can have their voice amplified by social media networks. This multiplicity of voices has the potential to deepen our understanding of the issues of the day. No longer are outside voices silenced. No longer are the elite the only ones who get a say in creating a dialogue about the most important ideas (LeBlanc, Mireile & Barling (2014). Social media and other communications technologies have also made it possible that work can be done anywhere in the world. Friedman (2012) makes this argument in his book; *The World is Flat*, where Freidman recounts a journey to Bangalore, India, when he realized that globalization has changed core economic concepts. In his opinion, this flattening is a product of a convergence of personal computer with fiber-optic micro cable with the rise of work flow software. He termed this period as Globalization 3.0, differentiating this period from the previous Globalization 1.0 (in which countries and governments were the main protagonists) and the Globalization 2.0 (in which multinational companies led the way in driving global integration).

Friedman recounts many examples of companies based in India and China that, by providing labour from typists and call center operators to accountants and computer programmers, have become integral parts of complex global supply chains for companies such as Dell, AOL, and Microsoft.

Social media as defined are new information and communication technologies using a form of interactive communication skills, where users produce the information and share other contents online while interpersonal relationships are established and maintained in the process. Scholars, identify six classifications of social media. These classifications are: Social Networks (Facebook, Google+, Myspace, LinkedIn); Media Products Community (You tube, Flickr, Slideshare); Blog Services (wordpress, blogger, Twitter); Information Community (Wikipedia and Wikispaces), which is also referred to as Collaborative Project ; Virtual Community also called Virtual Game Worlds , includes Second Life and World of Warcraft; and Link Sharing Services PLAC (2012). Dunu & Uzochukwu (2015) provide a summary of the definitions of social media as they write:

Other definitions see social media as elements of the new media that has the highest activity on the internet which use web-based technologies that transform and broadcast media monologues into social dialogues, support the democratization of knowledge and information while transforming people from content consumers to content producers. Social media are also perceived as tools that help to reach people when, where and how they want to receive messages; it improves the availability of content and may influence satisfaction and trust in the messages delivered (p.4)

There are certain attributes of the social media that has made it popular among users in Nigeria:

1. Social networking and social interaction;
2. Participation;
3. The use of different providers (e.g. search engines, blog spaces, etc.);
4. Openness;
5. Collaboration (between both users and user groups) (Eysenbach, 2008).

These identifiable features of the Social media enable a form of communication utilizing interactive and user-produced content, which has liberalized information sharing and allow for unprecedented ease among communicators as well as ensuring anonymity of users. Economically, social media have become utilized as a channel that allows companies to communicate with consumers in a more personalized way. This creates a two-way interactive communication channel, which is highly personalized. Consumers can learn about a company's products or services, and at the same time companies can learn about a consumer's preferences and needs. Ali (2015) outlined the positive and negative effects of the social media on the family and work place as follows:

1. Social networks help the businesses in a variety of ways. Traditional marketing mediums such as the radio, TV commercials and print adverts are completely obsolete now and demand for thousands of dollars. However, with social media the businesses can connect with their targeted customers for free, the only cost is energy and time. Through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or any other social site you can lower your marketing cost to a significant level.
2. The increasing popularity of social sites like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, social networks has gained attention as the most viable communication choice for the bloggers, article writers and content creators.
3. These social networking sites have opened the opportunity for all the writers and bloggers to connect with their tech savvy clients to share your expertise and articles. Your audience will further share your articles, blog or expertise in their social circle which further enhance your networks of the followers.
4. Social networks have removed all the communication and interaction barriers, and now one can communicate his/her perception and thoughts over a variety of topics. Students and experts are able to share and communicate with like-minded people and can ask for the input and opinion on a particular topic.
5. Another positive impact of social networking sites is to unite people on a huge platform for the achievement of some specific objective. This is very important

to bring the positive change in society. In the words of Ali (2009), “Social networks has provided us the opportunity to connect with people and build better relationships with friends with whom we are unable to meet personally, and let them know about our life and take input about their lives and events happening with them”. No wonder social media has been described as a site for social interaction, where people connect with each other and check out what people are doing. People are becoming more and more mobile, moving from jobs, living far from their families. Thus, this modern technology helps bridge the social gap created by this modern economy. We build and maintain relationships on social media.

Ali (2015) also outlined some of the negative effects of the social media to include the followings:

1. One of the negative effects of social media or network is that it leads to addiction. Spending countless hours on the social sites can divert the focus and attention from a particular task. It lowers the motivational level of the people, especially of the teenagers and students. They mainly rely on technology and the internet instead of learning the practical knowledge and expertise of the everyday life. Social media can be addictive and have the same consequences as other additions for some people. A lot of people look at their mobile when they wake up. It turns out that logging into Facebook can provide our brains with a influx of dopamine, just like alcoholic gets when one drinks a martini. A research by Martin (2012) shows that: “27 percent of consumers admit they check social networks as soon as they wake up, and 51 percent continue to log in periodically throughout the day. Researchers from the University of California and University of Rochester found that if individuals ‘psychological needs were deprived,’ a fear of missing out also provided the temptation of writing and checking text messages and e-mails while driving.”(Martin 2012:179).
2. Kids can be greatly affected by these social networking sites if they are allowed to use them. The reason is that sometimes people share photos on social media that contains violence and sex, which can damage the behavior of kids and teenagers. It put the negative impact on overall society as these kids and teenagers involve themselves in crime related activities.
3. Another downside of the social media is that the user shares too much information which may pose threats to them. Even with the tight security settings your personal information may leak on the social sites. Downloading your videos or pictures and copying your status is an easy task and can be done within few clicks. Social media has caused, in a sense, the death of privacy. Not only do your friends and family know everything about you, so does any company that can pay for your data. Private information about people is readily available to third parties. At the same time, public institutions, such as the police, use social networks to privately undertake activities that previously would have been subject to public oversight. Personal information and pictures available in social network sites such as Facebook means that these can be perused at will by any individual without the knowledge and consent of the owner

Apart from these negative points identified above, social media have some serious repercussions on productivity too as is evident from research findings. People are using social media while they are supposed to be working. Much productivity time is being lost to social media. “In its annual Wasting Time at Work Survey, Salary.com reported that 89 percent of respondents admitted that they waste time at work each day. A small percentage even admitted they waste at least half of an eight-hour workday on none work-related tasks. For the 61 percent who admit to wasting 30 minutes to an hour, the lost productivity may not seem like a big deal. But for a small-business owner, even 30 minutes each day adds up to 2.5 hours a week and 130 hours each year.” (Economist Magazine Inc.2009).

In recent times, GSM has become one of the major and trendy means of connection to the social network globally. This is because it is handy and comes in different shapes and sizes and also highly portable. Thus making it one of the most accessible and popular means of Internet connection used by the adults, youths and children. It can be manipulated to perform the functions of the computer in workplace, for business and for studies (for the students). Friends and business partners can connect to each other on Facebook, Linked, twitter, etc on their on their phones anywhere they are. More importantly, the GSM is used to make calls. The focus of the paper is on the abusive use of the GSM. It tries to examine not only whether and how GSM is used abusively but also who abuses the use of the GSM most, the males or female members of the society and why? Gender is envisioned as socially constructed sex as biologically given. Sex is the anatomical distinction between being a male or a female. Thus, gender is the patterned socially produced distinction between femininity and masculinity. Sex attributes are universal and are not adaptable to change whereas gender attributes are culturally specific and are subject to change across culture. Within this context, we try to see if gender uses of GSM are differential in the case of abuse and misinformation and to also determine other factors that may account for the negative use of GSM especially as it relates to insincerity. The focus is in the various ways the GSM has become abused in the Nigerian context. We are living in the era of mobile phones; communication has never been so easy. With social media we are always connected to our friends and millions of other people, no matter where we are. At a very low cost we can easily exchange messages, get all sorts of notifications and share information like texts, pictures and videos, all we need is a mobile phone with internet connection. Anecdotal evidence shows that besides communication we have available a vast variety of apps that can make daily life a lot easier using mobile phones, with only our mobile devices we can read books, listen to music, take pictures, watch videos, play games, create documents, store data and much more. This Utopian vision was what the creators of the Internet seem to have intended, a communication tool with grand progressive social implications. According to the editorial Column of The Economist Magazine, (2009) “The amount of digital information increases tenfold every five years... Moreover, there are now many more people who interact with information. Between 1990 and 2005 more than 1 billion people worldwide entered the middle class. As they get richer they become more literate, which fuels information growth” (The Economist 2009: 2). In the course of doing all these activities invariably some form of abuse and insincerity comes in.

As a social media platform of connectivity and also as primarily a communication device evidence form literature demonstrates various ways mobile phones have been abused and misused. Since this is the focus of this study, we here outline and also analyze the positive and negative aspects of GSM usage as extensively covered by Chatterjee (2014):

- Using mobile phones for criminal and negative activities such as - using mobile phones for kidnapping threats and blackmailing, cybercrime, fraudulent business activities (popularly referred to in Nigerian parlance as '419'-using mobile networks to engage in false business online activity and even *ponzzi* schemes. These businesses all have online presence without a corresponding offline address. The anonymity associated with such activities and virtual evidence of supposed genuine operations fuels the spread of such acts. (The latest *MMM Ponzzi* scheme debacle is a recent case in point that swindled many Nigerians off huge amounts of money leaving many suicide and heartbreaks in its trail). Among these negative criminal activities cybercrime has become the most popular. Common forms of such activities according to scholars include; cloning of websites, false representations, identity theft, Internet credit card theft, fraudulent electronic mails and cyber theft.
- Using mobile phones for invasion of privacy and extortion- Mobile phones with camera functions are causing privacy problems. This is because many people have misused the usage on the camera phones such as using it as a hidden camera to take photos which are private. These pictures are used for blackmailing people and extorting huge amounts of money. Another new dimension is that these pictures or videos are also used as false evidence and can be manipulated (photo shopping) to erroneously produce very false and misleading information of the person.
- Increase risk of accident and diversion of attention - The use of a mobile phone while driving translates into a significantly increased risk of a traffic accident. With public invasion which means that you are invading into other's personal spaces by talking out loud about your own personal spaces coming off as inconsiderate and/or rude and links to isolation of oneself and this has several repercussions. In answering the ringing mobile phone, the individual who is presently being conversed with, has described feeling a sense of being left alone, which can cause social anxiety, as well as bitterness/annoyance towards the individual who answered the phone call.
- Providing misinformation/false identity- While it has provided a new avenue to social networking and interactions, the change in the space and time concept has also had a negative effect as well. Many of us have likely experienced a situation where we have been in the presence of a mobile phone user who is engaging in some form of rude behavior that lacks respect for the individuals around them and also tell outright lies. One of such common lies in the Nigerian case is the use of mobile phones by couples in relationships to lie to each other. An exemplary and every day

misuse is the common trend of using mobile phones to give false information regarding location. Somebody in Lagos, Western Nigeria for instance, may lie and tell the person that the call is from Enugu, South East. Students could be somewhere and call their parents telling them that they are of course in the classrooms taking lectures. Of course there is a long catalogue of this type of misuse and abuse. Related to this ugly trend is the use of mobile phones to claim false identity and create false images.

- Arguably mobile phones have also altered social interactions - Mobile phones in their small time in existence have changed the way in which individuals are interacting with each other. Mobile phones have changed the way that individuals socially interact and individuals are communicating more through text messages and mobile phones than face-to-face, changing our social environment.

Even as Mobile phones have negative uses there are notable positive effects on the way that individuals put it to use in society as follows:

- Mobile phones have provided avenues for individuals to stay connected on a new level that does not depend on space or time, but is readily accessible at anytime, anywhere. Mobile phones have allowed social networks and relationships to be strengthened as well as new relationships formed and have also allowed individuals all over the world that, without the mobile phone would never have access to all of the networks, access information that they do through the mobile phone.
- According to George Simmel modern societies are characterized by individuals who combine a multitude of different roles, and individualization grows to the degree that each person realizes his own idiosyncratic role set and his specific trajectory of role shifts over time (Hans, 2004). Insofar as each role demands one's physical presence at a specific place (workplace, private apartment, church, school etc.), reconciling different roles usually means: sequencing role involvements diachronically and taking the burden of frequent time consuming locomotion. By providing the opportunity for flexible role switching without changing location, mobile phones facilitate the harmonization of different role duties, because diachronic role change can be substituted by (almost) synchronous roles involvements, and because frictional costs associated with time-consuming loco motional activities can be avoided, Gillard(1996). This is referred to as the Role-integrative functions of mobile phone. A common example is the use of mobile phone for conversing while engaging in other forms of activity such as working with the computer or doing some other functions different. For instance, women can engage in "remote mothering" at work or "remote work" at home: "The mobile phone permits them to exist in their domestic and work worlds simultaneously... women are now working "parallel shifts" rather than what has been described as the "double shift"(Rakow,1993) .
- Mobile phones can be instrumentalized for preserving diffuse, pervasive roles which demand that the incumbent is available almost all the time, because



such encompassing availability can be upheld even at times when individuals are highly mobile and involved in other social or private activities. Thus, mothers can use mobile phones as “umbilical cords” to their children, so that they are in contact with them the whole day even when they are at work or on travel (Hans, 2004).

- Mobile phone is not only used as tools for communication, but also as tools for emotional contact and sentient activity among people. Emotion and the mobile phone are inextricably linked through the interacting human user but it is the emotion rather than the technological interface that takes presence in the communication. The mobile phone acts as the conduit for sentient activity between people who already have some form of relationship, and especially those who are close to each other. It is because of this that the device enables people to feel the presence of others, no matter how distant. Mobile phone has become an almost indispensable tool when managing close family relationships. The mobile phone makes you feel close to loved ones but then there is a danger of feeling that you might miss a vital call, or of having to take a call or read a text when you are driving or in a public place with no opportunity for privacy (Vincent, 2013).

### **Theoretical orientation**

The study used Symbolic interactionism as its theoretical framework. The theory is concerned with the character and process of interaction among individuals. Its basic premise is that the human individual consists of a self (Okeibunor and Anugwom, 2005 p. 97). This self according to them is both social and biological. Socially, the self can interpret the action it is interacting with. Biologically, it does the interpretation to itself. The interactionist believe in the interpretation or the meaning any actor gives to his/her action. They believe that meaning can be relative, that is, it depends on the context of the action. One individual slapped by another on the face may not retaliate if the action is not interpreted to be offensive. The reverse will be the case if the slapping action is interpreted otherwise. In relation to this study, the interactionist is of the view that when a caller tells his recipient “am on my way” while he is still at home. It might not necessarily mean that he/she is insincere.

Hughes and Koehler (2008 pp. 95-98) maintained that symbolic interactionists view the world as a constructed reality. According to them, everyday fashion is a good example, thus, when we encounter a person dressed in a certain way, the reaction we have to the dressing is not to the clothes per se, but to the meanings they symbolize. Symbolic interactionism focuses on the process of social interaction and the meaning which individuals attach to them. This is unlike the structural-functionalist school where behaviour is not assumed to be a function of adherence to normative standards. Rather behaviour is perceived as being directly influenced by the interpretation of the situation. Symbolic interaction draws from the early work of Mead and Goffman.

### **Area of the Study**

The study was carried out in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka has a population of twenty-four thousand seven hundred and six (24,706) students for the full-time programme and twelve thousand,

four hundred and seventy six (12,476) students for the part – time programme distributed into diverse range of causes during the 2011/2012 academic year ([http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title= Nnamdi Azikiwe University](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nnamdi_Azikiwe_University)). The reason for the choice of Nnamdi Azikiwe as the study area of this work results from the fact that the University community as it is usually referred to has all categories of individuals needed for the research. The university play host to a nursery and primary school as well as a secondary school. It houses the employed and the unemployed. Different categories of people are also seen in the university community.

### **Methodology**

The major instrument of data collection is structured interview guide for Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The interview guide was divided into two parts. The first part is the socio-demographic data of the participants such as the sex, age marital status, educational level etc. The second part dealt with the substantive issues of the research such as the reasons for insincerity in GSM use, consequences of insincerity in GSM use, the benefits if any and how to reduce the incidence in the nation. This is complemented by In-depth Interviews (IDI). A sample size of one hundred (100) respondents comprising of staff and students aged 18 to 59 were randomly selected from the institution for the study. Presentation was descriptive.

### **Discussion of Findings**

All the participants interviewed know what GSM is and they have a functional phone. They all accepted that there is increased insincerity in the use of GSM. They are of the opinion that insincerity is a way of life in most developing nation of which Nigeria is one. According to one of our respondent ‘without a little insincerity life in work place or family cannot progress effectively’. Some of the common words used are: “am on the way”-while the person is still at home, “am at a particular location”-while the person is at a different location.

According to one of the respondents,

When you call someone and he/she says “am on my way”, it gives you hope to continue to wait for the person. So it makes life easy (21years old male undergraduate)

Another respondent said: “We tell lies to run away from trouble” (20 year old male Undergraduate)

Another respondent also said this: “anyway, telling lies on phone is a way of life” (24 year Female undergraduate)

Another respondent responds this way: “In fact GSM is very good but the truth is that because the person you are talking with doesn’t see or know your location it is always easy to lie” (21year old male undergraduate).

However 27% of the participants said that a sincere person will always say the truth whether there is GSM or not. It is pertinent to point out here that a person’s religious affiliation affects the assessment of people’s abuse of the use of GSM. Most of the

participants (44%) who belong to the various religious Christian denominations are of the view that GSM should not affect ones way of life.

An IDI participant said this: A sincere person is a sincere person, no matter the situation I cannot tell lies on phone (41 year old male HEO, none teaching staff of the University)

Another participant replied: Well if you are a good Christian no matter what you should know that lying is not good whether GSM oh! or not (35year old female Admin staff of the University)

However, an IDI participant said:” telling lies is not good whether on phone or not it makes one to loss his integrity” (45 years old female Faculty Officer- none teaching staff of the University)

Most of the participants (72%) noted that age affects the rate of insincerity on phone. The argument is that young people are more likely to be subordinate to someone (a boss, teacher, parents, uncle aunt, elder brother or sister) whom he has the obligation to please and because of this use the GSM to please them to the point of lying. Another perspective to the issue of age as a contributory factor and determinant of GSM abuse, as pointed out by majority of the participants is that as people advance in years, the need to lie diminishes. They believe that one’s age has some direct relationship with the frequency or otherwise of lying and abuse of anything not just GSM. However a small proportion (5%) of the participants were of the opinion that GSM abuse are more prevalent with the youths because they make most use of it more than any other age group, stressing that in the bid to put it to these various uses the tendency for abuse and misuse is bound to happen.

Responses from the study indicate that gender also affects the rate of insincerity on GSM use. Majority (78%) agree to gender differentiation in the use of GSM and invariably in the abuse and misuse. For instance, (76%) believe that males use the GSM more than the female and as such have the tendency to put it to abuse and misuse more than the female. All the participants accept that males tell lies on phones more than females. A participant painted a picture of infidelity among couples and said that “when men go out with other women they can tell lies because they can control the noise at the background (adult noise). The women on the other hand cannot. This is because culturally women spend more time with their children. They don’t often go out in the night and if they do will not be able to control the children’s noise at the background. One of the IDI participants, a deputy registrar said:

“Society has a way of controlling women not men. Culturally men do a lot of things outside the home which they do not tell their wives or mothers. This is culturally accepted. Also men occupy men occupy higher positions in homes and society so they always try to cover their wrongs by telling small lies especially on phones” (53year male IDI participant)

Occupation and work place affects the rate of insincerity on Phone as suggested by the respondents. Artisans and people who are engaged in low status jobs are more

involved in insincerity on phone than people who are in noble professions. According to the participants, most low status workers use falsehood to retain their customers.

One of the FGD participants said that:

“The people that tell lies more on phone are people who do jobs like mechanics, carpenters, vulcanizers, welders and even painters. All these people that do hand work.

They use it to keep their customers especially when they have other work they are doing”

(19 year female undergraduate).

However this view is contrary to those of our IDI interviewees which believe that the persons at the top of the hierarchy in work place can easily conceal mistakes more than persons below. In all, the participants are of the view that the society is structured in such a way that men are at the top of the hierarchy both at home and at work place, thus they can always do whatever they want to do with the GSM without being hindered or stopped. Another reoccurring response from all the participants is the agreement that insincerity in GSM though not good will be difficult to eradicate in the society basically because the GSM has been configured in such a way that users can get away with abuse and misuse of it. Interestingly, almost all the participants feel that more ingenious ways of abuse and misuse will continue to unfold as the technology continues to proliferate and its uses amplified in the society. They however all agreed to the need for the development of more technological devices to track lying especially in the use of GSM more than any other form of abuse.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The GSM is a very important tool in the hands of every member of the society. For the children, teachers and parents are no longer the only sources of knowledge, the GSM through different social media platforms have now become another strong often times more accessible and preferred source of ready knowledge.

Social media actually make the people more relationship-oriented, considerate, and emphatic. People remember their friend’s birthday, anniversaries and greet them. They comment on pictures, videos and status of their friends. They create longer term friendships by being in touch online even when friends are no longer physically meeting. However as we found in the study and in addition to anecdotal evidence, even as the social media create these spirals of connections, relationships and networks its basic configuration lends it to various forms of abuse and misuse especially to insincerity on phones.

Based on the above, the paper recommends that:

1. Phone manufacturers should introduce the device that tells the caller/recipient the location and if possible what the caller/recipient is doing at the point of the call. It is true that there are phones with such features; they should be made affordable just like the camera phones.
2. A reorientation of the youths who has the tendency to use the GSM more than other groups, on the need for ethical propriety in its use. Including providing

social media literacy education platforms for them. The various legal instruments recently developed in the abuse and misuse of the platforms in the country should be enforced though with caution so as not to infringe on human rights and Freedom of Information Act. One such legal tool is the house of Senate recently initiated bill to punish anyone who is found guilty of spreading defamatory information through the social media against anybody especially in the house of senate. The Mobile network companies should collaborate and partner with government in this needful area to track and checkmate most of these abuses. More regulations should also be promulgated in this area.

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