

Just a quick look on your phone, is that so bad?

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Original paper:

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<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0747563216302709>

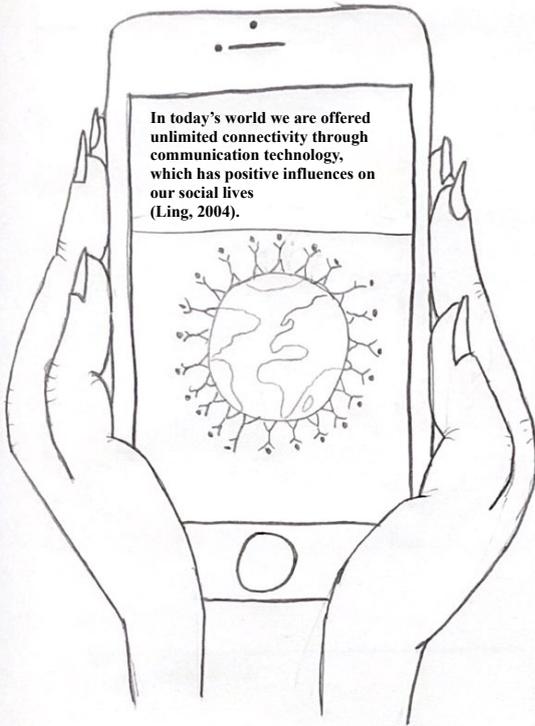
Project created for the class:

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But there are also concerns about new communication technologies. Phubbing (disrupting an offline social conversation, by looking at your phone), is an act that brings many concerns (stopphubbing.com, 2015)



Negative associations are found by earlier studies between using a phone in public and aspects of relationship quality. However, these earlier studies never found clarity whether there is a causal relationship of co-present phone use and a decrease on relationship quality (Misra et al., 2014)



It is likely that people display 'absent presence' in their (non)verbal behavior when they check their mobile device (Humphreys, 2005)

These displayed (non)verbal behaviors might have an effect on the image that is formed by the conversation partner.



"I feel like he gives me the cold shoulder"

H1 A conversation partner who checks a mobile message during a dyadic conversation between unacquainted individuals is perceived as (a) less attentive and (b) less polite than a conversation partner who does not.

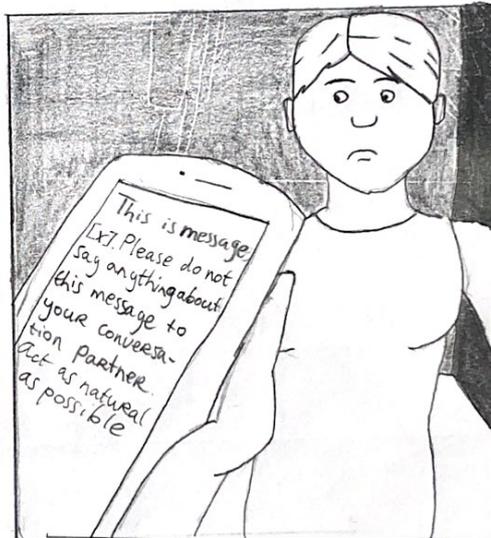
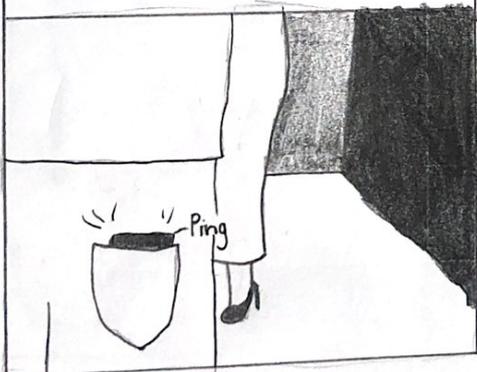
H2 Someone who checks a mobile message during a conversation pro-actively is perceived as (a) the least attentive and (b) least polite, followed by a person who checks a mobile message in response to a notification, and a conversation partner who does not use a phone during a conversation is perceived as the most attentive and polite.

To check these hypotheses, an experiment took place. The participants were not familiar with each other and were given the task to get to know one another in a ten-minute conversation.



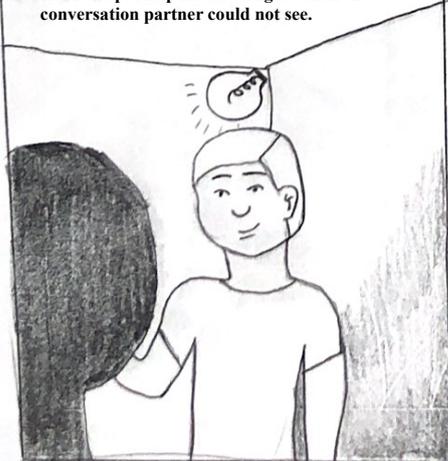
Condition 2

The second condition concerned reactive phone use. Here one of the participants got the instruction to get their phone out and silently read the message after the phone made a sound.



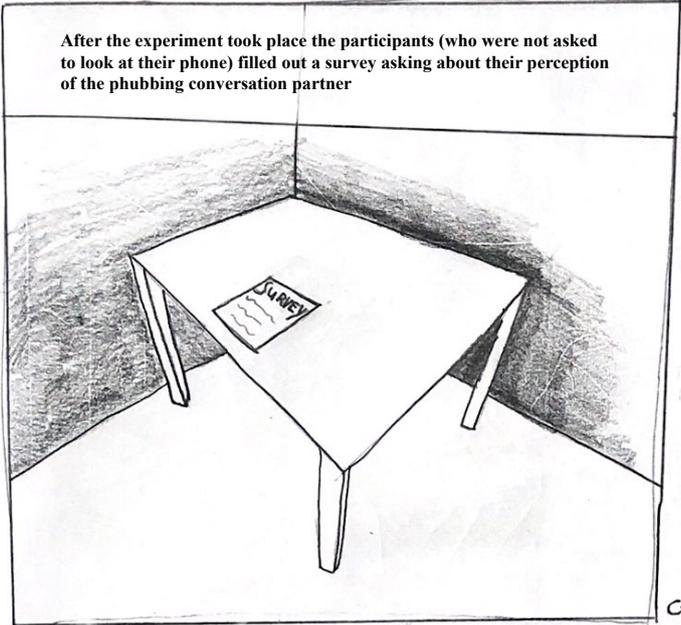
Condition 3

The third condition tested proactive phone use. Here one participant saw a light which the conversation partner could not see.

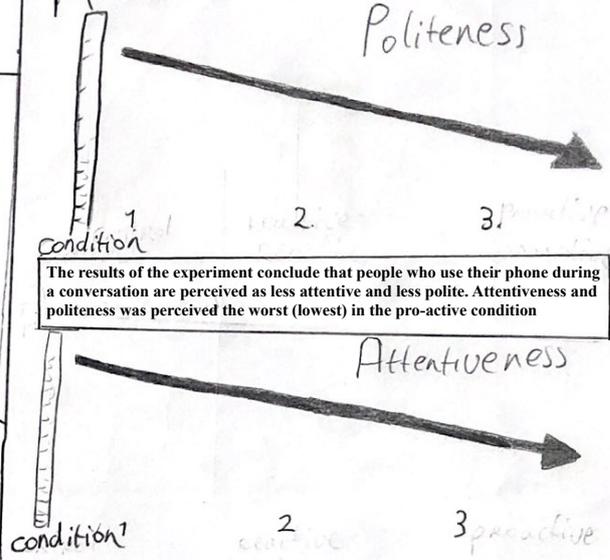


After the light signal (s)he read the same message on his/her phone

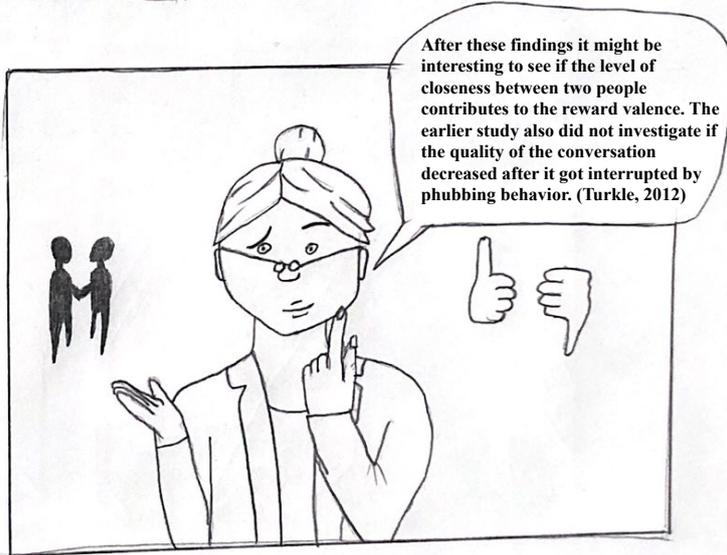
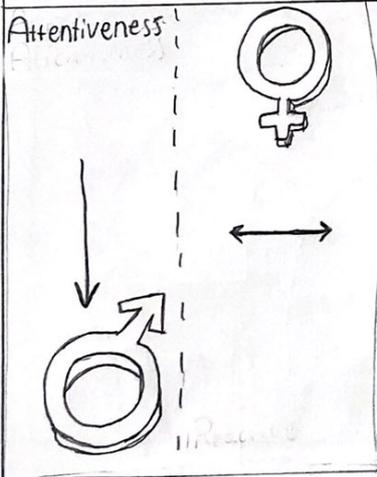




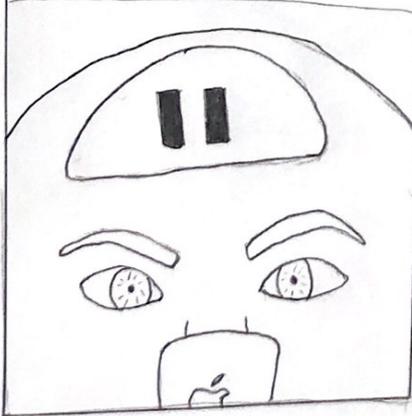
Results:



There was a difference between men and woman. Where men judged the phubber in the reactive and proactive condition less attentive, for woman perceived attentiveness decreased only in the proactive condition.



The quality of the conversation can be influenced because, the natural flow of a conversation might be hampered by a cognitive pause that happens when attention is concentrated on the mobile conversation (Oulasvirta, Tamminen, Roto, & Kuorelathi, 2005).



H1

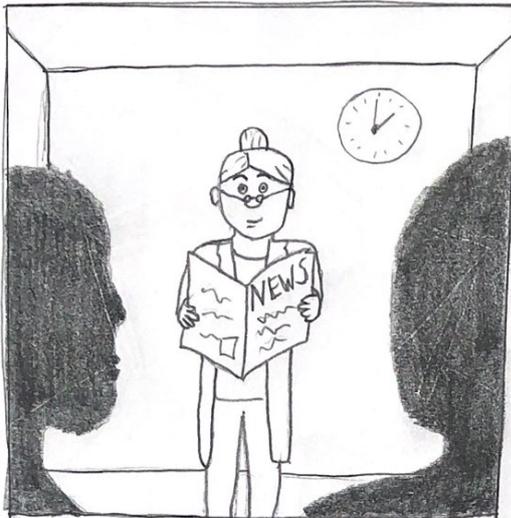
A conversation partner perceives the conversation quality of the offline conversation as lower when his/her partner engages in a mobile (text-based) conversation during the offline conversation.

H2

A conversation partner will perceive his/her conversation partner as less socially attractive when the partner engages in a mobile (text-based) conversation during the offline conversation.

H3

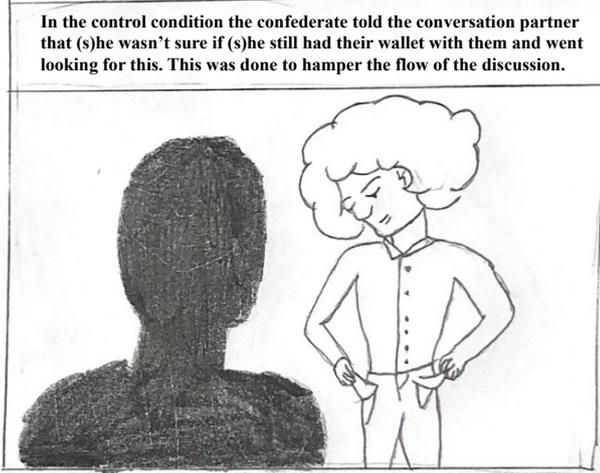
The effect of having a mobile (text-based) conversation during an offline interaction on (a) conversation quality, and (b) social attraction will be more negative in unacquainted dyads than in acquainted dyads.



Half of the participants in this second experiment already knew each other. Therefore, the participants were asked to have a ten-minute discussion about a recent issue in the press.



Again, one participant in each conversation was a confederate. After three minutes the confederate received a hearable message, (s)he reacted on this by mumbling it had to be answered and answered it.



In the control condition the confederate told the conversation partner that (s)he wasn't sure if (s)he still had their wallet with them and went looking for this. This was done to hamper the flow of the discussion.

H₁



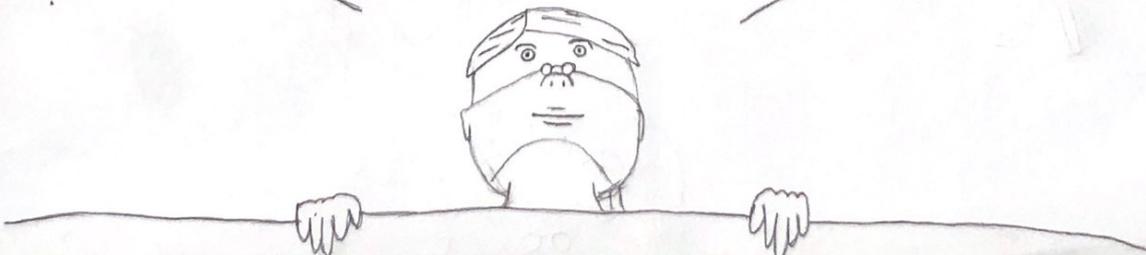
The findings indicate that quality of the conversation did decrease when a smartphone was used in a face-to-face conversation because persons seemed to be less involved.

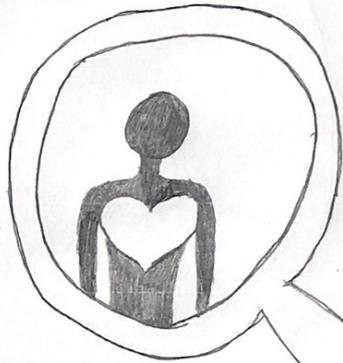
H₂ X

However, the other hypotheses were not supported. Smartphone users were not perceived as less socially attractive. This might be explained because the interruption happened just once.

H₃ X

Finally, If the partners were familiar or strangers did not matter in their assessment of one another.





It is interesting for further research to look into the effects on the self-esteem of the conversation partner.



A second suggestion is to investigate the objective cues in (non)verbal behavior and how that influences the conversation quality.



The conclusion that a more negative impression is formed and the conversation quality drops, when mobile messaging takes place during an offline interaction suggests that concerns over phubbing behavior and the social impact it has are warranted.