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***Personality and the Mobile Phone:
Character-Based Differences of Usage and Attitudes
towards Mobile Communication***

Personality factors in regard to mobile phone communication have rarely been in the focus of research. The presented study analyses whether the Big Five personality factors have an influence on the usage of mobile phones in general and in particular situations. Further, personality-specific differences of attitudes towards mobile phone communication are examined.

A sample of $N = 128$ undergraduate students was asked to complete a questionnaire including the German version of the NEO-FFI (Borkenau & Ostendorf, 1993) and items concerning mobile phone use and attitudes towards mobile phone communication. Cluster analyses were conducted to elicit personality prototypes based on the Big Five factors. Two of the four clusters found could be matched to prototypes from representative studies: resilient and overcontrollers. Dependent variables were tested for differences between clusters.

Whereas most of the participants used the mobile phone to express emotions, none of the resilient did ($\text{Chi Square} = 19,31; df = 3; N = 128$). Personality prototypes also influenced the way people act when they receive a call in the presence of others. The overcontrolled tended to answer the call only when the situation allows for it ($M = 4.16, SD = .97; F(3, 124) = 3.63, p = .02$) and stated to have more problems to call in public spaces ($M = 3.61, SD = .1.02$) than the resilient did ($M = 4.29, SD = .86; F(3, 125) = 2.87, p = .04$).

Although personality dimensions as influence factors of shown behaviour are regarded with caution, in the context of mobile phone communication, differences between personality prototypes can be shown. Further research in this field may lead to a better understanding of why the mobile phone is widely used, in which circumstances we do or do not use it and what our motives are.

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