

Relationship Between the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Mall Users in Lagos and Smartphone Use during Face-to-Face Interactions

ONOCHIE, Jennifer Ekene-Nnamdi, *PhD*

Department of Communication and Language Arts
University of Ibadan, Ibadan
Oyo State, Nigeria

&

OBONO, Koblowe, *PhD*

Department of Communication and Language Arts
University of Ibadan, Ibadan
Oyo State, Nigeria

Abstract

Smartphone use during face-to-face interactions has become very popular among people of different socio-demographic characteristics. This multitasking behaviour has undermined face-to-face interactions. However, adequate attention has not been given to the relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of users and their smartphone use during face-to-face interactions in public social settings like malls that exhibit social heterogeneity. Using unobtrusive observations, in-depth interviews, and survey, the relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of users and their smartphone use during in-person interactions was investigated. Two malls, Novare and Ikeja City Malls in Lagos were purposively selected. Forty groups of mall users were observed, 758 copies of a questionnaire were administered and 20 mall users were interviewed. Findings reveal a significant relationship (< 0.05) between the socio-demographic characteristics of mall users and their smartphone use during face-to-face interactions. Results show that females were 0.45 times more likely to take pictures during face-to-face interactions than males. Mall users with higher degrees were 0.15 times more likely to use smartphones for social media than those who were students and unemployed. Adults mainly used the device for work-related activities while youths used it for entertainment. Socio-demographic characteristics are strongly related to motivations for smartphone use during face-to-face interactions which impacts the quality of face-to-face interactions.

Keywords: Socio-Demographic, Smartphone Use, Face-to-Face Interactions, Public Social Settings, Mall Users, Lagos
