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Dicle Berfin Köse

BI Norwegian Business School, dicle.berfin@gmail.com

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Technological Antecedents of Phubbing

A Hedonic and Utilitarian Content Perspective

Dicle Berfin Köse dicle.b.kose@bi.no

Phubbing, in other words snubbing social companies by concentrating on smartphones, is raising concerns because of its detrimental effects in different types of relations. And previous research has mainly focused on addictive use of mobile services (e.g., Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016; Karadağ et al., 2015) as an antecedent of phubbing behavior. However, phubbing can have other information systems (IS) related antecedents. The design of IS with recurring notifications and feedback mechanisms can be conducive to phubbing behavior as well. For instance, content that is both fun and informative in the form of rewards and infotainment are among the most “hooking” features of contemporary IS (Ali et al., 2018). Therefore, it is worth looking into IS affordances as plausible antecedents of phubbing behavior as well. In that respect, content that is consumed by users can be a starting point. Phubbing behavior has been found to be detrimental in both personal and professional contexts (Halpern & Katz, 2017; Roberts & David, 2017). For instance, it was found that boss phubbing undermined employee engagement by decreasing trust in supervisor (Roberts & David, 2017). Yet, in a professional context, phubbing might also occur due to utilitarian content (e.g., work emails, or work-related notifications). For that reason, both hedonic and utilitarian content can be credible in inducing phubbing behavior. Accordingly, the goal of this research is to study the effects of hedonic and utilitarian content on phubbing in the context of social media services. The study will also investigate the possible mediating role of habitual use.

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