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Mobile Phones and Libraries/Information Centres

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Mobile Phones and Libraries/Information Centres

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InfoSci-Media and Communication Science and Technology

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[Abstract](#)

This chapter examines mobile phone use and behavior among users in library and information centres. It discusses both observed and perceived mobile phone behaviors among library users and advocates the control of identified negative trends in libraries. It recommends that user education should be intensified; law and legislations on mobile use in libraries should be enacted and guarded jealously. The chapter concludes that, though the use of mobile phones has revolutionized library and information services, it also redefined user behavior. Negative behaviors associated with the use of mobile phones among users will stop or at least reduce while libraries and librarians will continue to evolve ways and means to curb ugly trends.

Chapter Preview

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Introduction

The value of communication cannot be overemphasized in this age where the world is rapidly turning to a global village. The increasing need and value of communication has always pushed people to invent better and more efficient ways to convey messages, propagate ideas, and share personal information with friends and family (Miluzzo et al., 2010). Communication today is made possible through various media, one of which is the Mobile Phone. This communication gadget has become a necessity for almost everyone to keep in touch with people and happenings around them. It is in line with this that Iwhiwhu, Ruteyan and Eghwubare (2010) noted that Mobile phones have revolutionized the daily lives of ordinary people.

The origin of mobile phones as a concept dates as far back as 1947. Bellis (2013) noted that researchers observed after taking a closer look at the crude mobile car phones, that by using small cells (range of service area) with frequency reuse, they could increase the traffic capacity of mobile phones substantially; though the needed technology was not readily available then.

On the 3rd of April 1973, mobile phone was first put to use. The first mobile telephone call was made by Martin Cooper who was an Engineer at Motorola (Violiner, 2013). The phone was only able to maintain its charge for about twenty minutes. The development of mobile phones was later improved upon in 1982 through the introduction of car mobile phones by Nokia and later that same year with the introduction of the DX200. Donohoe (2010) also noted that in September, 1983, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the United States of America formally approved the DynaTAC 8000x phones which happened to be the world's first commercial handheld portable mobile phone. In 1987, there was a further advancement in mobile phone technologies with the introduction of the Mobira Cityman; which was the first mobile phone introduced for public use. He also noted that in the same year, the Global System for Mobile communications (GSM) network was adopted as the European standard signal and towards the late 90s Nokia introduced more mobile phones.

At the beginning of the 21st century, mobile phone providers became competitive and diversified in the production of these phones. In connection to this, Violiner (2013) noted that these companies went as far as advancing the services offered by these mobile phones to go beyond calls and texts messages. Within these few years, there has been obvious advancements in mobile phone technologies from simple mobile phones to indispensable 'smart' devices that provide tools which enables functions that surpasses phone calls and text messages. Such functions include web browsing, entertainment, etc. (Kim & Park, 2012). Even with all these improvements and advancements in mobile phone technologies, more innovations are still being put in place and therefore we can expect higher level of technological improvements in mobile phones in the nearest future.

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