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**REVISITING GOFFMAN'S "INTERACTION RITUAL": THE ROLE OF
SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION IN PUBLIC
SPACES**

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Revisiting Goffman's "Interaction Ritual": The Role of Social Media Use in Face-to-Face Communication in Public Spaces

Goffman'ın "Etkileşim Ritüellerini" Tekrar Ele Almak: Kamusal Alanda Yüz Yüze İletişimde Sosyal Medya Kullanımının Rolü

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PREFACE

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ABSTRACT

The pervasive use of smartphones and access to social media platforms in public spaces has transformed the everyday communication practices of individuals. The present study derives from this new communication environment and aims at exploring and understanding simply what is happening in social gatherings when individuals have access to social media through their smartphones which they never keep away from themselves. To achieve this aim, the research utilised the approach of ethnographic research in the area of sociology of everyday life and specifically Erving Goffman's dramaturgical and ritualistic conceptualisation of face encounters, the interaction ritual. The researcher conducted two-step research to collect data. In the first step, she conducted 34 field observations with 106 participants (51 females, 55 males) where she kept detailed notes of thick descriptions to document the patterns of smartphone use behaviours in public space on university campus. The field observations provided the researcher to see the maps of behaviours in public space that show the interaction patterns in the presence of smartphones. The second step of the study involved semi-structured in-depth interviews with 25 participants (12 females and 13 males) who provided the researcher with detailed data regarding their actual communication experiences and perceptions of the new patterns of behaviour in public space where they use social media during ongoing conversation engagements. The overall results of the study demonstrate that the new interaction ritual involves different patterns of behaviour, forms of involvements, rules of conduct and norms in public space from that of Goffman's. The use of social media in the new interaction ritual appears to be irresistible and also mainstream in face encounters where individuals take it for granted and shape their communication practices accordingly. The study concludes that since going back to basics in everyday communication in public space is impossible, it is important that researchers and professionals understand

how individuals perform in the front performance and in the back stage/region and maintain the social order so that effective communication and new communication strategies in different spheres of everyday life would be improved.

Keywords: Interaction rituals, face-to-face communication, social media, Erving Goffman, communication in public space

ÖZET

Kamusal alanda yaygınlaşan akıllı telefon ve sosyal medya kullanımı bireylerin günlük hayattaki iletişim pratiklerini ve deneyimlerini dönüştürmüştür. Mevcut çalışma bu yeni iletişim ortamından yola çıkmıştır ve bireyler yanlarından ayırmadıkları akıllı telefonları üzerinden sosyal medyaya erişim sağlarken bulundukları sosyal ortamlarda neler oluyor sorusunun cevabını araştırmak ve anlamak amacıyla yapılmıştır. Araştırma, amacına uygun olarak gündelik hayat sosyolojisi alanından etnografik araştırma yaklaşımını ve özellikle Erving Goffman'ın dramaturjik ve törensel yaklaşımla kavramsallaştırdığı yüz yüze etkileşim ya da etkileşim ritüellerini temel olarak almıştır. Araştırmacı veri toplama işlemini iki aşamada gerçekleştirmiştir. Birinci aşamada araştırmacı kampüsteki kamusal alanlarda bir araya gelmiş bireyler üzerinde saha gözlemleri yapmıştır. Toplam 106 katılımcının (51 kadın, 55 erkek) yer aldığı 34 saha gözleminde akıllı telefon kullanımı ve davranış kalıplarını içeren yoğun betimleme notları çıkarılmıştır. Saha gözlemleri, akıllı telefonların da mevcut bulunduğu kamusal alanda bireylerin gerçekleştirdiği davranışları ve bu davranışlardan oluşan etkileşim kalıplarını gösteren davranış haritalarını çıkarmak için gerekli veriyi sağlamıştır. Araştırmacı, çalışmanın ikinci aşamasında toplamda 25 katılımcıyla (12 kadın ve 13 erkek) yarı-yapılandırılmış derinlemesine görüşmeler yapmıştır. Bu görüşmeler araştırmacıya kamusal alanda devam eden karşılıklı konuşma sırasında sosyal medyanın kullanıldığı davranış kalıpları içinde bireylerin gerçek iletişim deneyimleri ve algıları üzerine detaylı veri toplama olanağını sağlamıştır. Araştırmanın sonuçları, genel anlamda kamusal alanda yeni etkileşim ritüellerinde Goffman'inkinden farklı davranış kalıpları, katılım türleri, erkân ve normların var olduğunu göstermiştir. Yeni etkileşim ritüellerinde sosyal medya kullanımı bireyler için karşı konulamaz ve sıradan hale gelmişken bireyler bu yeni durumu kabullenip iletişim pratiklerini buna bağlı olarak şekillendirmektedirler. Sonuç olarak araştırma, günlük iletişimde eskiye dönüşün artık mümkün olmadığını ortaya koyarken araştırmacıların ve profesyonellerin ön sahnede aktörlerin nasıl bir performans

gerçekleřtirdiđini, sahne arkasında ne yaptıklarını ve sosyal düzeni nasıl koruduklarını anlaması önem teşkil etmektedir. Ancak bu şekilde günlük yaşamın farklı alanlarında etkin iletişim ve yeni iletişim stratejileri gerçekleştirilebilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Etkileşim ritüelleri, yüz yüze iletişim, sosyal medya, Erving Goffman, kamusal alanda iletişim

INTRODUCTION

According to Deloitte Mobile Users Survey conducted in 28 countries on 6 continents among 44,150 users in 2019, 90% of adults between the ages 18 and 50 possess smartphones in Turkey. After Mexico, Turkey ranks the second with 73% of users stating that they overuse their smartphones. Compared to the users in European countries, the results of the survey demonstrate a dramatic difference in Turkish users' attachment to their mobile phones. 46% of Turkish users feel the need to check their mobiles continuously, whereas the EU rate is 21%, and 30% states that they are distracted more and more trying to complete a task while the EU rate is 22%. 29% of users suffer from FoMO in Turkey; in contrast, only 4% of EU users experience the same problem. 32% confesses that they fail to build face-to-face communication with family and friends and 25% states that they cannot meet friends and family as they used to, whereas 15% of EU users face problems in face-to-face, and only 6% of EU users report that they cannot meet their friends and families like before. 24% of Turkish users feel distressed when they cannot use their mobiles, but only 9% of EU users feel the same. Last but not least, Turkey ranks the first among all other countries with 46% of mobile users who state that they continuously check their mobiles.

Deloitte Mobile Users Survey also indicates significant results concerning Turkish mobile users' use of social media. In Turkey, checking social media ranks the first (86%) among all other activities when users are connected to a network, and 84% states that they check social media at least once a day. Turkish users rank the first in their use of Instagram (49%) and Twitter (23%) among all countries stating that they check these social media platforms at least once every hour. 95% of female and 98% of male users state that they primarily use WhatsApp for communication. Instagram is the second platform with 86% of female and 74% of male users often use in Turkey, and YouTube ranks the third with 86% of female and 85% male users, which shows that gender is not an important indicator in the preferences across social platforms in Turkey. The survey also demonstrates no significant differences in Turkish users' attachment to

social media across different age groups; 82% of users between 18 and 24, 87% of users between 25 and 34, 86% of users between 35 and 44, and 77% of users between 45 and 50 declare that they use social media at least once during the day, which indicates that social media has integrated the everyday lives of Turkish adult users regardless of their ages.

These figures are consistent with the everyday observations of common people in Turkey who see individuals often engaged in their screens on public transportation, at the table next to them in a café or a restaurant, their family members checking Instagram stories while having a conversation, watching a show together on TV, or even having supper, students getting lost in their timelines during lectures, or colleagues checking their WhatsApp messages shielding their mobiles behind tables in a business meeting. Mobile users' attachment to their smartphones are palpable today, and it is the reality in everyday life of common people. It is so common that such figures documented are also taken for granted thus attract less and less public attention. It is also commonly encountered that the majority of individuals deliver jeremiads against others being engaged in their screens, express their discomfort and complain that the social order is broken due to others inappropriately overusing their smartphones when they are with others in public space. People commonly lament over the 'good old days' when there were no smartphones and social media in everyday life. Then, the question is if the majority is uncomfortable because they think it is disrespect to look at screens during conversations and disapproves the use of smartphones in public, then who are these people in the rabbit holes in public? Are individuals, who complain about others looking at their screens, in complete denial of themselves and are they also unable to resist touching their screens, or are they so overwhelmed with the flow of content they are exposed to that they do not approve but cannot stop it? Is it a "digital akrasia," which Aagaard (2020) defines as "a tendency to become swept up by one's digital devices in spite of better intentions" (p. 238) that they cannot stop? Is the social order really broken as individuals complain about, or is this a *new* social order that people

have constructed but cannot see or rather deny it themselves? Considering the fact that if the social order were broken, a chaos would govern face-to-face communication practices in public spaces, it is logical to presume that a *new* social order is constructed with the digital technologies becoming pervasive in all spheres of everyday life, and it is this very presumption that lies in the motivation of this exploratory ethnographic study.

Smartphones and instant easy access to social media platforms available everywhere have transformed not only the way individuals communicate with others but also the patterns of behaviour that they display in face-to-face encounters in everyday life. Thus, the *everyday*, the totality of human activities and relations, cannot be fully grasped in the absence of communication technologies that govern individuals' communication practices. Smartphones take the stage at any instances of the individuals' communication performances in different forms. *Phubbing*, the act of ignoring the interactant(s) that individuals are with and giving attention to their mobile phones instead, has become a public communication phenomenon located in the centre of human relations and started manipulating the everyday discourses of individuals in public space. Thus, a considerable number of research concentrates on this new pattern of behaviour in the field of communication and explores how phubbing impacts the everyday communication from different perspectives. Research indicates that phubbing negatively influences closeness, connection, friendship satisfaction, and quality of conversations in one-to-one interactions when they have intimate meaningful conversations and cause psychological disorders like depression (Przybylski & Weinstein, 2012; Vanden Abeele et al., 2016; Ivanova et al. 2020; Sun & Samp, 2021) and even emerges as a form of smartphone-induced social exclusion (Nuñez et al. 2020). Recent research also concentrates on how phubbing impacts relationships and relationship satisfaction (Wang et al., 2021; David & Roberts, 2021; Beukeboom & Pollmann, 2021; Bröning & Wartberg, 2022). There is also a considerable amount of research that concentrates on the psycho-social causes of phubbing. Karadağ et al.

(2015) see social media addiction as a stronger cause for phubbing than other Internet-related factors. Fear of missing out (FoMO) is a consequent factor that cause individuals to be engaged in their smartphones in face-to-face interactions and urge users to use self-control and other social agents to bring procedures in order to maintain social order (Wu & Yang, 2021; Li et al., 2021; Tandon et al., 2022). Certainly, the integration of smartphone use in face-to-face communication in public cannot be reduced to only phubbing. The use of smartphones at the same time emerges as a sort of collective communication activity in face engagements, a public digital-social activity, which can even be an activity that can reduce the negative influences of phubbing as research suggests (Beukeboom & Pollmann, 2021), or a co-existing digital engagement in an ongoing conversational engagement in face encounters, which is *digital social-multitasking*, which also potentially influences the psychosocial development of adolescents in a positive way despite the negative perceptions (Yang et al., 2021). Regardless of the form of smartphone and social media use in communication in public space, there is still limited research that explores this communication phenomenon in the *everyday* from a sociological perspective with a focus on the atomic components of social engagements that ensure the maintenance of the public social order, which the present study aims at contributing to.

The purpose of the study is to make a contribution to the literature of social media use in public space through an exploration of how the *everyday* has changed in the ways individuals interact with each other and intends to find an answer to a very basic question: *what is happening there?* Furthermore, when smartphones stay on tables or in the hands of interactants, fingers tap on screens, eyes roll between screens and interactants in social gatherings, individuals sit at the same table but say almost nothing to each other but remain seated and get lost in rabbit holes in public, *what is happening* to social encounters, allocation of involvements, norms, and rules of conduct? How do interactants perceive this new communication climate in the presence of digital devices? Evidently, the *everyday*, or the *quotidian*, is different from the one explored

and defined before the digital age, yet the literature of sociology of everyday life endows researchers with insights to make such a sociological inquiry into the *everyday* of the digital age. Thus, the present research embraces both communication studies and sociology of everyday life, concentrating on merely the Chicago School of sociology that provides researchers with distinct conceptual and methodological frameworks. Erving Goffman is the scholar among many who approaches the *everyday* social interactions with the intention to outline face-to-face encounters that are composed of ritualistic and theatrical elements. Goffman takes face-to-face interactions, or *face encounters*, a distinct domain that deserves academic interest in his *interaction order*, which is ritualistic in its nature, and draws a framework that contributes to both the sociology of everyday life and communication.

The present study specifically aims at exploring how the *new* interaction order, the face-to-face domain, and the *interaction ritual*, is actualized in the everyday practices of young people who intermittently access to social media platforms while they are engaged in social interaction with others in public space. Goffman (1967) sees social interactions *ritualistic* since “the acts through whose symbolic component the actor shows how worthy he is of respect or how worthy he feels others are of it” (p. 19). Thus, *face encounters*, as Goffman (1963) conceptualizes, contributes to the foundation of *we-rationality* as individuals are in a mutual working consensus in maintaining social interactions. However, the *symbolic acts* in the social interactions in digital age through which individuals construct the social self and others, which constitute to the *we* today, have taken new forms with the integration of mobile technologies and social media platforms into the everyday social practices of young people. In other words, the *rationality* in building the socially bound *we* today consists of different norms, rules, and understandings than that of Goffman’s age. Today, individuals across different generations are likely to be engaged in multiple forms of interaction simultaneously or move across these forms without breaking the social order; however, especially young people, the participants of such new *face engagements*, are engaged in the interaction

order where their acts of verbal and non-verbal communication co-exist with their engagements in social media platforms through the smartphones available at all times. The study specifically explores how young people's pervasive use of social media while on-going face engagements has changed the interaction ritual and the symbolic acts through which the ritualistic and theatrical rules of social interactions in public space are reconstructed.

The study explores answers to the following research questions central to the inquiry into the *everyday* of Goffman in the digital age:

1. What are the *emerging patterns of behaviour* in the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access?
2. How are the *participants engaged in focused and unfocused interactions* in the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access?
3. What are *the new rules of conduct* in the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access?
4. How do participants *design and maintain the current interaction order* in encounters in the presence of smartphones and social media access?

The findings of this study are intended to reveal the picture of the new interaction ritual within a specific community, the university students on campus, and at the same time bring new insights into understanding everyday face engagements in different public settings among different social groups.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is to present a brief overview the literature of sociology of everyday life and outline the conceptual and methodological frameworks of the Chicago School of sociology. Since the academic legacy of Erving Goffman, one of the distinguishing scholars of Chicago School, is central to this study, this chapter will also review the concepts that Goffman coined and discuss how they still relate to everyday face engagements in the digital age. It will also review the communication research that take Goffman's work as reference to their research and demonstrate how the present study is related to Goffman's conceptualisation of interaction ritual.

1.1 Sociology of Everyday Life

Everyday life seems to include the most trivial aspects of societies and human behaviour, yet in the mid-20th century, scholars in the field of sociology, philosophy and anthropology demonstrated a growing interest in understanding and conceptualizing everyday life and its agents, which conducted to the emergence of a new sociological field, *sociology of everyday life*. The elusive realms of everyday life were intensely in the centre of scholarly reckoning both in Europe and in the US since the rising modern capitalism and the inadequacy of positivist approaches to understand and conceptualise the actual everyday experiences, social interactions and relations of individuals. Initially, it is essential to examine the key figures who have made significant contributions to the domain of sociology of everyday life with distinct theories and concepts in order that a theoretical path that the study is to follow to explore the contemporary everyday life in the digital era is constructed.

The French scholars played a significant role in the development of sociology of everyday life as an academic field of study. Among many, the first scholar to mention is Henri Lefebvre, a French Marxist. Lefebvre's *Critique of Everyday Life, Volume I*, whose first publication dates back to 1947 and the second with a new introduction back to 1958, is one of the most influential classics that contemporary sociology, philosophy,

cultural studies use as a major reference. The second volume was published in 1961 and the third in 1981, and the English translation came out in 1991. Lefebvre as a Marxist critical theorist, who was also influenced by Heidegger and Sartre's existentialism, took *quotidian* as an urban phenomenon that is restricted under the oppression of capitalism. Here, it is important to note that the word *quotidian* both in French and English has negative connotations and refer to something mundane, trivial, unremarkable and "everyday."

Lefebvre (1991) sees everyday life as the subject of not only economy as it involves the human relations with products and works but also sociology and psychology because it embraces all activities and the totality of human relations. To him, human relations are in the centre of everyday and coincide with the reality (pp. 96-97). To Lefebvre (1991), social relations cannot exist without *alienation* in a society where the division of labour and exchange-value of commodities govern the social life and "each individual exists socially only by and within his alienation, just as he can only be for himself within and by his deprivation (his *private* consciousness)" (pp. 15-16). The modern individual in the capitalist society who became isolated and inward-looking is the critique of own everyday life as he is conscious of the reality that labour is fragmented and atomised and detached from family life and leisure; "the discreteness of the elements of the everyday (work - family and 'private' life - leisure activities) implies an alienation; and perhaps at the same time a differentiation - certain fruitful contradictions" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 32). Parallel to Frankfurt School's conceptualisation of "culture industry," Lefebvre addresses to the technological advances and how the consequences of technology influenced the social structures and also the social activities and experiences. The working-class face the *what-to-buy* problem which modifies everyday life, and the spread of mass media, thus the increasing need for gadgets to reach mass media, leads to "the sudden violent intrusion of the whole world into family and 'private' life, 'presentified' in a way which directly captures the immediate moment, which offers truth and participation, or at least appears

to do so” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 41). Hence, Lefebvre (1991) maintains that the critique of everyday life as an aspect of sociology has to concentrate on all aspects of everyday life: professional life (labour), family life and leisure activities. While doing so, he suggests scrutinizing multiplicity of social interactions within each domain of everyday life and extracting “the worthwhile needs and fulfilments” from “the alienations” (p. 42).

Roland Barthes, a friend of Lefebvre, who has a distinguishing contribution to the literature of sociology and also semiotics, puts forward *myths* as a metalanguage and introduces discourse analysis to media studies in *Mythologies* published in 1957. Barthes in his later work *The Fashion System* published in 1967 also concentrates on everyday activities and human behaviour as objects of everyday life and communication through the fashion messages produced and consumed in capitalist society. He also maintains that everyday activities provide the individual with the knowledge about oneself as Lefebvre does. Similar to Lefebvre, Blanchot (1987) asserts that everyday “is no longer what is lived, but what can be seen or what shows itself, spectacle and description, without any active relation whatsoever” (p.14) since the individual has become the depoliticised spectator, “the irresponsible gaze,” to whom the whole world is brought while sitting in his safe and secure place. Blanchot (1984) sees the everyday as the *experience* and asserts that the everyday is indeterminate and difficult to uncover. Looking at post-war France, the idea that “popular or 'mass' culture was puerile, formulaic and aesthetically bankrupt, and that it had a detrimental effect on the values and beliefs of the general population” (Gardiner, 2000, p. 159) is the common ground where Lefebvre and the Situationists meet, yet Lefebvre rejects being a member of the Marxist Situationists in his interview (Ross and Lefebvre, 1997). Debord (2014), the representative of the Situationists, puts that the commodity production in capitalist society manifests itself in the everyday *a pseudocyclical time* meaning that the modern economic survival that detaches the individuals’ everyday experiences from decision-making and the natural order which

results in alienated labour in societies where private life, economic life, and political life become disintegrated (p. 82-83). The everyday, the *quotidian*, is the indeterminate human reality that the capitalist economy alienates the individual from and requires societal rejection of mass culture and revolutionise in order to eliminate the everyday from the manipulation of the cultural commodities according to the Marxist critical scholars.

The inquiry into everyday life is not limited to the Marxist perspective. Michel de Certeau is one of the first scholars who asserts that the consumption practices of individuals in everyday life are active and productive in essence. In his influential work *The Practice of Everyday Life* first published in 1980, the distinction that he makes between *strategies* and *tactics* forms the basis of understanding the active role of the individuals who are targeted by the power groups rather than determining them as passive consumers of cultural products. To de Certeau, the production and circulation of cultural products are not limited to economic analysis. Once a cultural product is distributed via mass media, it is not only the economic value that is under projection but also how these images and sounds are received by individuals and the invisible and untraceable meanings that they attribute to these cultural products are to be analysed to understand the everyday activities. In other words, the cultural products that are intended to impose any power on individuals do not necessarily follow the trajectory drawn by the producers. De Certeau (1984) asserts that the *popularization* or *degradation* of a culture is “a partial and caricatural aspect of the revenge that utilizing tactics take on the power that dominates production,” (p. 32) which means that there remains always a disproportion between the popularized cultural product and what individuals make out of it. On the other hand, the language used in society, as the fabric of the products thought to be intelligible to all, is beyond the linguistic units utilised to produce messages. The meanings made out of cultural products are not fabricated merely through the syntax and lexis of the language but through the *discourse*, the social practice, that individuals also produce and reproduce in everyday life.

De Certeau (1984) addresses to the realm of language, the practices of consumption, as “the ghosts of society” (p. 35) whose impacts are not noticeable. In the relation with cultural products and their producers and individuals targeted (or consumers), de Certeau (1984) makes a distinction between strategies and tactics. What he calls a strategy is “the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships,” (p. 35) whilst a tactic is “an art of the weak,” “a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus” (p. 37) and “clever tricks of the ‘weak’ within the order established by the ‘strong’” (p. 40). Hence, de Certeau reads the everyday actions of the individuals like cooking, shopping, talking, reading, and so on as *tactical in character*. De Certeau’s approach to consumption and everyday actions aligns with Baudrillard’s account of commodities that focus on their *sign-value*; commodities are defined by what they signify (sign-value), not by their function (use-value) or by their market price (exchange value), and the meanings of objects are constructed through their collective consumption. Baudrillard (1981) uses “gift” to illustrate how an object becomes a material of symbolic exchange. A gift is “inseparable from the concrete relation in which it is exchanged, the transferential pact that it seals between two persons” and thus gain a *symbolic exchange value* (p. 64). To Baudrillard, signs become a code akin to language that individuals are socialised to read and thus understand the messages that objects convey in their differentiations to other signs. In his essay *The Ecstasy of Communication*, he describes the quotidian in postmodern society as “hyperrealism of simulation” where the communication technologies, primarily television, leading to “an extermination of interstitial and protective spaces” diminish the borders of the private and the public and make individuals exposed to the codes of everyday that are readable (Baudrillard, 1987, pp. 128-131). The everyday, in a sense, is structured around the images and signs that individuals read and produce; the public is the space that screens dominate and the private is the *obscenity* that is exposed to masses through media.

In the discussion of the quotidian, Bourdieu is another distinguishing coeval scholar in France who concentrates on consumption as social distinction. In *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* first published in 1979, he states that individuals utilise *economic capital* (wealth), *social capital* (social relationships) and *cultural capital* (knowledge of and competency in the codes of legitimate culture enacted through consumption) in order to establish and maintain their social standing in a society. Bourdieu (1996) proposes the term *habitus* which refers to a lens through which individuals interpret and categorise people, events and objects which “produce not only objectively classifiable practices but also classifying operations that are no less objective and are themselves classifiable” (p. 169). What defines habitus is both “the capacity to produce classifiable practices and works, and the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products (taste)” (p. 170); tastes informed and shaped by the habitus function as a resource whose practice through consumption establishes, legitimises and distinguishes individuals’ place within the social stratification, and social tension arise from the power struggle among social classes to determine which tastes and practices are legitimate. Everyday life is structured around the everyday choices of ‘common’ people who attribute aesthetic value to ‘common’ objects that they utilise in their social practices.

The French scholars like de Certeau and Bourdieu impacted the scholars of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) that was opened in 1964 at the University of Birmingham like Richard Hoggard, Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall. According to Fiske (1996) who carries the legacy of CCCS and uses de Certeau’s approach to consumption as everyday resistance and Bourdieu’s conceptualization of cultural capital, “there is a difference between the representation of social forces or values and the experience of them in everyday life. Popular readers enter the represented world of the text at will and bring back from it the meanings and pleasures that they choose,” (p. 133) which means that the process of consumption is the process of making meaning at the same time. Raymond Williams, whose work *Culture and Society* that was first

published in 1958 as a strong criticism of Marxist view of culture, highly impacts an alternative definition of culture hence everyday life, for culture, as an unknown and partly unrealized phenomenon, is a *way of life* and the community where culture is alive contributes to the creation of it (Williams, 1960, p. 354). Williams contributes to the discussion towards an understanding of culture as a way of life that make culture a set of practices out of which people make meanings, to which they attribute meanings that are of common value. De Certeau, who was also a Marxist being aware of the commodified culture and the dominating capitalist forces but prioritizes resistance of the human agency, later further deepens the understanding of the everyday and intends to “locate more subtle moments of creativity and festivity within the delicate skein of everyday life as it was actually experienced, which included mundane acts of consumption, cultural or otherwise” (Gardiner, 2000, p. 164). The French scholars intend to understand the everyday, the *quotidian*, around commodification, symbolic cultural products, mass communication, and the everyday resistance of the ‘common’ against the institutionalisation of consumption.

Michel Foucault is another influential French philosopher that can never be set aside in a discussion that revolves around society, power relations and resistance. Foucault’s work on discourse and power contributes to understanding the everyday considerably. Discourse not only in verbal texts but also in social practices, objects and institutions, according to Foucault (1972), “contains the power to say something other than what it actually says, and thus to embrace a plurality of meanings: a plethora of the 'signified' in relation to a single 'signifier'” (p. 118). From this perspective, the practice of power is not always within what is said but within what is *not* said as well. In everyday life, what is practiced and what is *not* practiced by and over individuals and institutions, both the absence and the presence of objects in the everyday, uncover the social meanings embedded in the social structure. Besides, societies operate procedures to control, choose, distribute and organise the production of discourse in order that the power and potential dangers are avoided, which as a result brings the rules of exclusion

and prohibition (Foucault, 1972, p. 216). However, Foucault does not restrict the power relations to institutionalised power; he sees the pervasiveness of power relations in human relations among individuals, in families, in educational settings, and so forth. To him, power relations are the *productive force* that situates all parties in a relation in a strategic situation toward one another, and it is the *resistance* that maintain power relations because if there were no resistance but absolute obedience, there would be no practice of power; thus, resistance is the key constituent in the social dynamics (Foucault, 1997a, p. 167). Resistance evidently brings the question of liberation from domination of power groups. Taking a sceptical stance towards *liberation*, he distinguishes it from *practices of freedom*. According to Foucault (1984), power relations may give the participants the strategies to adapt in order to modify or block them; nevertheless, they face the state of domination. The liberation of individuals neglects the ethical aspect of freedom; one must *take care of oneself* to gain freedom, and taking care of oneself requires *knowledge of the self*. If one knows who they are, their capabilities, their being as a member of a community, there is no abusive practice of power. Otherwise, resistance is inevitable in power relations, and the main problem is to see where resistance develops from in human relations. As Foucault sees power relations everywhere, one might reckon that he does not believe in the freedom of individuals. However, he rejects power being evil but accepts it as *games of strategy* and believes that the freedom lies in the ethics and practice of the self; freedom is attained through “the relationship of the self to itself and the relationship to the other” (Foucault, 1997b, p. 300). Thus, everyday life opens up as one of the terrains of *resistance* where individuals use the *tactics* of the quotidian and their *cultural capital* to create and attribute meanings to their everyday actions.

Among all these French philosophers and sociologists mentioned and not mentioned regarding the limits of the study, Bruno Latour is a relatively contemporary one who also contributes to understanding the society, or rather the *collective* in his terms, as an atomic being that is not made up of only the *social* things since “social aggregates

might not be made of human ties” (Latour, 2007, p. 42), and *a type of connection* between things. From this perspective, Latour also contributes to understanding the social in connection with digital technologies. Latour, in his introduction to his major work *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, cogently expresses his approach to sociology, the social, and society, and although he uses the word “introduction” in the title of the book, he actually revisits the actor-network-theory (ANT) which he had made the major contributors to the development of. Latour (2007), in order to grasp the very nature of the social and the aim of sociology, proposes going back to the origin of the word *social* that means “a companion, an associate” in Latin and redefines sociology as “the *tracing of associations*” (pp. 5-6). Thus, Latour names the traditional notion of sociology as “sociology of the social” and distinguishes this notion from that of the new one that he calls “critical sociology” or “sociology of associations” and even “asociology” if only he could.

Latour (2007) criticises sociology of the social of being deficient to trace actors’ new associations and proposes a new understanding of sociology that does not restrict its studies to the social but substitutes the object of study with the concatenations of social relations but demonstrates that rather than intending to reveal the hidden ‘other’ behind the relations, it contemplates that “the social actors’ objections to their social explanations offer the best *proof* that those explanations are right” (p. 9). The social, then, is a thing that is *traceable* and “it is visible only by the *traces* it leaves (under trials) when a *new* association is being produced between elements which themselves are in no way ‘social’” (Latour, 2007, p. 8). The actor-network-theory that provides the critical sociologists the methodology to trace the social and understand the *collective* is revisited starting from the very name of it. Latour alternatively names actor-network-theory “sociology of translation,” “actant-rhizome ontology” (referring back to Deleuze and Guattari’s *rhizome*), and “sociology of innovation” but at the same time the acronym ANT is very much self-expressive because it suits for “blind, myopic, workaholic, trail-sniffing, and collective traveller,” (Latour, 2007, p. 9) he believes.

The main principle of ANT is that the actors are to be followed so that their collective existence and also the methods that they use to appropriate the new associations that they are to establish is understood (Latour, 2007, p. 12), and in essence ANT offers the opportunity to understand and define contemporary society similar to how ethnography does. Consequently, in the second half of the 20th century, French philosophers and sociologists only few of whom are overviewed within the limits of the study have been the major contributors in the process of understanding and analysing the everyday.

The key figures some of whom are overviewed here and many others who contributed to the domain of everyday life mainly conceptualise the quotidian, the social, the social structure and social practice critically at macro level. To illustrate, they mainly explored everyday life with respect to economy, culture industry, education, law, and so on. However, what is left out in the existent work is the micro-analysis of the everyday that explores the actual experiences, feelings and perceptions of the individuals who are the main actors of social interactions and relations. It is quite complicated to conceptualise the existent network, the associations constructed through and around the everyday experience of individuals. The American sociologists, particularly the Chicago School that was founded in the early 20th century contributed massively to the development both sociological thought and research methodology around everyday life. The Chicago School sociology, which started at University of Chicago but influenced various scholars in different institutions, referring to a particular school of thought and approach to sociology and sociological research is to be considered separated from the sociological research corpus conducted at University of Chicago.

The Chicago School founded in the early 1900s by William Isaac Thomas and George Herbert Mead, the key figures of symbolic interactionism, brought a scheme of thought that enables sociological research. The second generation, marked by Robert Park and Ernest Burgess, the students of Thomas and Mead, in the 1920s and 1930s carried out massive empirical research following the same path. In the late 1930s and 1940s,

prominently Everett Hughes and Ernest Burgess, the third generation developed symbolic interactionism perspective and contributed to the sociological research that continued after the World War II until today (Low and Bowden, 2013). Contrary to the positivist approach, the Chicago School had pragmatist foundations and was into symbolic system embedded in society following Peirce's theory of signs based on Saussure's signifier and signified and the reality of the social.

The motivation behind the foundation of the Chicago School determined the scope of the development of thought and vast corpus of research conducted until today. Wiley (2011) addresses to the rise of nativism, or Americanisation, after World War I, and maintains that as a result of increasing fascism, the Chicago School rose as a response to this social and political climate that they see as a threat to democracy. He argues that the Chicago School was more ethnic-oriented than class-oriented in the Protestant city started receiving immigrants (Catholic Polish and Italians, and Jews) and claims that the class consciousness was weak in the US and they were labelled as different ethnic groups rather than being labelled as Marx's proletariat (pp. 42-45). On the contrary, Deegan (2013) demonstrates how the work of Chicago School derived from the social and economic transformation of the city between 1892 and 1920 due to the acceleration of urbanisation and industrialisation; hence, their interest was directed not only to different ethnic groups but also to the study of social class and labour relations, the processes of labour, unionisation, exploitation of labour force, urban sociology (city life and urban planning), criminology with a specific focus on juvenile delinquency, feminism, and so on. Thus, the Chicago School's research orientation cannot be limited to ethnic groups; this school of thought and empirical research conducted over the years embrace a variety of sociological areas. Furthermore, the Chicago School is "a school of activity involving a diverse array of theoretical and methodological approaches than as a coherent and cohesive school of thought" (Low and Bowden, 2013, p. 9); thus, the significance of the school comes from what they have done. It was the first time when a form of capitalism was affirmed and legitimised on the basis of American civilisation,

the American dream, that has both the promising and the dark sides for individuals; they either shine or rotten in failure. The Chicago School addressed to both. The Chicago sociologists emphasised “space, time, and social organization so central to understanding the modern form of commercial capitalism pioneered in Chicago,” and they also raised “the activist work and concern for social reform of those who recognized that certain groups were not benefitting from the economic boom and that Chicago, as it currently existed, was not delivering its promise to all” (p. 15). In other words, they got interested in what the actual experiences of individuals are such as how factory workers deal with alienation in their social relations, what their leisure activities are, why they consume certain commodities but not others, what screens do their private and public space, etc.

Low and Bowden (2013) use the “hammer” metaphor for schools of thought as they serve the distinct purpose of the user, but they use the “Swiss army knife” metaphor the Chicago School because as they maintain, it offers a range of tools that could serve different purposes with its dynamic tradition. They also assert that the Chicago School is contextualist with an agreement on the definition of the situation and “renders social facts as located in social (and of geographic) space and social time” (p. 18). As a result of the urbanisation and industrialisation, the social structure, the social and the practices in the everyday evolve, the attention of the sociologists was directed towards what happens in society in simple terms.

An overview of theorists and particular schools in the field of sociology of everyday life reflects a different *everyday* from that of today. Individuals in their workplaces, public places, schools, houses are constantly exposed to information flow from digital platforms. A Skype meeting, a class on Zoom, a social media post that individuals interact with, an Instagram post that they expect likes all day, Alexa reminding a meeting to a user, or news that individuals follow online that individuals connect with others are all within the everyday sphere. There is a mutual synchronous and asynchronous interaction between individuals and the digital platforms, and they are

actively engaged in both the production and consumption of the digital content within a complex network that connects the digital and non-digital. Today, in the new socially situated encounters, a participant is likely to be engaged in multiple forms of interaction simultaneously or move across these forms flexibly and “is capable of adaptably turning from this form of interaction to other forms in order to best manage her/his ideal character” (Kien, 2015, p. 76). The everyday messages are both non-digital and digital; however, the terrains of the digital and the non-digital are not separate but a whole space of everyday interactions, and the meanings are constructed in this misty space of the everyday when an individual looks at a meme sent in his high school friends WhatsApp group during a meeting in a room, a partner broadcasts his proposal live on Facebook, a user checks stories while his friend tells what happens if they submit the project late. How can we conceptualise the everyday experience, feelings and perceptions of individuals, the social self, in such a complicated landscape of the everyday?

The present study attempts to enter this landscape to explore the new interaction order in which participants’ acts of verbal and non-verbal communication co-exist with their interaction with social media platforms through the smartphones that the majority of them carry at all times. If the aim were to understand what digital commodities BigTech try to sell individuals and what tactics individuals develop to resist such commodities, then the everyday of de Certeau would be in service of the study. If the aim were to explore how BigTech and modern capitalism colonise the digital experiences of individuals, then the everyday of Lefebvre would serve the purpose of the study. If the aim were to trace the interaction relations that individuals construct, then the actor-network-theory, would be the path of exploration for the study. However, the main purpose of the study is in very simple terms to find what happens in the new interaction order smartphones and social media reachable at all times and how the digital in their hands transform the social-self in the everyday. It is an attempt to unveil what is seen, experienced and observed everyday but has become so trivial that it has not been

conceptualised. Within the scope of the everyday, it requires a micro-analysis to explore new patterns of behaviour and participants' acts and perceptions in everyday interactions; hence, among all theorists overviewed, Erving Goffman and his micro-level conceptualisation of the everyday serve the very purpose of the present study.

1.2 Erving Goffman and the Everyday Life

The knowledge of the cultural capital, commodification, power relations, and so on was for theorizing the social; however, it was the actual everyday experience of the individual that is to be in the centre of the sociological inquiry. The Chicago School provided the tools to get into the everyday and the experience of the social in the community where individuals adapt and construct meanings through their social experiences. This is the reason why when it is the modern life, urban life and social practices in question, the research and approaches developed not only by the scholars behind the walls of University of Chicago but also by the scholars that carry on the legacy of the Chicago School sociology in different institutions are the first to consider. Regardless of time and place, it is this dynamic research approach that appeals researchers who conduct research in everyday life. Among many, Erving Goffman, the Canadian scholar who completed his MA in 1949 and his PhD in 1953 at University of Chicago, is one of the prominent figures that carried out massive research on the everyday that has not lost its impact on current research not only in sociology but also communication.

Erving Goffman whose works have substantially contributed to the field of sociology of everyday life is central to the study with a number of his works among many depending on the scope of the research. The reason why Erving Goffman among other theorists that contributed to the field of sociology of everyday life is that initially he is the one who intensely concentrated on face-to-face interactions at micro-level. Goffman (1983) points out that face-to-face interaction is a substantial analytically feasible domain that is to be studied through microanalysis and “the contained elements fit together more closely than with elements beyond the order; that exploring relations

between orders is critical, a subject matter in its own right, and that such an inquiry presupposes a delineation of the several social orders in the first place; that isolating the interaction order provides a means and a reason to examine diverse societies comparatively” (p. 2). Goffman, who believes that it is not necessary to label him as a symbolic interactionist or else, states that he can be considered as an urban ethnographer (Verhoeven, 1993). Goffman’s work and the concepts he developed regarding face-to-face interactions provide a framework that can contribute to understanding how face-to-face interactions in the digital era, and ethnographic research serves the very purpose of the study that explores what is going on *here* in the presence of participants’ smartphones and social media accounts and how the interaction ritual has evolved within this fluid nature of multiple interactions in public.

Goffman’s study of everyday life revolves around human interactions and specifically face-to-face interactions. Thus, once a discussion regarding face-to-face interactions emerges, Erving Goffman is one of the first scholars cited. Knowing the fact that Goffman belongs to the pre-digital era of social interactions, his conceptualization of socially-situated interactions as interaction rituals, participants as the actors on the stage of interactions and the rules of conduct that individuals design and maintain as the main actors of the order are attributed to the physical social interactions, yet they are still relatable and applicable to the new interaction order in the digital era. In other words, the study is inspired by the prescience of Goffman (1963) who explains “if the individual decides against contact, he may well have to find some activity for himself in which he can become visibly immersed, so as to provide the others present with a face-saving excuse for being unattended to... we see the situational functions that newspapers and magazines play in our society, allowing us to carry around *a screen* [emphasis added] that can be raised at any time to give ourselves or others an excuse for not initiating contact” (pp. 138-139). It is the age of screens when we are literally surrounded by digital *screens* in public, and it is the time to explore how Goffman’s

symbolic screen operates in public during face-to-face interactions and what happens to the social in the presence of screens.

The study concentrates on the concepts that Goffman develop in face-to-face interactions in public deriving from his major works titled *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1956), *Encounters: Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction* (1961), *Behavior in Public Places* (1963), *Interaction Ritual: Essays in Face-to-Face Behavior* (1967), and finally *The Interaction Order*, his 1982 American Sociological Association presidential address. This section aims at demonstrating the face-to-face interaction concepts of Goffman that are central to the research and how they are applicable to the study that concentrates on exploring how Goffman's "interaction ritual" is actualized in the everyday practices of young people who intermittently access to social media platforms while they are engaged in social interaction with others in public.

1.2.1 Dramaturgy

All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players;

They have their exits and their entrances...

(William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*)

Erving Goffman in his earliest work *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* develops a sociological perspective in the study of social life and proposes the concept "dramaturgy" that reminds us of the famous lines of William Shakespeare. *Dramaturgy* is the concept that refers to the idea that individuals are players on the stage of everyday life who learn their and others' roles in the play of life through the process of socialisation. The *performance* refers to the activities an individual fulfils in front of a number of observers who are influenced by these activities at a specific time (Goffman, 1956, p. 13). The performances of individuals are performed at the *social front* that is composed of setting, appearance and manner. *Setting* refers to "the scenic parts of

expressive equipment,” (p. 14) and expressive equipment constitutes to the *personal front* which are the things (e.g. clothing, gender, race, etc.) that are identified with the performer. *Appearance* is what manifests the performer’s social status and manner is what warns others of “the interaction role the performer will expect to play in the on-coming situation” which also shows the social occasion where the performance takes place (p. 15). To Goffman (1956a), there must be not only consistency between appearance and manner but also coherence among appearance, manner and setting (p. 16). Individuals, then, perform all activities in social settings in front of a number of observers who they manifest their social being, status and intention in a social occasion.

Moreover, Goffman (1956a) developed two other concepts in his dramaturgy; *dramatic realisation* and *idealisation*. In a social front where an individual is with others, the activities of the individual are imbued with signs that emphasise and illustrate ancillary facts in order that the individual conveys the intended meaning to others during the social interaction, which is *dramatic realisation* (pp. 19-20). What Goffman means by *idealisation* is that “a performance is, in a sense ‘socialized,’ moulded and modified to fit into the understanding and expectations of the society in which it is presented” (pp. 22-23), and the performance of an individual in front of others, in fact, reflect the values of the society as all these values are embedded in the performance itself that Goffman calls *ceremony*, “an expressive rejuvenation and reaffirmation of the moral values of the community” (p. 23). Thus, any performance in the social front is actualised through the activities with the ideal standards that reflect the recognised and approved values of the society in order to convey the intended meaning to other participants observing.

Goffman (1956a) also conceptualises region, “any place that is bounded to some degree by barriers to perception” (p. 66) and region behaviour. To him, social interaction is actualised in the social front, the *front region* or the *front stage*, in front of the observers to whom the performer transmits the meanings through the signs in accordance with the social norms, the *back region* or the *back stage*, is the place where “the capacity of a performance to express something beyond itself may be painstakingly fabricated; it

is here that illusions and impressions are openly constructed” (p. 69). In the back stage, the performer is confident that no observers, audience, enter. Goffman (1956a) states that in the back stage “we may expect reciprocal familiarity to determine the tone of social intercourse” and in the front stage “we may expect a tone of formality to prevail” (p. 78). However, when an intruder happens to appear in the region or any unmeant gestures, socially unacceptable words or behaviour are used in the region, a “scene” occurs, and it is essential that all participants *save the show*. Goffman (1956a) expresses how such an embarrassment is dealt with in interaction teams, and in his later work *Interaction Rituals: Essays in Face-to-Face Behavior*, he elaborates his idea of impression management in his conceptualisation of “face-work,” which is one of the interests of the present work examined below.

Goffman’s dramaturgy that is relevant to mass media and communication studies as he also acknowledges it in his conceptualisation of back and front regions is used as a framework for micro-analysis (Thornborrow and Haarman, 2012; Ytreberg, 2002). Goffman is one of the prominent everyday life sociologists that is used as a reference in social media research. His dramaturgy is specifically used to research the construction of virtual identities, self-presentation, social media content creation, and privacy. To illustrate, Hogan (2010) explores how Goffman’s dramaturgy applies to online participations of users, and he uses the back region and front region to explain the synchronous *situations* online and distinguishes asynchronous *exhibitions* of self from the situations. Similarly, Merunková and Šlerka (2019) explore Facebook users’ virtual identity construction and how they maintain their impact on other users online using Goffman’s dramaturgy. For privacy issues in the digital age, Armond (2018) discusses how back region has become accessible to observers or audience and performers have become vulnerable. Among various studies as such, the present study is not interested in how presentation of self is actualised on social media platforms but rather intends to explore whether presentation of self and regional behaviour during an

on-going face-to-face interaction in the presence of smartphones and social media platforms intermittently accessed has changed in the digital age.

1.2.2 The Interaction “Ritual”

Goffman’s terms like ritual, face engagements (losing the face, being in the wrong face or out of the face, or saving the face), and so on, have the potential to carry the discussion around his works to the scope of morality. Contrary to the discussion that claims “Goffman's moral viewpoint is far more complex and profound than a simple defence of the individual against society” (Creelan, 1984, p. 663) in his works, the study is not concerned with the morality that is attributed to individual’s being and social practices that they are engaged in. Rather, the present research takes the term *ritual* in the context of modernity as an ongoing structured set of complex practices whose orderly nature is defined by the community that the individual belongs to. Similarly, Foucault (1972) asserts that knowledge exchange and communication operate through complex but restrictive systems and takes *ritual* as one of that kind of a restrictive system. Ritual being restrictive in its nature sets the expectations of and from the individual in the everyday, or the conventions of the everyday discourse that individuals produce and reproduce.

“ritual defines the qualifications required of the speaker (of who in dialogue, interrogation or recitation, should occupy which position and formulate which type of utterance); it lays down gestures to be made, behaviour, circumstances and the whole range of signs that must accompany discourse; finally, it lays down the supposed, or imposed significance of the words used, their effect upon those to whom they are addressed, the limitations of their constraining validity” (Foucault, 1972, p. 225).

Goffman uses the term *ritual* to describe socially situated interactions to address to the orderliness of the communication in the social sphere. He addresses to social face-to-face interaction as a moral, celebrative, and territorial, thus cultural phenomenon. What a social interaction involves is the whole realm of social life that brings the moral obligations to participants which at the same time set the expectations from one another and also the rights of engagement in face-to-face interactions. The moral obligation in face-to-face interaction is the instrument that maintains the continuity of the mutual engagement in the social activity. Moreover, Goffman (1983) relates the “immaterial things” like gestures, body language, clothing that people use in face-to-face interactions to the representations of individuals during ceremonies, or celebrative social gatherings, to affirm their identities and show their sense of collectiveness (p. 9). Also, the interaction ritual is territorial as one encounter in one social occasion differs from another. Even the participants are the same, an encounter in a business meeting differs from an encounter during a coffee break, for instance. Also, it is culture-specific, as all rituals are. The order of a social interaction in one culture differs from the one in a different culture. Consequently, the interaction order is subject to change in time (Goffman, 1963); that is, an interaction activity expected from one participant today does not necessarily remain the same over time in the same community. The digital communication that finds its very existence in face encounters through smartphones certainly brings new orders and cultural norms that are to be defined. What might seem chaotic and problematic from outside in public spaces in fact exists in its new orderliness that change in time, and this new order needs academic exploration that has the potential to understand different aspects of everyday communication practices.

1.2.3 Focused and Unfocused Interaction

Goffman categorises interaction as *unfocused interaction* and *focused interaction*. By unfocused interaction, he refers to “interpersonal communications that result solely by virtue of persons being in one another's presence”, and by focused interaction, “*focused*

gathering, or an *encounter*, or a *situated activity system*” he refers to interactions with common properties and requisites in which “people effectively agree to sustain for a time a single focus of cognitive and visual attention” (Goffman, 1972, pp. 7-8). Participants in any community are subject to the obligations regarding their involvements in both unfocused and focused interactions. Involvement in an interaction is not necessarily through verbal communication. “Body idiom,” the non-verbal communication tools, both in unfocused and focused communication “convey information about the actor’s social attributes and about his conception of himself, of the others present, and of the setting” (Goffman, 1963, p. 34), and the social interaction is maintained as long as participants share the same understanding of non-verbal communication signs. In an unfocused interaction, say one male participant passes by a female participant in the street, building an eye-contact or not is subject to the interaction ritual in that particular community. Similarly, in a focused interaction, bowing one’s head to initiate the interaction is equally important in the maintenance of the social relation.

The involvement is categorised as “main involvement” which refers to the type that requires the main part of the participant’s attention and interest, and “side involvement” that refers to the type of involvement that is simultaneously carried out with the main involvement without creating any threat or confusion on the side of the main involvement (Goffman, 1963, p. 43). While one of Goffman’s examples to main and side involvements is knitting while listening, in contemporary interaction ritual “multitasking” arises as a new phenomenon undergoing massive research.

The main and side involvement are not the same as “dominant involvement” and “subordinate involvement.” To Goffman (1963), dominant involvement is the one “whose claims upon an individual the social occasion obliges him to be ready to recognize” and subordinate involvement is the one that a participant is eligible to “sustain only to the degree, and during the time, that his attention is patently not required by the involvement that dominates him” (p. 44). Goffman attracts our attention

to the fact that in a society depending on the social situation, dominant and subordinate involvements are subject to borders of interaction ritual and gives drinking coffee as the subordinate involvement in the office working as the dominant involvement. He also points out that a dominant involvement at one time can be a subordinate involvement at a different time; drinking coffee can be the dominant activity during a coffee break in the office, he states (p. 45). In the new interaction order, however, the questions whether such types are identifiable or not and what role they have on face-to-face interaction need to be explored.

1.2.4 Rules of Conduct in Interaction Rituals

Face-to-face interaction, or interaction ritual, as an orderly realm of social interaction is certainly based on shared rules and obligations that participants come to terms with in order to sustain the continuation of social relations and collectiveness of the community that they participate in. To Goffman (2019), rules of conduct are of two kinds; *symmetrical* and *asymmetrical* rules. By *symmetrical* rules, he refers to the common courtesies, obligations and expectations one takes on in relation to others in the community, whereas by *asymmetrical* rules, he means rules that lead participants treat others differently from the way they treat them. Goffman (2019) also describes rules as *substantive* referring to the rules and laws that ensure all participants' compliance with the appropriate and acceptable behaviour in the community and as *ceremonial* referring to the rules that are considered to be of no specific significance or secondary. However, ceremonial rules are the conventional rules through which participants reveal their character and also their appreciation of others who they are interacting with, or rather the etiquette (pp. 65-67).

Ceremonial rules, as Goffman (2019) states, are composed of *deference*, the type of activity that operates as the symbolic tool through which participants convey their appreciation of one another (p. 68), and *demeanour*, the ceremonial behaviour embodied in their manner in which they behave or comport themselves and dress, through which participants convey the message that they carry the qualities of being

desirable or undesirable (p. 89). Avoidance rituals define what is *not* to be done referring to the distance kept by the participants from one another to avoid violating one's personal space (e.g. calling someone with his first name or not) (p. 75), whereas presentation rituals define what is to be done referring to the confirmation conveyed to participants concerning how they consider others and how they will treat one another during the interaction (e.g. salutation) (p. 83). Certainly, both avoidance and presentation rituals are subject to the social status or reputation of participants; to illustrate, the avoidance and presentations rituals will be different in an interaction between a teacher and student from the one between two teachers in a school, and the knowledge of the differences of such encounters ensures the appropriacy of social interactions.

1.2.5 Face Engagements (Encounters)

Goffman (1963) looks at such social interactions from a larger perspective including the unengaged participants in the social setting; that is, the concept of "participation unit" refers to both encounters and the unengaged participants, the "bystanders," and the interaction order (p. 91). This means the interaction order is perceived at a larger scale evaluating the impact of the ones who do not belong to a particular encounter that is realised between at least two other participants. Still, what Goffman (1963) calls "face engagements," or "encounters," refer to a mutual interaction between two or more participants and requires the engagement or rather the involvement of the participants within the social situation, which is not limited to verbal communication but involves non-verbal communication as well. To Goffman (1963), the requirements of an engagement start with the maintenance of eye-contact, monitoring one another's mutual perceptions and concentration on the same subject matter and the participant while shifts in participants' focus of attention are tolerated as long as they remain within the limits of the topic.

Moreover, Goffman (1963) includes the necessity of "agreement concerning perceptual relevancies and irrelevancies" and "a working consensus" that requires "a degree of

mutual considerateness, sympathy, and a muting of opinion differences” (pp. 95-96). Contrary to the expectance of participants from one another and of oneself, when in a mutual activity that can be either instrumental (e.g. teacher-student engagement) or non-instrumental (e.g. a sociable chat) participants fail to devote cognitive and visual attention, the absence of which breaks the contact between the participants (pp. 89-90). In face engagements, such signals of inattention to the other, verbal or non-verbal, is interpreted as derogation which disrupts the dynamic of the interaction ritual. However, among many signals that show loss of cognitive and visual attention today is digital cross-talk, “a form of interaction that occurs during an encounter when one member of a *with* partnership engages in conversation or conversation-like activity” (Ictech, 2019, pp. 34-35). In the presence of smartphones, let alone speaking on the phone during an on-going face engagement in public, it is common that participants seem to lose their focus on the face engagements that they take part in due to intermittent social media use and get engaged in conversations on digital platforms.

During any engagements between participants, the shift in the focus of the attention of any participants leads to the subordination of the verbal exchange and the co-existence of another task that the participant is involved in, which certainly brings the questions to what extent this co-existence is tolerable and how this co-existence shapes the interaction ritual. The shifts in the focus of attention can happen in an encounter where participants chat and then start smoking, for example. Goffman (1963) calls this instrument of avoiding “involvement shields” and states that in modern life bedrooms and bathrooms are the main involvement shields that individuals use to block others’ perception of their involvements that they do not want others to see. He also takes newspapers or magazines as “portable source of involvement” and also “substitute companion when eating alone without the cover of conversation with an eating partner,” (p. 52) because they help the *single* in public seem engaged and protect himself from others. When the participant is engaged in an encounter where there are

withs, the individual can still use a newspaper or magazine to exclude himself from the encounter without losing his face.

The *screen* today is not only a tool that individuals hide behind but also a multi-functional “objects or directions of involvement” in Goffman’s terms. As Goffman (1963) puts it, “the individual’s own body, or an object directly associated with his body, provides a very common object for his own involvement” (p. 64) which he calls “auto-involvement” that can function both as side involvements that cause shifts in attention and as “face-saving excuse” similar to newspapers or magazines. It is a common and even unnoticed everyday scene that individuals look at their screens on public transportation vehicle, in a restaurant while waiting for a *with* to arrive, in a doctor’s waiting room, in a school corridor during a break, on queue in a supermarket, and so on. It has become rare to catch a quick gaze of someone in public as everybody is or rather act as if they were busy with whatever they look at on their screens; whether smartphones have become the primary instrument that prevent an individual from losing his face needs to be explored.

1.2.6 Face-Work

The word *face* refers to a body part which is the frontal part of the head where eyes, nose, mouth are located in its denotative meaning, whereas the word face is used in idiomatic expressions both in English. A person *faces the problem* or *the fact*, for example. When he is angry with someone, he tells him to *get out of his face*. When he does not want to be engaged in a conversation, he *shuts his face*. Among such expressions, there is a group where the word face is associated with morality, honour and grace in the social community. If a person *loses his face*, he loses the respect of others and is exposed to public humiliation or disgrace. Then, he tries hard to *save his face* to preserve his reputation, and one *gives a face* to honour or show respect to the other. What Goffman conceptualises is in fact parallel to the idiomatic uses of the word face.

Goffman (1967) defines “face” as “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image delineated in terms of approved social attributes” (p. 5). It is the impression management that Goffman expresses in his theory of dramaturgy that he further conceptualises as “face-work” in *Interaction Ritual*. In a face-to-face interaction the role that a participant takes on is the role that is socially and institutionally legitimised. In instances when a participant loses his face, has a wrong face or finds himself out of touch of the social situation, there emerges embarrassment, and he fails to communicate his *line*, “a pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he expresses his view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself” (Goffman, 1967, p. 5). However, it is a social obligation that such *scenes* are to be managed and the social interaction is pursued by the participants, which is as equally important as the participant who tries to establish and maintain his face in an ongoing interaction.

Goffman (1967) categorises face-saving processes as *avoidance* and *corrective processes*. He proposes four strategies under the *avoidance process* that enables the participant to avoid contacts that have the potential to cause him lose his face: *defensive strategies*, *protecting strategies*, *preventive strategies*, and *ignorance*. A participant using defensive strategies distances himself from topics and activities that can potentially cause him communicating messages that are inconsistent with his line that he tries to maintain. When a participant uses protecting strategies, he demonstrates courtesy, respect and politeness to other participants saving both his and others’ face for a possible inappropriate or offensive behaviour. If there is a possibility to lose face in an interaction, a participant then uses preventive strategies and wait for the right moment and right place to contact others. Finally, a participant uses ignorance as a strategy and as the name suggests, he simply ignores the potential threat to the face. In the *corrective process* in face-work, when an event that is not compatible with the social norms and expectancies happen, participants take the responsibility to rectify the

situation. Under such circumstances, participants feel the obligation to explicitly refer to the inappropriate behaviour, action or utterance and suggest it is brought back to the line, or offer the participant fallen away from his line to compensate his misbehaviour and reconstruct the interaction order. In return, it is expected from the participant that he accepts the offer and shows gratitude to others who give him a chance to compensate (pp. 15-23). Consequently, face-work, as Goffman proposes, is the process that contributes to individuals' face-saving during an interaction in order that the order of the interaction ritual is maintained and face-to-face communication is sustained.

1.3 Erving Goffman and the Communication Research

The terms “social” and “sociological” have taken new meanings and perspectives in the digital age, so has the ethnographic research which offers researchers methodological tools to explore the digital social and cultural phenomena. In cyberethnographic research, Goffman's conceptualisation of interaction ritual and theory of dramaturgy are widely used in communication studies to understand how face-to-face communication is actualised among participants in social interactions and with a specific emphasis on “the dramaturgical, ritualistic, and ludic aspects of the interactions taking place in online environments” (Robinson & Schulz, 2011, p. 181). Morva (2017) also argues that Goffman's conceptual framework that perceives social life from a dramaturgical perspective enables researchers explore and describe the online environment as a social world through distinctive cultural codes. Thus, researchers intend to find answers to their queries into the digital interactions and the activities in digital social environment which is an alternative public space today.

To begin with, there are numerous references that use Goffman's dramaturgy to describe how self-presentation and regional behaviour. Jenkins (2010) uses Goffman's dramaturgical model to explore digital interactions and argue that the face-to-face work on digital platforms are similar to Goffman's interaction order in the physical world. O'Leary and Murphy (2017) compare participants' presentation of self on Facebook and Yik Yak (a social media app that is out of service today) and using Goffman's

dramaturgy conclude that users reveal their idealised front-stage performances of Facebook, whereas on Yik Yak in their backstage performances they reveal a more “true-self.” Alfarid Hussain (2015) also uses Goffman’s symbolic interactionism to explore how the social media platform Facebook contributes to the users’ construction of virtual identities. Similarly, Robinson (2007) focuses on the new social self which is the cyber-self in his research. Not only the self-presentation of Goffman but also his concept of impression management is used to explore how participants act in front and back regions on digital platforms. Using Goffman’s dramaturgy, Krisnawati (2020) recently explores how impression management is actualised by a Vlogger.

There are some small-scale studies that aim at understanding the role of smartphones in face-to-face interactions in public though. Nakamura (2014) studies gazing at a phone display as a form of nonverbal behaviour/communication in Japan which potentially indicates that one participant is busy, rejects interaction, signals the other participant to hold on, and finally initiates a collaborative work on the phone. Humphreys (2005) uses Goffman’s concepts of cross-talk to understand how mobile phone use in public influences the normative social interaction and concludes that mobile phones “privatize and atomize public spaces as cellphone users block out others nearby” and also expose their private information to the public when they speak on mobile phones loudly in public (p. 828). Following Humphreys’ research, Ictech (2019) uses Goffman’s concepts of face-work, encounters, behaviour in public places to understand how participants perceive and negotiate social relations when digital cross-talk is realized around them. Similarly, Henriksen et al. (2020) explore the role of smartphones in social interaction in public, specifically in a café and identify five categories of smartphone use in cafés; phone–face transitions, screening for urgency, ignoring, phone use contagion, and screen sharing. Consequently, Goffman left a lasting legacy not only for researchers in sociology and ethnography but also researchers in digital communication.

1.4 Erving Goffman's Interaction Ritual and the Present Study

Goffman calls socially situated interactions “ritual” as social encounters display certain features, orderliness, symbolic acts, conventions and obligations that are to be fulfilled and complied with by the participants. Today, face-to-face interactions are almost never without simultaneous or intermittent social media use on smartphones in the social front, which is central to the present study whose central inquiry is how smartphones and participants’ simultaneous interaction with social media platforms are embedded in the order, symbolic acts, conventions and obligations in the new interaction ritual. The maintenance of the interaction ritual is through the appropriate practice of the rules of conduct that interactants approve and follow. The present study focuses on *symmetrical ceremonial rules of conduct* since it is this kind of rules of conduct that reveals how participants are engaged in face engagements in public. Within the scope of the study, Goffman’s concept of *deference* and its two forms *avoidance rituals* and *presentation rituals* are used to understand how participants who intermittently use social media platforms on smartphones in the new interaction ritual maintain interaction and social relation in face encounters.

Among numerous studies that use Goffman’s conceptualisation of everyday life as a framework to understand how social interaction is realised in the digital era, the present study aims at contributing to the field of communication in the way that it does not concentrate on social interactions or presentation of self on digital platforms but explores what happens to interaction ritual and presentation of self in an ongoing face-to-face interaction, a face engagement, where participants interact with the social media platforms intermittently and even simultaneously. In other words, the main intention of the study is to concentrate on the new hybrid interaction ritual using Goffman’s interaction ritual as a theoretical basis rather than tracing the impact of smartphones and social media platforms on face-to-face interaction, and this section aims at outlining how certain concepts of Goffman presented above are central to the present study.

Goffman's dramaturgy is widely used in digital communication research; however, dramaturgy is distinctive in the present study as it does not explore the presentation of self and regional behaviour on digital platforms but it concentrates on how self is constructed in face engagements in front of the audience and the regional behaviour in the presence of smartphones and social media access. To illustrate, the present study explores how the social performance in the social front is demonstrated through the activities where smartphones and social media use are embedded, how are such activities evaluated by the interactants in terms of the pre-established social norms of the society and what the intended meaning is conveyed to the audience in face engagements. When it comes to the regional behaviour, the present study concentrates on the front and back region behaviour with respect to instances of intrusions into the back regions, the smartphones and the social media content on screens. The world of smartphones is full of precautions that users take to prevent such intrusions into their back regions coming from not only onlookers but also encounters in public space. Beside using screen locks, hiding notifications for merely WhatsApp messages, adjusting the screen brightness level to minimum, keeping smartphones on the table screen facing down, the smartphone industry provides users new security systems like fingerprint sensors or face recognition. In face engagements, how participants feel about onlookers when they use their smartphones in public spaces, to what extent participants of the face engagements become onlookers to each other's screens and intrude into the *with's* back region and whether such instances create embarrassment and require face-work are explored in the study.

Goffman's categorisation of involvement as unfocused and focused interaction is upon the interest of the study; moreover, in the presence of smartphones whether it is still possible to define an interaction as unfocused and focused in the same way is worthy of exploration. Furthermore, his conceptualisation of main and side, dominant and subordinate involvement needs to be revisited in the new interaction ritual today. While Goffman's understanding of such types of involvement refer to the new phenomenon

of multitasking that attracts researchers from different fields, the present study does not concentrate on multitasking but explores how such shifts from one type of involvement to another are experienced in face engagements. Today tapping on the Instagram stories while listening can be a common example to main and side involvements in participants' consideration, yet which one is the main and which one is the side involvement needs to be explored. Similar to Goffman's example of drinking coffee and working in the office, the *single* in a public place who checks Instagram stories while waiting for the *with* to bring coffee is involved in the social media engagement as a dominant involvement, and when the *with* is back with the coffee chatting, the continuing tapping behaviour becomes the subordinate involvement. Or is it possible to clearly label such activities in a face engagement? Based on the same Instagram story tapping example, in the interaction ritual today, which one is the dominant involvement, and depending on the social activity how do they change as dominating or subordinate activity? Furthermore, is it merely a shift from the dominant to the subordinate, or does this shift have a different function in the interaction ritual today? The study also concentrates on finding answers to these questions and understanding the participants' involvements in face-to-face interactions.

Contrary to Goffman's conceptualisation of face engagements that depend on cognitive and visual mutualness on the side of participants, face engagements, or encounters, today vary in the nature of participation unit. Different from Goffman's frame of participation unit that includes encounters, unengaged participants and bystanders, smartphones and social media access available at all times are within the same frame today leaving question marks regarding the requirement of devoting visual and cognitive attention to one another in a face engagement. One may question whether this is an engagement or not, but today it is rare to witness a face-to-face interaction in the absence of a smartphone and social media access. Still, there seems to be no serious issues regarding smartphone use during face engagements as participants continue using their smartphones during face-to-face interactions, but the present study aims at

exploring why participants tend to access to social media and how they react to one another in such cases during face encounters. The present study also aims at understanding the new participation unit where smartphones are also participants in the interaction ritual and questions if or how shifts from one involvement to another change face engagements. When it is the shift between the main and side involvements, today the participants in an encounter experience such shifts between their *withs* and their smartphones, and between their *withs* and virtual encounters on social media platforms, which is one of the inquiries of the study. Such shifts can also be a decision of the participant that he intends to avoid interaction but never risks losing his face. Then, the study concentrates on exploring if social media platforms are the new involvement shields or objects of involvement that provide the participants with face-saving excuse and how they function in social gatherings.

Last but not least, the present study that concentrates on how face engagements are realised in the presence of smartphones and intermittent access to social media platforms also explores how participants deal with face-saving during an ongoing interaction. Considering the symmetrical ceremonial rules of conduct, do participants lose their face when they look at their screens? Are there any instances that they look at their screens to shut their faces, and if they do so, does it cause them lose their face? Furthermore, the inquiry into participants' perceptions of their and others' faces and lines in the new interaction ritual is central to the study.

2. THE RESEARCH

The qualitative study primarily aims at exploring how the “interaction ritual” in Goffman’s terms, is actualized in the everyday practices of young people who spend considerable time on social media platforms while they are socialising with others in public. Goffman (1967) expresses the rationale behind his use of *ritual* with his concentration on “the acts through whose symbolic component the actor shows how worthy he is of respect or how worthy he feels others are of it” (p. 19). Goffman’s use of interaction as a *ritual* aligns with the general conceptualization of communication not merely as the transmission of message but rather the base process that provides the mutual construction of the social and individual identities from a sociological perspective (Nalçaoğlu, 2019). The face-to-face communication in public, or rather “face engagements” have taken new forms in different spheres of life of people from different ages, social and cultural backgrounds. The study concentrates on how the presence of smartphones in face encounters in public spaces and participants’ social media use influence the interaction ritual.

2.1 Methodology

The research is conducted following the constructivist paradigm which enables the researchers to *construct* concepts and theories utilizing the research participants’ life experiences that they themselves try to express and comprehend (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p. 10). From this perspective, the researcher aims at understanding the world and people’s different social experiences. As Creswell (2003) states, the different multi-meanings that people attribute to their experiences are limited to their subjective evaluation of them, which urges the researcher “to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas. The goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participants’ views of the situation being studied” (p. 8). In constructivist paradigm, the meaning is interpretive, constructed and reconstructed, interpreted and reinterpreted in the social milieu. The present study aims at understanding how face-to-face interactions of young people at university in

presence of their smartphones and social media access are shaped within the framework of Erving Goffman's *interaction ritual* with a specific focus on face engagements, face-work, rules of conduct and dramaturgy. To do this, the researcher aims to explore what participants (or interactants) do and experience, what meanings they attribute to these doings and experiences and what rules they follow to maintain the continuation of social interactions, how they perceive the self and others, how dramatic realisation and idealisation are actualised and the rules of the new interaction ritual are realised in the presence of smartphones and social media access.

The study is qualitative, and the researcher uses qualitative research methods to collect data that reveal participants' actual practices and interpretation of meanings that they are surrounded with. In the study, the researcher, as Corbin and Strauss (2008) put it, appreciate the "serendipity and discovery" (p. 13) that qualitative research methodology offers. As the aim is to explore the new *interaction ritual*, the researcher intends to take a voyage into something that is already publicly recognised by many but not closely examined yet; thus, qualitative research with its capacity to allow the researcher explore the participants' actual experience and how they interpret their actions also allows the participants to see their inner drives and thoughts, which enriches the data.

Qualitative research offers a variety of data sources that the researcher can make use of to understand the phenomenon from different sides. Accordingly, the researcher uses observations, interviews, media texts (both digital and non-digital), videos, audio and/or visual texts, movies, historical archives, literary works, letters, and many others that can be listed. As the study is in the field of communication, not all the data sources listed contribute to the results. Merrigan and Huston (2004) identify four possible data collection sources where communication data can be obtained: "(1) observations of communicative interactions; (2) self-reports of communicative behaviours, beliefs, and/or characteristics; (3) other-reports of communicative behaviours, beliefs, and/or characteristics; and (4) texts" (p. 37). To obtain data concerning what is happening in

the actual communication settings where participants intermittently use their smartphones and often access social media for different purposes during face-to-face interaction, “observations of communicative interactions” is the appropriate data source for the study. Nonetheless, what is observed in the field is limited with both the physical conditions and the researcher’s perception, understanding and interpretation of the cases. Hence, in the study, one-to-one interviews and transcripts that are obtained are the second data source through which the researcher seeks an answer to what actually happens, why it happens, what participants do, intend to do, feel, and think in such communication settings. The researcher has the opportunity to compare what is observed and what participants express since interviews enable the researchers to learn participants’ opinions, beliefs and feelings in different research areas. This enables the researcher to evaluate data across data sets and at the same time sheds some light onto any activities that would not make fully sense to the researcher during observations. Observations, as Corbin and Strauss (2008) express, enable the researcher to see what people are doing rather than relying on solely what they say that they are doing, and give them the opportunity to position themselves in real environments where the actions in inquiry take place (pp. 29-30). Similarly, having only interviews do have limitations that restrict the data to what participants prefer expressing, which prevents the researcher from capturing and understanding the situation from various perspectives and explore doings that participants do not express for different reasons. The field observations together with the interviews provide the researcher with the data about what is actually happening, how the interaction ritual flow in public spaces and what participants are doing in face engagements. Based on this classification of data collection sources, the researcher uses two different data tools to collect data to serve the purpose of the study.

1. Non-participant field observation
 - a. Observed behaviours documented
 - b. Researcher’s memo concerning each group

2. In-depth semi-structured interviews

- a. Self-reports of the data
- b. Transcripts of the interviews

Non-participant field observations are conducted following the principles of ethnographic research that equips the researcher with the methodology to analyse the data obtained.

The study follows the same methodological tradition of Goffman to explore the new interaction order from this perspective. Goffman, who had education in anthropology, pursued methodology originating from ethnography and explored both social reality as a game where players (performers or social actors) perform their pre-established roles in society and participants' (interactants') perceptions of such social reality (Segre, 2014, p. 146). Likewise, the researcher approaches face encounters in the presence of smartphones as the new culture of communication that needs to be explored. As in ethnographical research that aims at making sense of communities and cultures, the researcher in the present study utilises the methodology to make sense of the smartphone behaviour of participants in face-to-face interactions, which is central to social and cultural patterns of behaviour in public spaces and takes this research also as a study in the field of digital ethnography. Thus, the present study also contributes to the recently expanding research area which is digital ethnography, the ethnographic research into digital cultures. Even though digital ethnography concentrates on the meanings and practices produced and reproduced in the digital world (e.g., Ardévol and Gómez-Cruz, 2014; Kaur-Gill & Dutta, 2017; Varis, 2020), this study opens a discussion whether the intersection between the virtual and the physical world is the subject area of digital ethnography. The conceptualisation of the virtual and the physical as two distinct cultural worlds where individuals produce and reproduce cultural codes and meanings brings both methodological and conceptual limitations to academic studies. Contrary to this restrictive perspective, the virtual and physical

worlds co-exist, and in everyday communication practices the involvement or engagement of individuals are actualised in quite fluid patterns of interactions. It is this fluidity that makes the borders of the virtual and the physical shift in the everyday communication; that is, social and cultural practices cannot be categorised based on whether they are actualised on virtual platforms or face-to-face encounters today. The messages constructed and interpreted have the potential to be carried to the virtual platforms during face encounters, or online messages are integrated into everyday conversations. Also, individuals take the liberty to take journeys from face-to-face encounters to virtual platforms and then they come back to the social gatherings. Thus, in today's communication practices, what is produced, reproduced and interpreted cannot be solely virtual or face-to-face. It is this perspective that positions this research as a digital ethnographic study that aims at understanding the patterns and codes of conduct in the fluidity of face encounters in the digital age.

Clifford Geertz, the father of interpretive anthropology, puts epistemology as “thick description” in the centre of the methodology, takes culture as the collection of socially constructed meanings that are public. To Geertz (1973), an ethnographer has to explore “a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render” (p. 10). Geertz (1973) concentrates on meanings beyond language as he follows the ideas of Wittgenstein who asserts no matter how well people speak the language of the country they have been to, they do not understand the meanings that belong to that community (p. 13). This leads to the idea that the world where the human steps into is a complex social and symbolic structure that is full of meanings that do not manifest themselves through language only. While in culturally loaded occasions like funerals, weddings or religious feasts meanings are quite dense, still in common practices individuals often construct or attribute meanings to cultural symbols and representations that are not always conveyed through verbal language but behaviour. When it comes to the field of

communication, the meanings that participants construct and convey in one-to-one or group interactions are not limited to the common verbal language that they communicate with. What do participants mean when they prefer silence in the middle of a discussion? What do participants try to imply to other participants when they do not look into their eyes while speaking? What if someone speaks to another but receives no response? What about using social media during face-to-face communication? A researcher as a non-participant observer observes such multi-layered complex sets of behaviour in a social interaction and comes up with certain patterns of behaviour that are meaningful to the social actors. The present study consequently uses “thick description” as a methodology which brings anthropology an interpretive approach. From an interpretive perspective towards anthropology, thick descriptions are “microscopic descriptions that are based on a complex web of interpretations” that are used to understand cultures (Michael, 1993, p. 270). Interpretive anthropology offers the methodology that enables the researcher first see the patterns of behaviour in a social interaction where smartphones have taken on new roles as invisible social participants that have the potential to change and/or create patterns of behaviour in social interactions. What is the new interaction order today? How are face engagements practiced in the presence of smartphones and social media access? What are the patterns of behaviour in face-to-face interactions? What happens when a participant looks at his/her screen in the middle of a conversation? The methodology of interpretive anthropology “thick description” is expected to lead the researcher to find answers to such questions in the study. Certainly, the methodology provides comprehensible data of observable behaviour that manifest what is happening during interactions without any details regarding what participants exactly do on screen, how much time they spend on each activity, who they interact with and why, and so forth; still, thick descriptions together with the researcher’s memos give the researcher the opportunity to draw the colour maps of face-to-face interactions where mobile phone use can be tracked and make a list of emerging patterns of behaviour, which the

researcher uses to trace the concepts of Goffman around face engagements relates each mobile phone use behaviour to these concepts to explore how face engagements are carried out. In other words, similar to the echocardiograms, the graphic outlines of the heart's movements, the researcher aims at drawing sort of echocardiograms of the interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and read the flow of the face engagements in public spaces.

Among the social media platforms that they use, which ones do they use while they are having a conversation? What attracts their attention on their mobile phones? Is it social media content that they interact with in the middle of a conversation? What could be their motivation to bring in some social media content into an ongoing conversation? How are participants engaged in face-work? What are the current rules of conduct? How do participants express and perceive this new interaction ritual? How do the new actors of social performance construct the self and the other? The study adapts triangulation (obtaining different types of data) in research, which means the combination of non-participant field observations and semi-structured interviews open a safe passage into a deeper exploration of the matter studied. Through the in-depth semi-structured interviews, the study at the second step explores participants' practice of face-work and perceptions of rules of conduct today, and Goffman's dramaturgy in social encounters where smartphones and social media platforms are simultaneously used during face-to-face interactions. The reason why semi-structured interviews are preferred in the study is that the participants are expected to explain their ideas and actual experiences within the scope of the study but allowing them to express themselves further but certainly keeping them focused. With this purpose, the researcher conducts in-depth interviews with young people on the same campuses where the non-participant observations are held, which gives the opportunity to compare what is observed in actual communication environments and what participants actually do, think and feel. The researcher processes the interview data using thematic

analysis. The data is processed through encoding interview data with explicit data-driven codes inductively.

2.2 Step 1 – The Field Observations

2.2.1 Sampling

As the aim of the ethnographic methodology in this research is to deeply explore structured patterns of interactions to obtain insights about the individuals' everyday communication experiences in public space, the primary objective is to explore deeply enough to uncover individuals' most underlying behavioural and motivational drives in face engagements in the new interaction ritual. Thus, the study does not aim at obtaining results that enables a generalisation to the whole population but explaining the patterns of behaviour in the selected population. Moreover, when it comes to smartphone use in face engagements in public space, it is observed that no significant variations are documented among different age and gender groups. The Deloitte survey shows that the selected population between the ages of 18 and 50, in 2017, 78% and in 2019, 84% of Turkish participants state that they use social media at least once a day. The results specific to participants between the ages of 18 and 24 do not demonstrate significant variations indeed; in 2017, 77% and in 2019, 82% of Turkish participants state that they use social media at least once a day. The same survey explores which digital device participants use for a variety of online activities like checking online shopping sites and doing shopping, using search engines, watching short videos, online banking, making video and voice calls (VoIP), checking social media, watching films and TV series, and so on, and the results indicate that in all age groups participants use their smartphones for these online activities, except for the 45-50 year-olds who prefer watching films and TV series on their laptops more (Deloitte, 2020). This indicates that while the findings of the study explore and shed a light onto a specific population, the university students' (aged 18-24 primarily) patterns of behaviour in face engagements in public space, it at the same time provides insights into the patterns of behaviour in different age and socio-economic groups as the mobile user behavioural patterns do not

seem to show dramatic differences across various social groups. In other words, what is observed in public space is expected to be similar across different groups, but the content they create and consume might certainly show differences across different age and socio-economic groups. Thus, the researcher uses convenience sampling (also called accidental sampling or grab sampling) as the study does not require a population to be observed with specific demographic features other than being university students using smartphones during face-to-face interactions on campus. The population of the study are university students who often intermittently use their smartphones during their everyday practices including their face-to-face interactions and are actively engaged in activities on social media platforms. Convenience sampling is also advantageous for the researcher since such population is ready to reach. It is not difficult to find such groups on any university campus today as the typical picture in any campus demonstrates some students whose mobile phones are either on tables or in their hands during face-to-face interactions. The data setting is all possible places where they gather and spend some time together; open/closed public places like cafes, study areas, sitting areas, shuttle buses and the library on the campuses of Istanbul Bilgi University, a foundation university, in Istanbul.

2.2.2 Data Tools & Sources

As the study primarily seeks to understand observable behaviours during interactions of individuals, the field observations serve the very need of the researcher who is interested in face engagements and the observable involvement of participants who are likely to touch their smartphones and leave the social front at times and come back if and when they want to, which means that the researcher observes how the interaction ritual with all of its performers and audience and their smartphones that accompany them at all times. What distinguishes the study from other observations of communication activities is that the researcher in her observations concentrates on not only the participants (P) but also the active and fluid presence of smartphones in the communication setting as P'. In this setting, contrary to the participation unit that

Goffman characterises as units of social gatherings composed of both encounters and unengaged participants, there are participants themselves but the participants with their smartphones who are actively using them and also give an active role to their smartphones probably without even realising that they have been changing the structure of the face engagements and the norms that maintain the social gathering and thus the ritual element of interactions in public spaces. From this perspective, the researcher uses observations mainly to identify the common patterns of behaviour in face engagements where smartphone use interferes with the mutual commitment of participants.

In order to explore what is happening among participants in face engagements using their smartphones in public spaces on campus, the researcher takes a seat in a public place (cafés, sitting areas, library) on campus, observes groups of different sizes, and takes notes in the way that Geertz explains as “thick descriptions.” The researcher expands these notes by writing the incidents happening and the participants’ reactions and responses. In some observations, the researcher sometimes clearly hears participants’ responses or see their screens, which she adds to her notes as memos. Although the study has no focus on gender, the researcher included the gender information in the thick descriptions; she draws the sitting arrangements in social gatherings coding each participant as A, B, C, and so on and noting down the gender of each participant there in case the data could reveal a significant result regarding gender.

2.2.3 Demographics and the Research Setting

By the end of December 2018, 34 observations on campus are completed. In total, the researcher observes only students in face-to-face interaction on campus for 31 hours and 25 minutes. Out of 34 observations, 31 observations in open/closed cafés and sitting areas on campus, 2 observations on the university shuttle buses and 1 in the university library are conducted. The number of participants in each social gathering observed and the number of groups observed in each group size is seen in Table 1.

Table 1 The number of the participants in each social gathering and the number of groups in each group size

Size of groups	Total number of groups
One-to-one	16
3 participants	6
4 participants	5
5 participants	3
6 participants	1
8 participants	2
9 participants	1

The social gatherings observed are also classified as fully-focused (2 participants), partly-focused (more than 2 participants) and multi-focused (more than 3 participants) following the classification of face engagements of Goffman (1963) as in Table 2.

Table 2 The number of groups in each type of social gathering observed

Social gatherings	Total number of gatherings
fully-focused gathering	16
partly-focused gathering	6
multi-focused gathering	12

The researcher pays attention to the balance between male and female participants in case the study could reveal a significant result based on gender. 106 participants (51 females, 55 males) in total are observed in groups on two campuses. Besides, the

researcher notes down the purpose of participants' gathering as a reference to Goffman's classification of face engagements as instrumental (study) and non-instrumental (chat) (Goffman, 1963). The classification of participants' purpose of gathering as groups is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 The purpose of participants' gathering

Purpose	Total number of groups
Chatting – non-instrumental	18
Study – instrumental	11
Passing time at a café – non-instrumental	5

The data obtained from the chatting cases involve more variety in communication activities both in face-to-face communication and smartphone use while the flow of communication lacks such activities in some cases. In the classification, the students who are observed chatting and spending time together are differentiated from the ones who are there to pass some time only. The former participants are eager to verbally communicate with each other whereas the latter seems to just come together coincidentally and are visibly reluctant to build a connection with each other. Contrary to Goffman's conceptualisation of face-engagements that refers to mutual activities that require visual and cognitive attention, the groups observed indicate that social gatherings today, meaning being present in the same physical environment, do not necessarily bring the obligation to interact with each other. Such gatherings do not fall into the category of unfocused interactions as Goffman classifies since participants, who know each other and exchange minimum verbal and non-verbal communication, gather around the same table but avoid interaction with each other but are mostly into their smartphones throughout the gathering. To the researcher, such gatherings are more like the waiting rooms in public spaces except for the fact that the participants

know each other and show consent to stay together in public. Thus, the category “passing time” is added to Table 3. The number of groups at each size and the distribution of groups according to the purpose of gathering is in Table 4.

Table 4 The distribution of groups according to the purpose of gathering

The type of the social gathering	Total number of groups	The number of chatting groups (non-instrumental)	The number of study groups (instrumental)	The number of passing time groups (non-instrumental)
Fully-focused	16	10	5	1
Partly-focused	6	3	2	1
Multi-focused	12	5	4	3

The large groups observed are mostly during the exam periods that there are no classes on campus. Other than the exam periods, it is not common to encounter large groups of more than 4 or 5 participants. Besides, in larger groups it is typical that there is a flow of participants; that is, there are often some participants joining and leaving the group, and some are back to the group while some have left for good, and some just pop by and leave. Such social gatherings are similar to Goffman’s description of face engagements in parties where participants are likely to leave the social front and interact with bystanders and also involve others in this interaction. Thus, in such social gatherings, it is possible to observe multiple face engagements around the same table that continue simultaneously and coincide with each other at times.

2.2.4 The Procedure

2.2.4.1 Data Collection

The researcher as a non-participant observer sitting in a public place on campus takes detailed observation notes to document the participants' behaviours and the incidents happening in face engagements with a special focus on their use of smartphone usage. Moreover, she takes memo concerning each group afterwards and also transfers some detailed notes she takes during engagements to her memo. She also notes down some possible conclusions that she reaches based on any observable verbal and non-verbal communication that participants display. With privacy concerns, she positions herself at a distance where she can observe the behaviours of the participants but cannot always see what they look at on their screens or hear what they say to each other. Rather she concentrates on observable distinctive communication behaviours that can make sense in terms of mobile phone use during face-to-face interactions. Still, in her memo, she notes down any observations of her related to the occasion and any typical features of participants together with verbal communication that she is able to hear or visible content on participants' screens. The notes include details such as;

- the details of date, time, location, and the duration of observation,
- the seating arrangement and gender of the participants (the researcher labels each participant as A, B, C, and so on and uses the same coding in the notes to refer to the individuals) and also the purpose of their gathering,
- the instances when the participants use their mobile phones and their purpose of using them,
- anything they read aloud or show from their mobile phones to other(s) and the reactions they receive from the other participants or the reactions that are not given to the participants,

- the conversation among the participants and/or the theme the conversation revolves around,
- whether participants look at the screens (own or others'), to each other or to something/someone else,
- the information regarding where the participants are keeping their mobile phones.

2.2.4.2 The Analysis

In order to outline the observable patterns of behaviour in face engagements where mobile phone use is integrated in real life settings, the researcher follows the procedure below:

1. The researcher reads through the notes and underlines/highlights instances of mobile phone use within the groups till she makes a list of commonly emerging behaviours of mobile phone use during face-to-face interactions.
2. The researcher initially creates 12 colour codes for each common behaviour of mobile phone use to specify the patterns of behaviour in face-to-face communication.
3. The researcher creates hard copy colour maps of each face-to-face interaction. Using the time noted during observations, the researcher shows the estimated intensity of patterns of interactions. The maps reflect the durations of activities based on the noted timing during observations. With the time indicated in the notes, it can be seen how intensely participants use their mobile phones individually without any contact with others, or how often they check their mobile phones during a conversation with others.
4. The researcher rereads the notes and recreates the colour maps already made for the second time without looking at the previous ones, and then she compares two versions of maps of the same interaction in order to minimize the errors in

maps. In the second versions, the errors detected are corrected. On these maps, the researcher adds any notes from her memos that are meaningful in the study. For samples of manually created colour maps, see Appendix A.

5. After the hard copy colour maps are transferred to the computer, the researcher compares the maps with the notes once again. While transferring and comparing the maps, 3 new colour codes are added to the list in order to show some patterns of behaviour which do not fit under the existing ones. As a result, 15 colour codes are identified.
6. The researcher lists the common working concepts that Goffman's conceptualisation of face engagements embraces. The concepts *single* and *with*, mutualness in face engagements, digital cross talk, and objects of involvement and involvement shields are included in the analysis to describe face engagements.
7. The common behaviours that match with the concepts of Goffman selected are listed as seen in Table 5. The concepts not included in Table 5 are analysed based on the emerging patterns of behaviours during face engagements.

Table 5 The colour codes for common behaviours of mobile phone use

Colour codes	Patterns of Behaviour	Goffman's concepts
	individual use of mobile phone without contact with others	involvement shield - single & with
		digital cross talk
	show/verbally share content from mobile phone	digital cross talk
	receive content from someone's mobile phone	digital cross talk
	talk on the mobile phone	digital cross talk
	look at screen together and talk about the content on the screen	digital cross talk
	responding to (verbally or physically) or talking to someone while using mobile phone	digital cross talk
	searching content on mobile phone raised in conversation	digital cross talk
	touching mobile phone habitually/ checking notifications on the mobile phone	digital cross talk
	look at someone's screen	digital cross talk
	speaking to someone without any contacts with mobile phones	face engagement - mutual contact
	non-digital activities ignoring verbal exchange	involvement shield - single & with
	one taking selfie or recording a video and others participating	objects of involvement
	using someone else's mobile phone to reach/check content	objects of involvement
	study and interact with others only for this purpose	face engagement - mutual contact
	use mobile phone as a tool/source to study	objects of involvement

2.2.5 The Results

Overall, the field observations reveal how face engagements today in the presence of smartphones and social media access has changed. The study initially demonstrates that in real-life communication practice, it is extremely rare to witness any face engagements without smartphone use. In other words, what Goffman identifies as participation unit which includes encounters, unengaged participants and bystanders has another component today; the smartphones. Regardless of the size of the groups and the purpose of gatherings, in all face engagements observed, the researcher observes a considerable amount of smartphone use but not even a single group without any smartphone use. In all groups the smartphones of participants are on the tables, in their hands or in their pockets (males mostly), which indicates that the participants prefer their mobile phones to be reachable, visible and by their sides at all times.

The observations reveal no significant results regarding gender differences in the pattern of behaviour in mobile phone use during face engagements in public spaces. Moreover, whether the face engagement is instrumental (study) or non-instrumental (chat) does not make a significant difference in the amount of smartphone use, nor does it show any alterations in the patterns of behaviour that participants display. One significant difference is found in two different non-instrumental activities which are chatting and passing time that the researcher differentiated in the study. While participants are observed to be taking the responsibility of the mutual interactions they initiated when they are together to chat in public spaces, the face gatherings appear to be *faceless* in groups where participants appear to come together in the same place to pass some time. In such gatherings, participants are observed to be mostly in the back stage avoiding verbal and even non-verbal interaction with others and seems to have gone into *the rabbit hole*, or their smartphones.

In all group sizes and categories of emerging patterns of behaviour identified, one of the most common behaviour, or rather a habit, is intermittent check of smartphones

during face engagements. The participants check notifications from different platforms, messages from different digital channels or simply time. No matter what the reason is, the participants' repeatedly checking their smartphones – turning on the screen, having a glimpse to the screen for a couple of seconds – is the major pattern of behaviour that emerges during observations. The majority of the participants look distracted by their own habitual smartphone checks, or they irresistibly lose eye contact with others or get detached from the interaction for a short time. This pervasive behaviour emerges both in instrumental and non-instrumental activities, at any moment of a face engagement, no matter what the performer or audience is doing at that time.

The memos that the researcher has taken regarding the field observations address to the use of social media platforms to the extent that the researcher is able to see the screens of the participants. According to the notes of the researcher, the most frequently used social media platforms when the participants prefer staying in groups but in isolation from others and conversely when they want to share some content with others are Instagram and YouTube. Moreover, it is noted that participants often text someone or read text messages that often they receive on WhatsApp. It is observed that the use of WhatsApp has the potential to compete with the most frequently used social media platforms.

Overall, the observations provide the researcher with some common patterns of behaviour in smartphone use that emerge in face-to-face interactions with respect to the structure of face engagements that Goffman conceptualises and the field observations reveal certain differences in concepts such as *single* and *with*, mutualness, digital cross-talk, objects of involvement and involvement shields that certainly influences the interaction ritual today.

2.2.5.1 *Single and With*

In public spaces, Goffman categorises human units as *singles* (the presence of an individual as one) and *withs* (the gathering of at least two individuals) both of which require the performers follow certain rules of interaction ritual. Being *single* in a public place makes individuals feel more vulnerable to the environment whereas *withs* feel more powerful in presence of others. In other words, *singles* intend to signal other individuals in public spaces the legitimatization of their presence through their behaviour. Accordingly, the *singles* tend to look for instruments that make them seem engaged and utilise magazines or newspapers, which indicate the public that they are engaged in an activity or have a legitimate reason to stay there on their own. This is what Goffman's shields of involvement in public spaces are for.

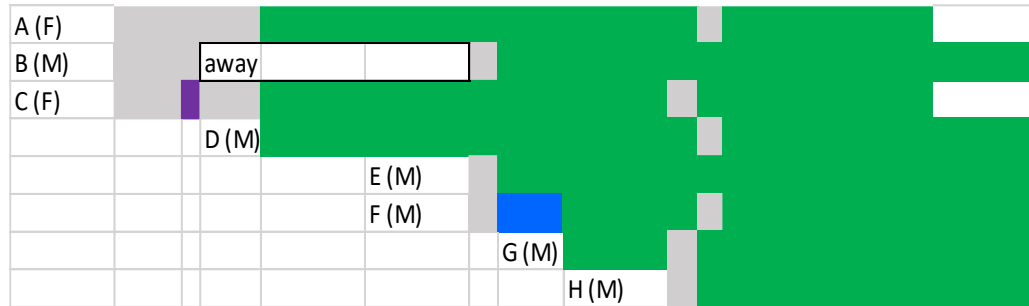
Regarding the aim of the study that concentrates on face encounters, or *withs*, the researcher does not collect data of singles in public spaces on campus. However, during the field observations it is recognised that newspapers and magazines, the shields of involvement that Goffman observed, are replaced with screens. *Singles* in public spaces on campus pervasively look at their screens. They occasionally look around possibly to check if there are anyone they know, and then they are back to their screens. The same pattern of behaviour emerges when a *with* temporarily leaves the face engagement (Table 6). In the absence of the *with*, her smartphone makes her seem engaged and busy in the eye of the public because one leaving for a while leaves her vulnerable and lonely in public, and from then on, this participant acts in the way that a *single* tends to act in public; she looks at her smartphone and touches the screens to show that she does something on it.

Table 6 A 33-minute fully-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation when the *with* leaves for a coffee



While such behaviour is predictable in fully-focused face engagement, the same pattern of behaviour is observed in a multi-focused face engagement where participants start using their smartphones individually in isolation from each other after one leaves the spot temporarily (Table 7). While three participants have a conversation, shortly after Participant B leaves temporarily, both participants start using their smartphones in isolation from each other and a new participant joins the social gathering and starts looking at his smartphone because Participant A and C ignore his arrival. Participant A turns her head and looks at him shortly, but says nothing. Then Participant D is into his smartphone.

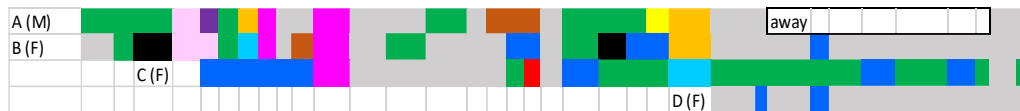
Table 7 A 23-minute multi-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from others and grey indicating verbal exchange when the *with* temporarily leaves



However, there is another sample of multi-focused face engagement where not all participants are engaged in their smartphones when one temporarily leaves (Table 8). The one who is using her smartphone is the one who starts using it before one participant leaves for a while, and staying in the rabbit hole, she either ignores or does

not notice the one leaving. The other two participants prefer talking or dealing with non-digital activities.

Table 8 A 23-minute multi-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from others, blue indicating non-digital activities and grey indicating verbal exchange when the *with* temporarily leaves



Consequently, the field observations show that smartphones play a significant role in the way that participants deal with being the *single* in public spaces. Smartphones also benefit participants whose *with(s)* leave the front stage for a while as they provide them an alternative engagement to curtain their temporary vulnerability in public. However, using smartphones when the *with* leaves is not reduced to curtaining one's vulnerability similar to newspapers and magazines that Goffman mentions because today in face engagements in public, it is observed that one participant leaving a multi-focused group does not ensure the ones who stay there to have mutual interactions with one another. Still, they may start using their smartphones in isolation from each other.

2.2.5.2 Mutualness in Face Engagements

A face engagement, or an encounter, constitute to the situation of at least two participants being engaged in a *mutual* activity that requires a sole focus of cognitive and visual attention among each other (Goffman, 1963, p. 89). In a face engagement, both verbal and non-verbal exchanges of messages that are constructed with this mutual cognitive and visual attention maintain communication, which is the core interaction ritual that is observable. In instances where participants lack or lose this mutual attention, "the breach in the mutual commitment of the participants" in Goffman's terms, is also the subject of the analysis. The field observations primarily enquire into the structure of face engagements in the presence of smartphones in public spaces. The

emerging patterns of smartphone behaviour in public spaces primarily show that Goffman's principle of mutualness does not appear to be one of the essentials of face engagements today due to the fact that every time a participant uses his/her smartphone, there occurs a shift from the front stage to the back stage or the other way around, which inevitably pushes the margins of disinvolvement of participants and violates the principle of mutualness. In other words, the field observations reveal that today participants experience numerous breaches in face engagements, and such breaches seem to be the fabric of the new interaction ritual.

Face engagements in the presence of smartphones display a different structure than that of Goffman's conceptualisation as the field observations show. The field observations initially demonstrate that today in public spaces it is almost impossible to witness a face engagement in the absence of smartphones. In all public spaces on campus where researcher collects data, smartphones are dominantly visible either on tables or in hands as the co-participants of all social gatherings. Goffman (1963) conceptualises a social gathering from a larger perspective and refers to the participation unit that involves both encounters and unengaged participants who have the potential to change the focus of encounters from fully-focused to partly-focused or multi-focused gatherings. Contrary to Goffman's classification of social gatherings as fully-focused, partly-focused and multi-focused, today regardless of the number of the participants in face engagements, the level of mutualness between participants do not show variations as participants show more or less the same patterns of smartphone behaviour; for instance, private smartphone use in isolation is observed not only in multi-focused gatherings but also in fully-focused gatherings where participants do not hesitate to break mutualness with the other participant who is the only audience. Moreover, the field observations do not reveal any significant results with respect to the purpose or motivation of social gatherings; for example, private smartphone use in isolation is observed in face engagements where participants come together not only to chat but

also to study or to pass some time. In the new interaction ritual, regardless of the purpose of the social gathering, smartphones intervene and participants pause their mutual commitment for interaction and also tolerate this intervention.

Smartphones in face encounters function as all-time accessible communication channels through which participants send or receive information throughout the social gatherings; hence, they interact with others who are like the invisible bystanders to the face engagement. Different from Goffman's description of a bystander who is present but not ratified to be a member of the gathering, the presence of smartphones is taken for granted. It is observed that smartphones are more commonly used for texting rather than for talking on the phone which is discussed under digital cross-talks below. The field observations reveal that participants make or receive phone calls primarily to communicate their location on campus or course-related information with peers. However, participants are observed texting mostly on WhatsApp in face engagements in public spaces.

The field observations also show that participants in public spaces occasionally use their smartphones both for very short periods of time checking notifications or else on their screens and for quite some time staying into their smartphones isolating themselves from the social gathering. Such intermittent smartphone checks and individual smartphone use in isolation are the most common patterns of behaviour observed, which signals the violation of the mutual agreement between the participants. The researcher documents 19 out of 34 face engagements where participants intermittently check their smartphones during verbal exchange mostly and few instances of such while other participant(s) are engaged in their smartphones or non-digital activities. The researcher also documents face engagements where there are few instances of verbal exchange but mostly or even entirely individual smartphone uses in isolation. To illustrate, a 22-minute multi-focused face engagement shows no instances of verbal exchange; five participants use their smartphones in isolation from each other

and one participant looking around, but they prefer staying together at the table in a café on campus (Table 9).

Table 9 A 22-minute multi-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from others and blue indicating non-digital activities



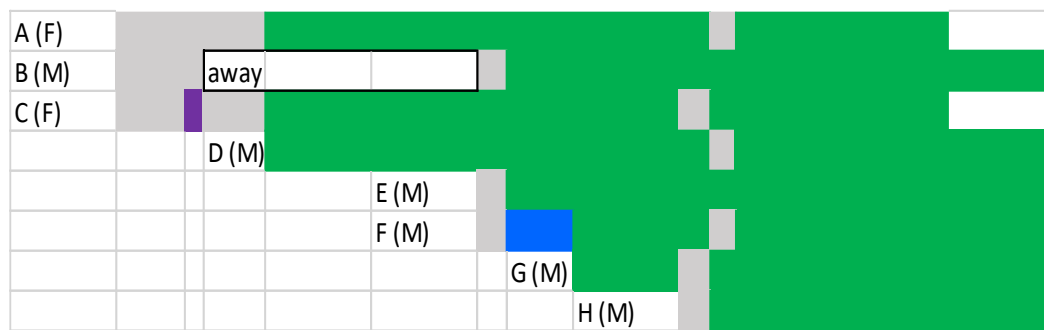
Another sample is documented in a sitting area of a building on campus where five participants spend 19 minutes together without any verbal exchange except for one instance of one participant showing content from his smartphone to another participant and both laughing. The participants are mostly into the *rabbit hole* looking at their screens in isolation, one participant first receives and then makes a phone call and two participants putting down their smartphones deal with something else (Table 10).

Table 10 A 19-minute multi-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from others, brown indicating searching for content, light blue indicating verbally sharing or showing content on screen and dark yellow indicating receiving it and blue indicating non-digital activities



Similarly, in a 23-minute multi-focused face engagement, the duration of verbal exchange is less than 10 minutes while they are into their smartphones in isolation from one another in the rest of the gathering (Table 11).

Table 11 A 23-minute multi-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from others, grey indicating verbal exchange and blue indicating non-digital activities



The researcher documents no verbal and non-verbal negative responses from any participants towards each other when they use their smartphones in social gatherings in public spaces or rather when they cause a breach in the mutual commitment that they are supposed to agree on. The participants do not leave the gathering either but prefer staying there together interacting with someone or something else on their screens. Thus, participants do not display any expectations for mutualness from each other, nor do they signal the *we-rationale* to each other or to the public eye.

The results of the field observations further demonstrate that during a conversation, participants commonly search information through their smartphones and carry the content they come up with to their conversation; they either verbally share the content or show their screens to other(s) and they look at the screen together and talk about or related to the content they look at. This new pattern of behaviour in public spaces refer to a new form of *mutualness* in face engagements. In other words, such exchange of content from digital platforms appear as mutual verbal or multimodal exchange that maintain interaction in the interaction ritual. Participants search or see some content worthy to share with other(s) on their smartphones in the middle of an ongoing verbal exchange, a study session, or while they are privately using their smartphones in

participants. Participants in public spaces often look at their screens but talk to their *with(s)*. They hardly look into each other’s eyes, but they have a conversation. To give an example, in the 17-minute partly-focused face engagement, the yellow areas that indicate looking at the screen and speaking to others show how participants are likely to do multitasking, which is another form of mutualness in the new interaction ritual today (Table 13).

Table 13 A 17-minute partly-focused face engagement – yellow areas indicating looking at screens and speaking to others (multitasking)



Goffman (1963) brings maintenance of eye-contact as one of the first conditions of engagements as it signals the mutualness or a working consensus among participants; however, in the presence of smartphones, eye-contact is frequently lost due to the pervasive use of smartphones during face engagements in public, which does not seem to make the *with(s)* uncomfortable though. In such a communication environment, participants appear to be using multitasking quite often, primarily looking at the screen and talking to the *with(s)* simultaneously, which appears to be the alternative signal of mutualness among participants today.

2.2.5.3 Digital Cross-Talk

Goffman (2019) addresses to the possibility of temporary talks to individuals who are bystanders out of the social gatherings where a conversation is held among the participants. He states that this kind of cross-talk could be an instance of asking an address while it can also be a chat in a party (p. 47). This means a conversation is likely to receive incoming messages from outsiders and at the same time send messages to outsiders; that is, a conversation is open to a cross-talk that may occur any time and

change the interaction patterns in a performance. In a performance in the social front, cross-talks occur in two different ways; one of the participants of a face engagement may decide to interact with a bystander or a passer-by temporarily and leave the front stage for a short time, or one of the participants of a face engagement may be temporarily driven away with an intruding message from a bystander or a passer-by. In some instances, the participant who is engaged in a cross-talk includes some other participants of the social gathering in this temporary interaction; for example, s/he may introduce the bystander or passer-by to the rest of the social encounter and after an exchange of back-channel cues like non-verbal gestures, the cross-talk may continue in private isolating the rest from the interaction, or the cross-talk may turn into a co-existing face engagement that includes some other participants too, and alternatively, it may evolve into a new face engagement where a new participant is involved if welcomed by the rest of the participants.

The field observations reveal that with the emergence of digital communication technologies, the bystander or passer-by in mediated communication in public is predominantly the smartphones that show their taken-for-granted existence in every performance in the social front. It is observed that the face engagements today are frequently intervened by digital cross-talks in different forms. The colour maps drawn indicate that face engagements today cannot be free of digital cross-talk interventions as no face-to-face interactions that involve only typical verbal and non-verbal exchange among interactants are observed in public spaces on campus. Participants in the social front start interacting with invisible bystanders that are available on their smartphones whenever they want to or whenever any bystanders of such want to reach them regardless of time and space. Thus, a cross-talk *mediated* face-to-face communication is even more frequent and observable than it was before. The results show no significant variation among the type of the social gatherings, nor does it indicate an accountable difference in the purpose of the gatherings; digital cross-talk emerge in

fully-focused, partly-focused and multi-focused social gatherings realised for chatting, studying or passing time. Moreover, the field observations reveal that participants in a face encounter are engaged in various forms of digital cross-talk such as phone calls in public, searching, sharing and receiving content, looking at smartphones and speaking to other(s), intermittent smartphone checks in face engagements, and looking at someone's screen (digital eavesdropping) in an ongoing social encounter where they gather to chat, to study or just to pass some time in a public space on campus.

2.2.5.3.1 Phone Calls in Face Encounters in Public

One of the first digital cross-talk that has emerged with the emergence of mobile phones in public spaces is the phone calls, both incoming and outgoing. The field observations show that the least common digital cross-talk today is the phone calls in public. In 34 face engagements observed, phone calls emerged in 14 face engagements where in total 20 phone calls are recorded. While 2 phone calls are the prior calls whose starting points are not observed by the researcher, 10 incoming and 8 outgoing calls are observed. Among 8 outgoing calls, 1 is unanswered and the caller takes her time to wait for the one she calls to answer but then puts her smartphone down; thus, the phone calls observed are 19 in total excluding the unanswered one. Among these 19 phone calls, 8 phone calls aim at communicating the location of the participant observed so that the one at the other end of the phone could meet him/her and the details about an exam that day or the exam room that they are supposed to be in; thus, they are very short calls that communicate the necessary information during the day on the campus. The phone calls observed can be categorised as private, collaborative, and semi-collaborative phone calls. Out of 19 phone calls 14 phone calls are private cross-talks that exclude the *withs*, and 1 phone call is collaborative in the sense that the one speaking on the phone creates a communication channel between the *with* and the one at the other end of the phone. Among 4 phone calls which can be considered as semi-collaborative cross-talks, in 2 cases, the participants on the phone interact with the

withs using non-verbal communication which makes the face engagements a cross-talk for the ones at the other end of the phone at times, and in 1 case two participants decide to call someone and ask something, and one of them does while the other looks around waiting for the answer, and in the last case while the participant speaks on the phone, the *with* watches and listens to her, which creates no unease on the side of the participant talking on the phone.

2.2.5.3.2 Looking at Own Screen in Isolation from Others

Similar to having a private conversation with a bystander or by-passer, private smartphone use in isolation from other *withs* is one of the most common form of a digital cross-talk today. Participants in face engagements, as the study reveals, frequently leave the social front and start interacting with digital platforms in presence of others. It is observed that in public spaces, participants are into their smartphones in two different ways. One is that they are observed to be excluding themselves from the rest of the group as long as they look at their screens; in other words, the smartphones function as *involvement shields* in Goffman's terms behind which participants hide, which needs to be evaluated separately. The second way that can be considered as a form of cross-talk is the use of smartphones privately during an ongoing face engagement for short periods of time. It is observed that participants frequently prefer leaving the social front and getting engaged in digital cross-talks.

In a 55-minute partly-focused face engagement where participants study at a café on campus, it is observed that short private digital cross-talks through smartphones intervene verbal exchange among the participants at the beginning of the gathering observed and later the period of studying together is interrupted due to Participant B and Participant C's private digital cross-talks (Table 14).

Table 14 Partly-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from other participants and light pink areas indicating studying



Similarly, during another 40-minute partly-focused gathering where participants chat at a café on campus, Participant A is engaged in private digital cross-talks that make him leave the social front while the two other participants are engaged in a verbal conversation. Towards the end of the observation, all participants lose their interest in the face engagement and end the conversation which is replaced by other activities, private digital cross-talk and simultaneous verbal exchange looking at screens, and finally all participants prefer staying out of the social front despite staying in the same physical environment (Table 15).

Table 15 Partly-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from other participants, blue indicating other non-digital activities ignoring verbal exchange, and yellow indicating looking at screens and speaking simultaneously



In a fully-focused 5-minute chat on the shuttle, Participant A is engaged in a private digital cross-talk that intervenes a verbal exchange and later when she receives no response to her verbal message as Participant B remains unresponsive and keeps looking out of the window she goes back to her smartphone (Table 16).

Table 16 Fully-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from other participants, blue indicating other non-digital activities ignoring verbal exchange



The observations reveal that face engagements today involve frequent private digital cross-talks that make participants leave the social front no matter what type of social gathering they are in. Through the smartphones that participants hold close at all times, the digital platforms are always active and open the channels to participants to cross-talk any time that they want to. Besides, it is observed that such cross-talks are taken for granted and appear to be part of a regular face engagement.

2.2.5.3.3 Searching, Sharing and Receiving Content

The field observations also demonstrate that phone calls are not the only digital cross-talks that occur during face engagements. The digital cross-talks today are observed to be intervening and changing both the flow of participants between the front and the back stages and the performance in the social front occasionally. Beside phone calls in public, participants in ongoing face engagements often search for content that arises from the conversation, show or verbally report content from digital platforms and *withs* look at or listen to the content transmitted, start looking at the same screen and talk about the content they see on the screen. The study demonstrates that today there are four common patterns of behaviour that digital cross-talk emerges in public spaces: (1) quest of content: a participant starts searching for content that arises from an ongoing conversation, shows or reports it to other(s) who look(s) at the content on the screen or listen(s) to the reported content, (2) exchange of content: a participant looks at his/her smartphone, sees some content, shows or reports it to other(s) who look at the content on the screen or listen to the reported content, (3) collective consumption

of content: a participant starts searching for content that arises from an ongoing conversation or looks at his/her smartphone and sees some content, shows or reports it to other(s) who look at the content on the screen or listen to the reported content, then the sharer and receivers look at the same screen together, (4) content out of the rabbit hole: a participant uses his/her smartphone in isolation from *withs*, shows or reports some content to other(s) who look(s) at the screen or listen(s) to the reported content.

2.2.5.3.4 Looking at Smartphones and Speaking to Other(s)

Moreover, multitasking appears to be another form of digital cross-talk during face engagements. The researcher noted down participants who seem to be engaged in their screens are not entirely isolated from *with(s)*, but they commonly check the flow of conversations with glimpses that they give other(s) speaking at the same time. When they decide to come back to the front performance, participants often respond to the *with(s)* while they are engaged in digital platforms on their smartphones. In such a case, the participant is engaged in a cross-talk with a digital platform while he/she intends to maintain the conversation with the *with(s)*. The face engagement is even more complicated today with the other participants who are also engaged in cross-talks over their smartphones but respond to each other. In a fully-focused 27-minute face engagement at a café on campus, frequent instances of such multitasking (yellow areas), a new form of digital cross-talks, show that participants tend to speak to the *with* without maintaining eye-contact with him/her but looking at the screens. As the example below shows, it is also possible that both participants look at their screens but talk to each other simultaneously (Table 17).

Table 17 Fully-focused face engagement – yellow areas indicating looking at screens and speaking simultaneously, grey indicating verbal exchange



Similarly, a 17-minute partly-focused face engagement demonstrates how participants talk to each other with no eye-contact; during the majority of their meeting time, they are either in private digital cross-talks in isolation or speak to each other while looking at their screens (Table 18).

Table 18 Partly-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from other participants and yellow indicating looking at screens and speaking simultaneously



The study also displays that the utterances of participants remain unanswered at times; the participant who is addressed to is also engaged in his/her smartphone or deals with something else like looking around, looking out of the window, drinking coffee, smoking, playing with or examining a leaflet, etc. An example to such indifference is that in a 5-minute fully-focused social gathering at a café on campus, while two participants study, Participant A is not responsive to the verbal exchanges of Participant B; while Participant A is into her smartphone, Participant B's looking at her smartphone and talking to the with but receives no responses, then Participant B shows content from her smartphone and Participant A receives. Then, Participant A shares content with Participant B, which lead them to look at the screen together and talk about the content (Table 19).

Table 19 Fully-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from other participants, yellow indicating looking at screens and speaking simultaneously and pink indicating looking at the screen together



The researcher in such instances carefully examines whether the addresser shows a reaction to the *with(s)* not responding or even ignoring the message directed to them. It is observed that none of the participants show any negative reactions against someone ignoring their utterances or even repeating their messages in case they are not heard.

Different from having a cross-talk with a bystander or by-passer that brings the participant the responsibility to decide on the duration of cross-talk and whether he should engage the *withs* to the cross-talk, today participants have the opportunity to keep their digital cross-talks entirely private but intend to save their faces and the maintain the social norms that urge the participants save the face of the *withs*. The researcher observes no negative reactions in any type of social gatherings when such digital cross-talks emerge. On the contrary, the participants observed show tolerance to one another or ignore their unanswered interactions in cases where participants engaged in digital cross-talks fail to respond to the other(s) despite their intention to achieve multitasking.

2.2.5.3.5 Intermittent Smartphone Checks in Face Engagements

Another form of digital cross-talk observed is the automatic intermittent smartphone checks that participants seem to do during an ongoing face engagement. During all face engagements that the researcher observes, no matter what type of social gathering it is, participants seem to be habitually checking their smartphones at all times, and such checks seem to be taken for granted in face engagements in public spaces, which is why participants show no negative reactions to one another.

It is observed that such very short cross-talks also has the potential to take the participants away from the social front; that is, the digital cross-talks observed mostly cause the *withs* to go into their smartphones, which cause others to pause the face engagement and be engaged in alternative cross-talks through their smartphones. To illustrate, in a 5-minute fully-focused face engagement where participants chat on the

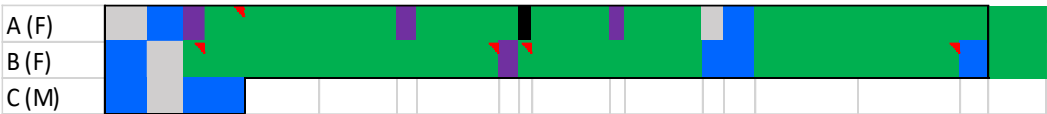
shuttle, a verbal conversation is interrupted by an intermittent smartphone check (purple area) that causes Participant A to stay on her smartphone and get involved in an interaction with digital platforms (green area), which leaves Participant B alone and causes him to deal with something else (Table 20).

Table 20 Fully-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from other participants, purple indicating intermittent smartphone check, and blue indicating other non-digital activities



Another example is a 30-minute face encounter that starts as a partly-focused one but continues as a fully-focused social gathering at a café on campus. Participants sit and pass some time but have no significant intention to build a verbal exchange. Once Participant A checks her smartphone, she prefers staying in it, and every time she intends to leave it down, she is attracted by another intermittent check and stays in another long-term digital cross-talk. Participant B is not much more different than her, in fact (Table 21).

Table 21 Partly-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from other participants and purple indicating intermittent smartphone check



In a 16-minute fully-focused face encounter where participants study at a café on campus, once Participant A checks his smartphone, he stays in it and continues his engagement in a cross-talk (Table 22).

Table 22 Fully-focused face engagement – green areas indicating screen engagement in isolation from other participants, purple indicating intermittent smartphone check, and light pink indicating studying



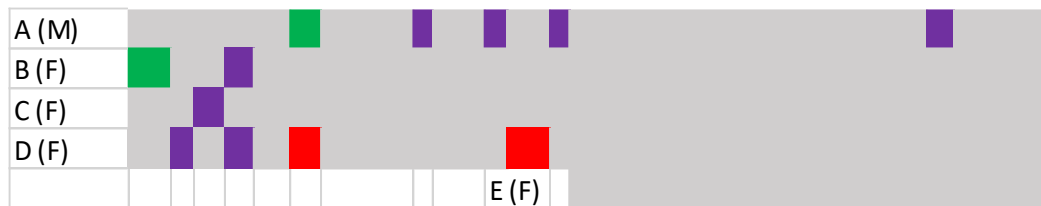
Another finding indicates that such intermittent smartphone checks trigger other participants to check their smartphones. The 9-minute fully-focused face engagement where participants chat on the shuttle is a typical example for such a digital cross-talk that goes like a seesaw. Every time Participant A checks her smartphone during the conversation, Participant B seems he cannot resist checking his smartphone, which may indicate the triggering effect of intermittent smartphone check in face engagements today. The same repeated smartphone checks occur towards the end when both are engaged in non-digital activities but cannot resist smartphone checks occasionally (Table 23).

Table 23 Fully-focused face engagement – purple areas indicating intermittent smartphone check, grey indicating verbal exchange, and blue indicating non-digital activities



The 23-minute multi-focused face engagement where participants chat in an open-air sitting area on campus also shows how such digital cross-talks spread among participants once one does as the colour map below demonstrates. This face engagement is one of the rare samples where participants are mostly engaged in verbal exchange and use smartphones rarely. (Table 24).

Table 24 Multi-focused face engagement – purple areas indicating intermittent smartphone check and grey indicating verbal exchange



The purple areas that indicate intermittent smartphone checks demonstrate how participants are influenced from one another and once one participant checks her mobile phone, the other cannot resist doing the same check, which means the digital cross-talk of this kind has the potential to make participants repeat the same intervention over and over. Moreover, it is observed that participants do not always check their smartphones when they see a notification on their screens. On the contrary, the majority of cross-talks as such are observed to be automatic rather than being a response to a notification coming from the device.

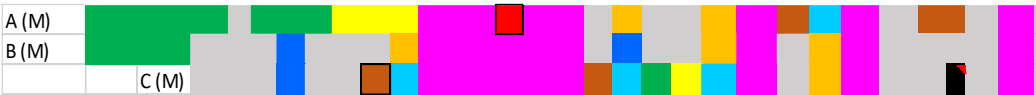
2.2.5.3.6 Looking at Someone's Screen (Digital Eavesdropping)

Goffman (1963) refers to bystanders as the civil inattention designed for encounters and points out that bystanders intend to give the impression that they respect the encounters and do not overhear the conversation going on, which is not easy to observe how much eavesdropping is done in what kind of the situations (p.156). The study demonstrates that the face encounters today have a new form of eavesdropping that is more observable in addition to the one that Goffman examines. While smartphones function as new bystanders and by-passers as they give participants the opportunity to interact with leaving the social front and the audience, they at the same time become the target of the civil attention. It is observed that when the screens that participants hold become open channels through which they interact with outsiders, the *withs* may fall into the position of eavesdropping. The observations reveal that encounters

sometimes tend to look at their *withs*’ screens when they are engaged in digital cross-talks at times. In total 14 instances of digital eavesdropping during the field observations are recorded.

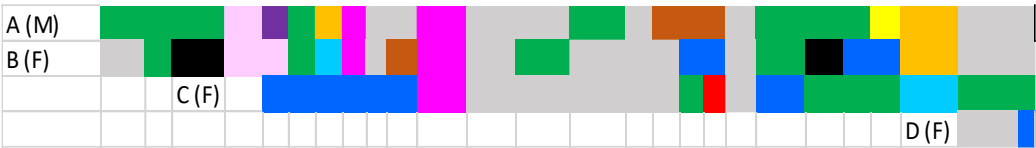
In a 42-minute partly-focused face engagement, for example, it is observed that Participant C looks at Participant A’s screen while he searches some content during an ongoing conversation (Table 25).

Table 25 Partly-focused face engagement – black area indicating looking at other participant’s screen and brown indicating searching some content



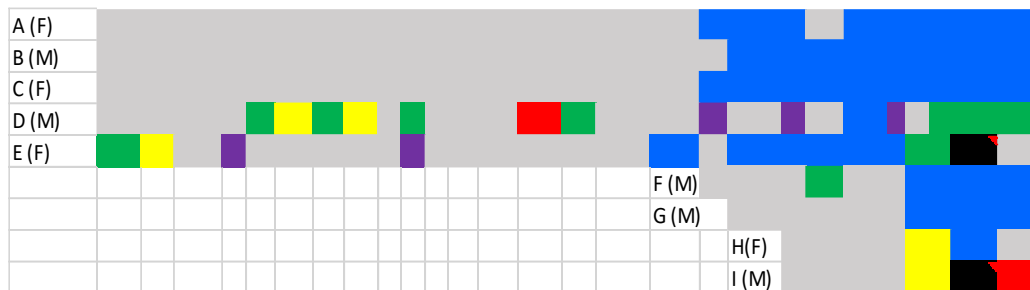
In a 33-minute multi-focused face engagement, Participant B tends to look at her *withs*’ screens when they are engaged in private digital cross-talks (Table 26).

Table 26 Multi-focused face engagement – black area indicating looking at other participant’s screen and green indicating screen engagement in isolation from other participants



In another multi-focused face engagement, Participant E and Participant I tend to look at Participant D’s screen when he is in a private digital cross-talk (Table 27).

Table 27 Multi-focused face engagement – black area indicating looking at other participant’s screen and green indicating screen engagement in isolation from other participants



The instances of digital eavesdropping, contrary to Goffman’s observations, are detectable and the encounters who become the bystander to their *withs*’ digital cross-talks are not observed to display inattention, nor did any of the participant demonstrate visible signs of discomfort or efforts to hide their screens.

2.2.5.4 Objects of Involvement and Involvement Shields

Goffman (1963) asserts that the participant’s body, the physical being, is the central object that indicates his/her involvement. He adds that any objects associated with the physical being of the participant is also the object of involvement. Then, with objects like clothing, accessorize or books, newspapers, magazines that they carry with them, participants show the degree of their involvement to the audience. As the field observations show, smartphones go beyond an association with physical beings of participants in face engagements; rather they appear to be extensions of their bodies that they keep as close as possible. Goffman (1963) observes that instances auto-involvements like eating, dozing, cleaning nails in the presence of others are considered as improper as they cause distraction from the dominating involvement that participants have a mutual commitment to. However, the field observations reveal that participants in public spaces today use their smartphones as objects of involvement, and all face engagements observed are distracted from their dominating involvements like chatting

or studying due to auto-involvements in Goffman's terms. Contrary to Goffman's evaluation, the researcher documents no signs of perceiving such instances of auto-involvements as inappropriacy on the side of the participants, nor are any reactions and observed, such auto-involvements are treated as natural instances of face engagements. Goffman differentiates auto-involvements from *away*, "inward emigration," which are activities that participants develop in order to cover their intention to turn their attention away from the dominating involvement and take some time to stay alone in their world of phantasy. As the field observations indicate that using smartphones in isolation from other participants is the most common behaviour in face engagements in public, this activity can be evaluated as not only an auto-involvement but also a tool for an inward emigration.

The field observations reveal that smartphones as objects of involvement in public spaces function as shields of involvement. Participants mostly conceal their intention for auto-involvement or inward emigration which is considered as inappropriacy with their taken-for-granted smartphone engagements. Smartphones have replaced kindly asking for permission to go to the bathroom during a face engagement in a way; they are the new shields of involvement in the new interaction ritual. They are in fact more functional than Goffman's shields of involvement because they allow participants to remain in the shared space but make other participants accept that they prefer staying in the back stage for some time, and also eavesdrop the conversation and decide to come back to the social front when they want to. From this perspective, with the smartphones present in public spaces, participants have the power to take the initiative to interact with others or not. They take this initiative comfortably because as the field observations reveal, participants enjoy this comfort and tolerate one another; thus, the norms of face engagements in the presence of smartphones appear to have been reconstructed.

2.2.6 Implications

The field observations verify the everyday observation of individuals in public space. Today in everyday practices, it is rare to encounter a face engagement in the absence of smartphones. One can see them either on tables or in the hands of the interactants demanding their attention at times. Thus, they are like extension of their bodies, and organic component of face engagements. The study demonstrates that when *single*, the first thing that interactants in the new interaction ritual hold on to is the smartphones in public space. Thus, the study suggests that smartphones have replaced the newspapers and magazines that *singles* hide their vulnerability behind in Goffman's interaction ritual. The role of smartphones in face engagements for *with(s)* is not less important. Another everyday observation of individuals is also documented in the study. Interactants, either *single* or *with*, intermittently check their screens in public space. It seems like a habitual action. Such checks in social gatherings have a chain effect on interactants; short after one checks the screen, the *with(s)* do the same thing. It is like one yawning after the other, or when one lights a cigarette, another one does so.

The digital content obtained from smartphones actively moves among interactants as the field observations reveal. They are often in a quest of content; they either take their smartphones suddenly and start looking for something or take their smartphones and start searching something as a continuation of their conversational engagements. Then the content obtained is circulated among interactants also leading one showing content to another interactant who may also find some other content and show it to the other, so it is common that an exchange of content takes place in face engagements. Moreover, interactants collectively consume digital content often looking at the screen together. It is also common that interactants in the rabbit hole seem to come back to the front stage/region with a digital content to share with others. Then, they are either back

to the rabbit hole after looking at it together shortly or get involved in the conversational engagement.

The face engagements display a more fluid nature in the new interaction ritual. For an observer, the patterns of interaction in the front performance are rather complicated, and it is challenging to distinguish the front performances from the smartphone/social media use interventions. The participants experience shifts between the front and back stages/regions, and the smartphones and digital platforms, the bystanders of the new interaction ritual, become central participants in face engagements and create constant shifts from one stage/region to another, which makes both the boundaries between the social front and the back stage and the interactants ambiguous.

Contrary to Goffman's conceptualisation of the signals of inattention to the other, verbal or non-verbal as derogation which disrupts the dynamics of the interaction ritual, cross-talks, which are one of such disruptions, function as stations in the flow of conversations that trigger or give direction to interactions. The cross-talks are actually embedded in conversational engagements and normalized to the extent that no participants in public space react against them. The observations in the study significantly demonstrate that in public space, interactants display no negative reactions or corrective behaviour that intend to warn the *withs(s)* to quit using their smartphones. Thus, it can be concluded that the new interaction ritual does not require significant expectations for mutualness among the interactants, nor does it urge the interactants to establish the *we-rationale* in public space, which at the same time indicates that the codes of conduct in the new interaction ritual vary from that of Goffman's.

In Goffman's interaction ritual, cross-talks are bound to outsiders who decide to get involved in a face engagement for a short period of time when they relate an interactant or the topic of conversation that they overhear/eavesdrop to their very existence in the public space. As opposed to an outsider's involvement in a face engagement, an

interactant may also see an outsider and relate them to their very existence there and leave the front stage/region for a short time and then come back. With emergence of mobile phone technology, phone calls in public space have brought a new form of cross-talks to the public space. In the new interaction ritual embracing both mobile and wireless digital technologies, on the contrary, cross-talks are not bound to a bystander or by-passer, or rather the bystander or passer-by can be invisible to the public as they might get involved in a face engagement through WhatsApp or direct messaging, a comment or a like for a post; in other words, they may pop in a face engagement any minute through a notification appearing on the screen or a screen check that interactants cannot resist in public space. It is not the only digital cross-talk when an interactant makes or receives a phone call in public space, but cross-talks come in the forms of screen checks, rabbit holes, content searches and exchanges, simultaneous screen and conversational engagements, and digital eavesdropping, some of which might engage them longer than expected. Thus, cross-talks of such forms carry the potential to take interactants away from the front stage/region for a long time that cause constant breaches in face engagements. Every time an interactant is involved in one of these patterns of behaviour, there is a bystander or passer-by invisible to others. Thus, the working consensus in the new interaction ritual is likely to be disrupted contrary to Goffman's conceptualisation of social order that is bound to the balance among the participants which depends on the knowledge of social expectations from both oneself and others; however, the study documents no discomfort upon this occasional loss of balance. In other words, the social order in the new interaction order seems to lie in the balance of acceptance of the interference of digital content in face engagements; when almost everyone is or ready to be engaged in screens, it eventually becomes the new normal.

The study demonstrates no significant changes in the patterns of behaviour based on the number of interactants in face engagements in the new interaction ritual; the

interactants are not hesitant to be engaged in screens in any ways in fully-, partly- and multi-focused gatherings. Thus, the requirements of gatherings have changed, and so do the norms and codes of conduct.

Based on the results of the study, it can be argued that the face encounter in the digital age includes additional participants which are the smartphones of participants; that is, any participant (P) taking place in the social front of a face engagement is with his/her smartphones (P'). In other words, every interactant with a smartphone is both an interactant in the front stage/region and a potential bystander or passer-by bearer. The fact that smartphones are predominantly kept on the table or in hands during face engagements, interactants prefer keeping the P' as close to them as possible.

Smartphones appear to be the *negotiators* in case of *the breach in the mutual commitment of the participants* in the new interaction ritual since no negative verbal or non-verbal responses to the use of smartphones in public have been observed in the study. Rather participants seem to be taking it for granted, and it is the 'new normal' in face encounters. Goffman (1963) outlines the assets of engagement as maintenance of eye-contact, monitoring one another's mutual perceptions, concentration on the same subject matter and the participant, tolerance for shifts in the focus of attention from one subject matter to another or from one participant to another within certain limits, agreement upon relevancies and irrelevancies and finally "a working consensus" that requires mutual respect, sympathy and silent acceptance of differences in opinions, which contributes to the establishment of "we-rationale" (pp. 95-96). However, the results of the field observations reveal that today the new interaction ritual does not require participants to come to terms with Goffman's conceptualisation of engagement. The constant shifts from the front stage to the back stage or any violation of the principle of mutualness appears to create no discomfort on the side of the audience, nor do they result in embarrassment on the side of the performer who transgresses the *margins of disinvolvement*. Moreover, content from smartphones is

observed to take an active role in conversational engagements in the sense that once some content is carried into conversational engagements, it circulates around the interactants and dominates the performance in the front stage/region. Interactants show their screen to others, look at each other's or the same screens together, search for content, and talk about the content they are exposed to. In this way, the content circulated is embedded in the conversational exchange, which flows in a natural way without any hesitations or discomfort. While discussing that mutualness is not maintained in the new interaction ritual, it is also crucial to note that this new pattern of behaviour in public spaces, the consensus in the interference and consumption of digital content, refers to a new form of *mutualness* in face engagements. It is observed that there is a mutual consensus on the availability of smartphones and digital content to be utilised in face engagements, and this is the new social order that differs from Goffman's.

As Goffman (1963) explains, the collective sense of being part of a group doing the same thing, or developing the *we-rationale*, requires minor ceremonies in face engagements to signal the termination of the engagement, entrance and departure of interactants, and it is the social and moral responsibility of interactants to hold these ceremonies to assure that they are in *line*. The observations demonstrate that in the new interaction ritual interactants do not seem to carry this responsibility, nor do they display any signs of concerns for staying in *line* since specifically in partly- and multi-focused gatherings, it is common that interactants show no signs of engagement when they use their smartphones in isolation from others for a considerable amount of time. Furthermore, they do not feel the responsibility to signal their arrival or departure from the engagement, and there seems to be a working consensus on this new social norm as no patterns of behaviour showing discomfort is observed in public space.

2.3 Step 2 – Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews

2.3.1 Sampling

Similar to the first stage of the study where the researcher conducts non-participant field observations on campus, she uses convenience sampling (also called accidental sampling or grab sampling) for the semi-structured in-depth interviews as the second step of the study. As the research does not require a specific population with certain features, being an undergraduate student who actively uses a smartphone and social media in the daily routine in public spaces makes a candidate an appropriate participant.

2.3.2 Data Tools & Sources

The researcher focuses on the actual experiences of social media use of participants in the public space in the second step of the study in order that comprehensible data to track Goffman's "interaction ritual" in the digital age would be obtained. During the field observations she often witnesses young people using social media, primarily Instagram, and texting on WhatsApp in face engagements and the memos that she keeps for each observation on campus address to the use of social media. The observations demonstrate the new patterns of behaviour during face-to-face interactions which requires an in-depth exploration of the social media practices of participants in the public space. Thus, in the second step of the study, the researcher aims at reaching data that tell her what participants actually do on social media and how face engagements are influenced by the use of social media embedded in the new patterns of behaviour in the new interaction ritual.

The researcher initially prepares a short survey to be delivered to the participants before the interviews. The survey aims at collecting demographic data and also data regarding their approach to using social media through their mobile phones during face-to-face communication. For the interview, open-ended questions are prepared to enable the participants reveal more of their thoughts, feelings and ideas. The interviews are

designed as semi-structured, which means all participants are addressed the same questions, but in order to enable the participants to elaborate more some additional questions are also put to reach any meaningful data in the study.

2.3.3 Demographics and the Research Setting

In total 25 in-depth interviews are held with voluntary undergraduate students between 26th October 2018 and 25th April 2019 on two campuses of Istanbul Bilgi University. The participants are randomly selected among the undergraduate students who use smart phones actively in their daily routines. Being an instructor at the same university, the researcher is careful about selecting participants who she has never met and taught before, so all participants are the ones who she meets on the interview day in person. As the researcher teaches at the department of advertising in the same university, 3 participants from the department of advertising who take part in the study are the ones who have been exempt from the course that the researcher is teaching.

The researcher reaches the participants via e-mail through her colleagues', present and former students' references, and also some participants who have already participated in the interviews and offered help to the researcher find volunteers. All participants are given an informed consent form to be signed where they agree to participate in the study on condition that their identities and responses are kept confidential (see Appendix C for the form). Also, the whole interviews are (video) recorded upon the consent of the participant. 13 male and 12 female students participate in the study. The classification of participants' year of birth by gender can be seen in Table 28.

Table 28 Participants' year of birth by gender

Year of Birth	The number of participants	The number of male participants	The number of female participants
1994	3	3	-
1996	5	2	3
1997	6	3	3
1998	7	3	4
1999	2	1	1
2000	2	1	1

All 25 participants use smartphones and they are active social media users. 21 out of 25 participants always have Internet connection on campus while only 4 of them not always have Internet connection. According to the short survey delivered before the interviews, the most popular social media platforms among the participants are Instagram and YouTube, and Twitter follows them as the third one. The survey shows that Facebook and Snapchat are the least popular platforms that are listed in the survey. Table 29 shows the frequency of the social media platforms that are used by the participants.

Table 29 The frequency of the social media platforms used by the participants

Social media platforms	The number of participants				
	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Always
Instagram	1	2	3	9	10
Twitter	8	3	3	7	4
Snapchat	13	9	2	-	1
Facebook	11	9	3	1	1
YouTube	-	2	4	9	10
Other(s) Pinterest	-	-	1	-	-
Other(s) Tumblr	-	3	-	-	-
Other(s) WhatsApp	-	-	1	2	2
Other(s) Spotify	-	-	-	1	-
Other(s) Twitch	-	-	-	1	1
Other(s) Reddit	-	-	-	-	1

The participants are also addressed the question how often they access to their social media accounts during face-to-face interactions in order to obtain some information regarding their self-evaluation of social media use during face-to-face interactions. The results of the survey are seen in Table 30.

Table 30 The frequency of participants' use of social media during face-to-face communication

Number of participants	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
25	3	12	8	2	-

The results show that 48% of the participants claim that they *rarely* use social media during face-to-face interactions, and 32% state that they *sometimes* use social media. 12% of the participants claim that they never use social media during face-to-face interactions. Only 8% admit using social media *often* while none of them state that they use it *always* during face-to-face interactions.

The researcher holds and records one-to-one interviews that have lasted 25 hours and 51 minutes in total. Although the participants are addressed the same questions, the duration of the interviews held ranges between 34 and 115 minutes depending on the participants' responses because some tend to explain and elaborate their answers more and intend to give a variety of examples. The researcher lets them talk as long as they are on the same track considering that what they express enriches the data. As the participants agree to be recorded on the informed consent that they sign before the interviews, the researcher video-records the interviews with the concern that the paralinguistic responses (gestures, body language) can be missed if their sounds are recorded only. However, while 23 participants give consent for the video-recording, 2 of them allow the researcher to record their sounds only. The researcher uses a video camera to record these 2 participants' interviews, but their faces are out of the frame during the recordings. In these two recordings, no non-verbal communication clues are included, yet this does not influence the data as the transcripts demonstrate.

2.3.4 The Procedure

2.3.4.1 Data Collection

The researcher prepares standard interview questions that are also peer-reviewed and revised by the thesis monitoring committee. In total 21 questions are agreed upon. The interviews are piloted with 2 undergraduate students (1 male and 1 female) at Bahçeşehir University upon the permission of Elif Canan Onat, the head of the department of modern languages. The pilot interviews show that the standard questions function well with participants and lead the researcher to add some more elaboration questions. The interview questions that are finalised after piloting can be seen in Appendix B.

The researcher, as an instructor in Istanbul Bilgi University, inform her colleagues and present and former students about the study and ask them if they can open a communication channel with students from different departments who can voluntarily participate in the interviews to be conducted. Some colleagues inform their students about the study and forward the e-mail addresses of the ones who agree to participate to the researcher. Some colleagues invite the researcher to their classes where she can inform students about the study and take the e-mails of the ones who agree to be part of the study. Moreover, the researcher announces in her classes that she needs some voluntary students for her study. Some students of the researcher contact their friends who they think they could be happily taking part in interviews. They forward the e-mail addresses of the ones who agree to participate to the researcher. One alternative communication channel through which the researcher can reach prospective participants is opened by some participants who have taken part in the interviews during the process. After their interviews are conducted, some participants kindly offer the researcher help to find other participants. They ask their friends and contact the researcher afterwards and give her some e-mail addresses of friends who also agree to participate in the study. Thus, finding interview participants does not become an issue

for the researcher thanks to colleagues and students at Istanbul Bilgi University who are all extremely positive towards the study and eager to help the researcher.

The researcher contacts the volunteers via e-mail and inform them about the aim of the study, duration and content of the interviews. When the final decisions of the volunteers are positive, they agree on an interview date and time so that the researcher could reserve one empty room on one of the campuses of the university that participants prefer. All interviews are held on campus in these rooms.

The participants are first given the informed consent and the short survey, which can be seen Appendix C. They read the document and state that they agree and sign it. Then they answer the survey. After the survey completion, the researcher starts the interviews and either took sound or video recording of the participants' responses upon their consent. Whereas the researcher obtains personal information of all participants (name and surname, department, year of birth, phone numbers, e-mails), no names are mentioned during interviews and the recordings are coded as Participant 1 (P1), Participant 2 (P2), Participant 3 (P3), and so on for confidentiality.

The recordings are saved on the computer, and the researcher transcribes each recording word by word. No transcription software is used for transcription, nor does the researcher assign any other professionals to transcribe the interviews considering the fact that the transcription enables a researcher to get familiarised with the data during this process and also master the whole data, which definitely contributes to the researcher's ability to analyse the data. Each recording is transcribed and saved as Word documents separately. All transcripts are printed out ready for the analysis.

2.3.4.2 The Analysis

The aim of the study at the same time determines the method of analysis. Since the study intends to explore whether and how Goffman's conceptualisation of interaction ritual is transformed in public space today where individuals interact with each other

while intermittently interacting with social media platforms and also bring what they are exposed to on social media platforms to their face engagements, thematic analysis emerges as the ideal method because it is “a way of seeing” the patterns that emerge in qualitative data that “at maximum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon” (Boyatzis, 1998, p.4). Thematic analysis is in fact encoding the qualitative data in order that meaningful patterns are seen and interpreted. In simple terms, Saldaña (2015) describes a code as “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p.3). In the study, the main purpose is to *see* how these single codes construct a picture of reality present in the qualitative data and how different aspects of the data interact and/or intersect with each other in order to help the researcher make sense of the new communication environment.

The interview transcripts are first processed in order that thematic analysis could be made through creating data-driven codes. The researcher followed the 5-step process of developing coding: “(a) reducing the raw information, (b) identifying themes within subsamples, (c) comparing themes across subsamples, (d) creating a code, and (e) determining the reliability of the code” (Boyatzis, 1998, p.45). To complete this process, the researcher completes the following steps:

1. The researcher randomly chooses 3 transcripts and reads through each transcript that she transcribes from the recordings herself several times until she is sure that she feels confident that she gets fully familiarised with the data.
2. The researcher highlights words, phrases, chunks, and clauses that are meaningful in the study concerning the research questions. She highlights the phrases such as “when alone more,” “addiction” and “curious” because these phrases communicate the frequency, time, place, purpose, motivation, and so on of social media use during the day.

3. Next to the highlighted parts, the researcher notes down descriptive codes to summarise the main topic of the excerpt in the transcript, the examples of which are presented in Table 31.

Table 31 Samples of descriptive codes used in the transcripts

SM use in FTF Reason for no SM use in FTF	P5: For example... I always mention Instagram but... it's because I use it most... I don't do explore anywhere or when I have company because when I get there I am totally distracted. I notice none of the things spoken there then. So, I don't use it.
Interest in what others look at on SM Reaction to SM use in FTF	R: In such a situation would you be curious about what interests them on social media? P14: No, because everybody is attracted to something different, I don't think that what attracts him would also attract me. R: Would you not want to have a look at it? P14: Well, if he doesn't listen to me at all, I say what... I say what are you doing, what's so important there, what is it that is much more important than we talk here? But I don't say dude let me have a look at it too.

Reason to use SM in FTF	R: ... When you have company and you are in the middle of a conversation, why would <i>you</i> feel the need to use social media on your smartphone? P4: [Thinks for a while] At that moment... say there is a topic that attracts me. Although that topic would never attract me under normal circumstances, at that moment because it becomes the most interesting topic in that context, I use it to check.
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4. Within the scope of the study, the researcher focuses on the following concepts of Goffman; participation units, unfocused interaction, rules of conduct, face-work, and region behaviour. The inquiry into each concept enables the researcher to answer the research questions in the study. The concepts of Goffman that are analysed and the research questions intended to be answered are shown in Table 32.

Table 32 The research questions and the concepts of Goffman

The Research Questions	The Concepts of Goffman
How are the participants engaged in focused and unfocused interactions in the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access?	• Participation units • Unfocused interaction – Involvement
What are the new rules of conduct in the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access?	• Rules of conduct
How do participants design and maintain the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access?	• Face-work • Region behaviour

5. The researcher identifies and selects the descriptive codes that are relevant to the concepts of Goffman that he elaborates to describe the interaction ritual. She notes that the descriptive codes have the potential to refer to more than one concept explored in the study. Table 33 displays the descriptive codes that are relevant to the concepts of Goffman explored.

Table 33 Descriptive codes relevant to the concepts of Goffman

Concepts of Goffman	Descriptive Codes
Participation units – Cross-talks, single & with	Reason for intermittent SP check Interest in what others look at on SM Multitasking ability (own)/(others) SP use in public/FTF SM use in isolation Approach to SM use in FTF Reaction to others' SM use in FTF SM content transfer into FTF conversation SM use while studying Compulsive SM use in FTF Reason for no SM use in FTF
Unfocused Interaction – Conversational engagements as involvements, involvement shields, margins of disinvolvement	SM use in FTF (one-to-one/group) Own reaction to own/others' multitasking performance SM use in isolation Approach to SM use in FTF Reaction to others' SM use in FTF SM use while studying

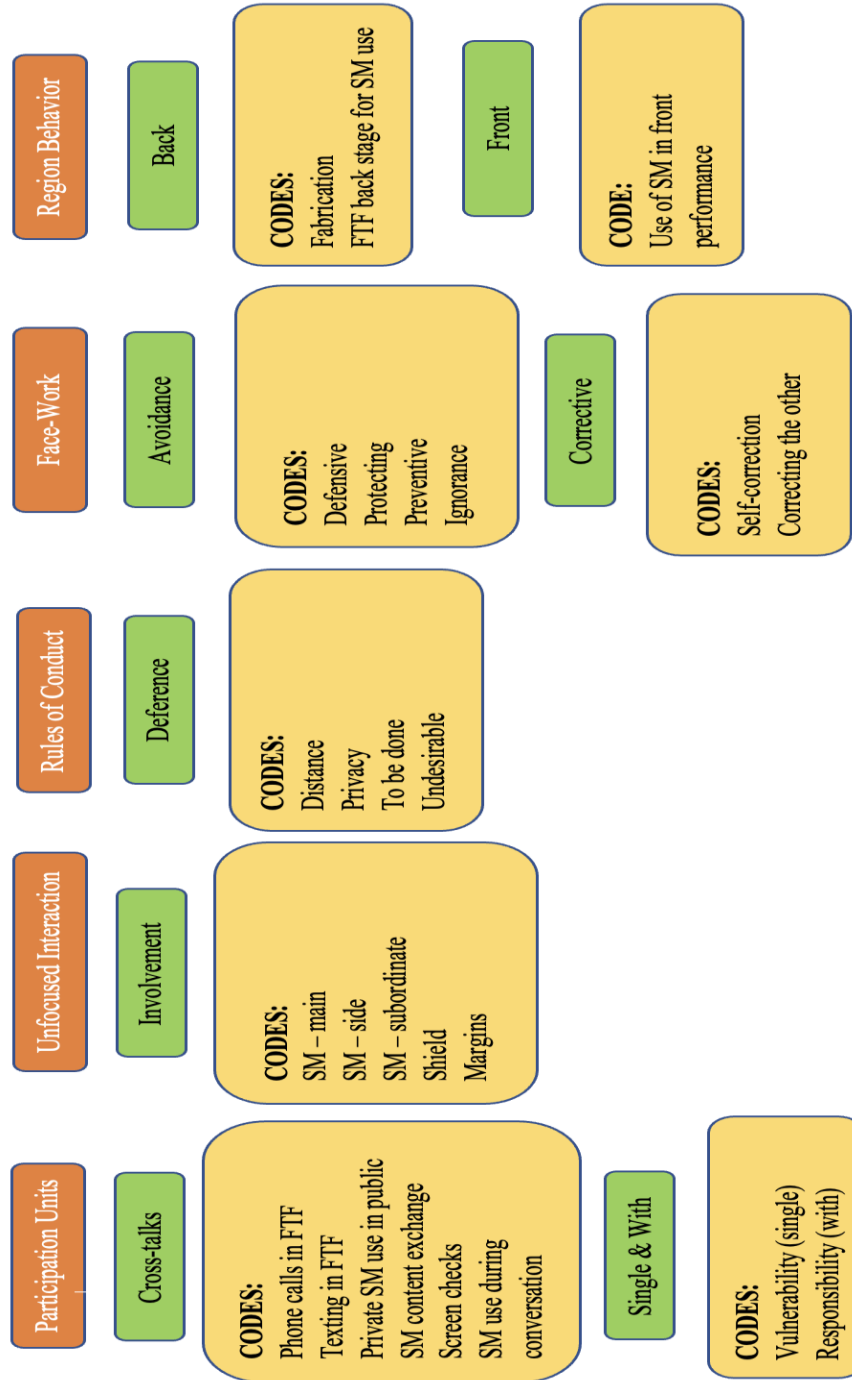
	Impact of SM content on FTF conversation SP use in public Reason to use SM in FTF Attitude to SM content share in FTF
Rules of conduct – Deference	SM use in FTF (one-to-one/group) Reason to use SM in FTF Approach to SM use in FTF Reaction to others' SM use in FTF Privacy in public/FTF (Reason for) no SP zone Attitude to absence of SP Reason for no SM use in FTF Reason for intermittent SP check Attitude to SM content share in FTF
Face-work – Avoidance and corrective processes	Purpose of SM use Reason to use SM in FTF Reaction to others' SM use in FTF People's response to reactions to their SM use in FTF (one-to-one/group)

	Own reaction to own/others' multitasking performance Interest in what others look at on SM No SP zone Attitude to absence of SP Attitude to SM content share in FTF Reason for no SM use in FTF
Region behaviour – Back stage/region and front stage/region	SM activities/use in FTF Collective SM activity in FTF SM content transfer into FTF conversation Impact of SM content on FTF conversation Multitasking ability (own)/(others)

6. After determining the descriptive codes that refer to certain concepts of Goffman, the researcher focuses on each concept individually and creates initial codes that are categorized under each sub-theme and theme. The researcher takes each concept of Goffman as the theme and the explanatory concepts as the sub-themes.
7. The researcher randomly chooses 3 other transcripts and read them thoroughly several times in order to get familiarised with the data. She then processes the data using the codes that she has produced for the former transcripts in order that she would test the effectiveness of the existing codes. During this process,

she decides to add one code under participation units for cross-talks and delete one code under unfocused interaction for conversational engagements as involvement. By the end of the analysis process that she conducts through 6 transcripts, the working codes are finalised. Table 34 demonstrates the themes, sub-themes and codes that are used in the analysis.

Table 34 The themes, sub-themes and codes that are used in the analysis



2.3.5 The Results

In this section, the results obtained from the interview transcripts are presented under each research question and the concepts of Goffman explored in the new interaction ritual.

2.3.5.1 Participation Units & Unfocused Interaction

Research Question: How are the participants engaged in focused and unfocused interactions in the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access?

Initially, the study aims at exploring the focused and unfocused interactions in the public space where participants access to social media during an ongoing social interaction. To understand if and how the dynamics in participation units and the rules about the allocation of involvement have altered in the presence of digital technologies, the focus of the analysis is firstly on the participation units that are composed of both encounters and unengaged participants as Goffman conceptualises. In the presence of smartphones and social media platforms during face engagements, the study intends to explore how participation units today function in public firstly through the analysis of cross-talks that demonstrate to what extend the working consensus among participants is maintained in the interaction ritual. Furthermore, the researcher tracks the concepts of “*singles*,” the vulnerable ones in public space because they are open to others’ judgemental eyes and thus feel the obligation to justify their presence there, and “*with(s)*,” who feel more confident as they are in company of other(s) and thus need to accept the responsibility to one another and therefore comply with the social expectations in the new interaction ritual.

2.3.5.2 Cross-Talks

One of the signals in face engagements that interrupts the “working consensus” between the participants is cross-talks, and the study approaches the cross-talks as the instances that Goffman (1963) sees as “a breach in the mutual commitment of the participants” (p. 90). In the study, digital cross-talks are not reduced to phone calls in public because the breaches that Goffman addresses to take new forms in the digital age. To illustrate, as P2 expresses, in face engagements today, when they want to contact with someone who is far away, they reach that person over social media. More specifically, P13 resembles social media use in face engagements to phone calls in public:

Well, because normally when two people talk, we don't stop listening to the other suddenly and talk to someone else because you now this is a code of conduct. But it's like you behave as if no one is there, well it's like talking to someone else on the phone.

Then, from a broader perspective cross-talks are taken as common digital interactions participants are engaged in or short instances of breaches in the face engagements. From this angle, the study takes all following digital interactions as cross-talks: phone calls and texting during face engagements, intermittent screen checks, private social media use, social media use during an ongoing conversation, social media content exchange with other interactants, and interest in/looking at others' screens (digital eavesdropping). The results of the study reveal that cross-talks from this perspective are one of the most common instances that emerge in face engagements and have the potential to influence the structure and dynamics of participation units in the new interaction ritual.

2.3.5.2.1 Phone Calls and Texting in Public

As the results of the study demonstrate, phone calls in public space are not common, but they mostly prefer texting on primarily WhatsApp instead. Even the participants who reject using social media in face engagements admit stating this due to the fact that they think WhatsApp is excluded. When it is WhatsApp, all participants admit that they are involved in texting during the day and regardless of time and space, they point out that they cannot neglect incoming messages and delay their answers for a long time. The majority of the participants refer to texting via WhatsApp in face engagements and the importance of instantly responding back to them when they are important, whereas few participants mention phone calls in face engagements in the new interaction ritual. For instance, P16 clearly expresses that they prefer phone calls when there is an emergency or a serious matter to communicate but WhatsApp to receive quick instant answers. Thus, it reveals that phone calls in public as cross-talks have lost its effect with the emergence of digital messaging platforms like WhatsApp. The majority declares that they prefer their smartphones close to themselves (on the table or in their pockets) because it is very important for them to be reachable; thus, they mainly concentrate on incoming calls rather than calling someone else. P5 confesses that she is too worried about the possibility that she cannot be reached, which makes her keep her smartphone with her at all times:

It's not the social media thing. What scares me most is I may not call and let someone know about something or stay uninformed. It's even a... not a phobia maybe but something similar because really, it's like... my mind is bombarded with things like even if I go somewhere near, my mobile will be essential on the way, I will need to contact someone. This is why I need my mobile.

They emphasise the importance of being reachable primarily because of their parents, which concerns them most.

P2: In fact, it's like this since my childhood because am expected to answer the phone when my family calls me. If I don't, it creates anxiety (laughs). This is why, I keep it on the table.

P4: I never switch off my mobile. Because some possibly important calls... because I'm not that busy... I'm not engaged in complicated things, I work, study and so on... I mean I don't really worry or concern about calls except for the ones from my family, I don't switch it off...

Similarly, P25 expresses that she needs her mobile at all times in case her mother could call her.

Because mum and I don't live together, we live in separate places, she worries about me and keeps calling. I do this (pulling her smartphone close) mainly for mum. Other than this, if my boyfriend is not with me, I also do it. I mean in case someone calls me, I keep it always in sight.

With the same concern, P19 expresses that he interrupts conversation engagements and replies phone calls in face engagements when his parents call him. He also adds that he can make phone calls to ask something that he does not know during a discussion in face engagements.

They also explain that they use their smartphones to make phone calls in public mainly because they need to communicate with others on campus. They think that it is important for them when they need to make arrangements for social gatherings on campus. P14 gives an example to such instances:

P14: Well, you ask, where are you meeting, I call and say we are in this place, come here we're here with Ms. Tüge and like that.

P15: Well, we are here, why don't you also come or there's something, or we've heard about an occasion, would you like to come too, we're chatting with friends, would you like to join us kind of things. It's done to communicate something for sure.

Similarly, P25 emphasises the importance of having her smartphone to communicate with others on campus especially when she is alone on campus. She makes phone calls to reach friends and it is crucial for her because she tries to overcome the feeling of vulnerability as a *single* in public space on campus:

When someone calls, they need to find me. For example, I am in the garden. Let me give an example from school. I'm in the garden alone, I will call someone and say come over. I mean, I will call them. Without a mobile, how can I do that? If I can't find them... I know they are in school but don't know where they are. Then I use my mobile to reach them. So, I need my mobile with me.

Smartphones also connect participants in face engagements to others far away as P1 expresses. She states that one of them calls someone that they all know and everybody gathers around the same smartphone to participate in the conversation with a shared friend who cannot make it at that moment.

In their daily routines, when they are in face engagements, texting on WhatsApp appears to be irresistible for the participants, which is a much more common cross-talk that has the potential to create breaches in the working consensus. The majority of participants who express their discomfort for social media use in face engagements and claim that they avoid checking their social media accounts in conversational engagements exonerate WhatsApp because it is for instant urgent important communication during the day. P23 lists the applications that he uses in his daily

routine from the most to the least frequent ones as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook, for instance. P5 confesses that the most common digital interaction in face engagements that she has is using WhatsApp for texting. P25 addresses to the commonality of instances when she talks to the *with* next to her in a face engagement, that interactant could be looking at his/her smartphone and texting, and she also states that she herself *definitely* accesses to WhatsApp in face engagements. Similarly, P2, who always keeps her smartphone on the table in case her family calls her, declares that while she does not really look at the social media notifications in face engagements, she does respond to the messages asking permission from the *with(s)*. P17 explains that in his daily routine, it is very common that he uses WhatsApp in public space as the messages are unpredictable during the day, and such instances are private ones that they are interrupted by:

After all you never know when a message comes or when you need to answer a message, or you need to ask someone something. In general, I use WhatsApp for this. I write it myself. I don't think it is a common thing to do with others.

Thus, the continuous flow of messages on WhatsApp and the intense drive to follow and respond to these messages that participants have create significant breaches in face engagements in public space today. On a 10-point scale, P3 gives 6 to the importance of messages in public space, but still she addresses to how people are insistent on being responded. She states that people are impatient and they complain for example why she is not online and she does not respond to them for like 10 minutes. As a result of such a social pressure, participants feel it is important to follow the messages even in face engagements. Similar to P7, who finds notifications for WhatsApp messages more tempting than social media notifications, expresses the *responsibility* to respond back to incoming messages which urges her to ask interactants to excuse her to text back, P16 also explains that it is a *responsibility* to answer WhatsApp messages and he can

tolerate for 2 or 3 hours if there is not something urgent. This means he can delay answering the messages depending on the level of importance; however, it is evident that he cannot delay checking them as he has the liberty to decide whether it is important and not so that he could choose to answer or not. He also adds that social media like Instagram is of secondary importance compared to WhatsApp. Similar to P16, P17 declares that he checks the notifications for messages and answers them if he finds them important.

Texting on WhatsApp occupies a considerable time during the daily routines of participants for it eases the flow of communication with a great number of people for different purposes as the study demonstrates. P1 refers to the practicality of WhatsApp as it offers the opportunity to connect with more than one person simultaneously and communicate in groups. She states that there is no burden of texting the same message to different people; thus, she can use WhatsApp any time she thinks she is available to discuss arrangements and plans as a group easily on WhatsApp. Moreover, the majority of participants declare that they often send a variety of documents ranging from photographs to course materials using WhatsApp not only single individuals but large groups of interactants.

WhatsApp also attracts participants when they feel that the mutual conversation is blocked and no new topics for discussions are left. While P19 expresses that when the conversation is blocked, he starts texting, P16 finds such instances as an opportunity to answer the messages, and P25 chats with someone on WhatsApp when she thinks that the conversation is uninteresting to her.

2.3.5.2.2 Intermittent Screen Checks

The results of the field observations show that intermittent screen checks are one of the most patterns of communication in face engagements today. The participants in the in-depth interviews all confirm that people in public space check their screens often,

and they put different reasons for this behaviour of others and themselves. One of the most common reasons for intermittent screen checks is not related to social media use; the majority points out that they check the time. P17 states that he checks his screen to check the time, but he also admits that he may do this too often to signal his boredom sometimes. Another reason is fear of missing out (FoMO); they continuously fear that they miss notifications on their smartphones, and P25 admits that this has become a habit.

My mobile is muted always. That's why I often take my mobile and check it if there are any notifications or if someone has called me or texted me. Other than that, it has become a habit after all. Sometimes in fact I don't have anything in my mind, but I check the screen and then lock it again (imitates the behaviour). I mean it's a habit. Because it's muted, it becomes a habit.

P19 also expresses his concern for missing phone calls or any important notification because he states that he keeps his smartphone muted but on vibration mode during face engagements. He thinks that he can possibly miss calls or notification during a conversation or noise in the background. However, P19 prioritises phone calls especially from his mother as she suffers from panic attack but finds social media notifications ordinary and insignificant thus not worthy to check in face engagements.

P13 believes that this habit of screen checks and motivation of not missing notification is rooted in the pressure that comes from friends and families. P13 expresses that when she misses notifications, her friends are complaining that they cannot reach her, which makes her more careful at seeing the notifications. According to P13, this situation simply restricts their freedom:

It's like people think... well when I call, text, I can reach her any time. But it's something like this. I mean the function of mobiles is not that I think. And it's a bit disturbing because it's interference in people's lives. I mean whenever you want to... Because why? Normally, when we talk to someone, communicate with someone, well like approaching, saluting, when they are available, then communication starts. But there is no such thing in mobiles. You're available, you call her, but if that person is busy, you're interfering in her life.

On the contrary, P5 states that her smartphone is not muted, so she can hear the notifications and checks when she hears a notification that she thinks important, and P17 also maintains that he does not feel the need to check the screen as the notifications are on, and he can see the LED signal as the mobiles are smart ones after all.

The results also show that interactants in face engagements intermittently check their screens for social media. P4 denies checking his screen in face engagements, but he is one of the participants who comments that others do it for social media checks, which is at the same time a signal of some sort to the *with(s)* in the social gathering:

Well, what they look at, that situation is, yes other than being here... I have other alternatives besides being here, but I choose to be here. This is the message they try to convey to others, I think. I think this is not a social media addiction, rather it is something they want to show other people.

P14 reduces this behaviour to a simple temptation to a possession, and he states that similar to his frequent openings of the fridge as he loves eating, these people, he thinks, love their smartphones, so they check them, but he also adds that these people do this because they construct their identities and self-integrity over their accounts on

the Internet. Similarly, P23, who admits checking his screen often in face engagements, questions why they do it but cannot address to a concrete answer to it:

It's something weird and well I don't know the reason. Why do people feel the need to look at it? I mean what's gonna happen if we don't for an hour? After all we sit exams for hours. Nothing for example... you concentrate on just the exam. Then, at that moment, if he concentrates on just the friend, there won't be a problem, I think. Frankly, I don't know the reason (laughs). I mean maybe it's like a reflex, I don't know what to say. But I well... (laughs with a gesture showing hopelessness). I can't find a logical answer. I look at it, I do you know (laughs).

P6 puts the blame on the developing smartphone technology and claims that the feature of iPhone that turns on the screen when it is touched disturbs her. She states that she cannot change the settings, so she inevitably checks the screen whenever she touches her smartphone.

Free of any intentions to check notifications or missed calls, P20, who declares that he does not have a Twitter or Instagram account that he can use in face engagements but at the same time admits he cannot resist WhatsApp messages, believes that such intermittent screen checks are for avoiding eye contact when they do not want to maintain it any more. To him, it is a tactic that receives less reactions from the *withs* today. He states that the notifications are seen with the flashing light on the screen and they have watches to check the time; then, to him it is for “stopping the eye contact and taking a breath” as they check *nothing*.

2.3.5.2.3 Private Social Media Use

Similar to the intermittent screen checks, the results of the field observations demonstrate that participants in face engagements in public space commonly use their

smartphones in isolation from *with(s)*. In other words, it is observed that during face engagements they are into the rabbit holes where they seem to detach themselves from the interaction despite physically being present there. The results of the in-depth interviews also confirm that such instances of private smartphone use emerge as alternative digital cross-talks where participants interact with others on digital platforms, thereby break the mutual consensus with others. P23, who describes the situation as “building a wall” around them, expresses one of such instances:

I went and sat next to my friends. We were sitting and I wanted to ask how they were doing, how they are. Can you believe four of them took their mobiles, and I waited for them like this. Then I thought why am I here? Wait a second, I said. I want to take a photo of you, and I did. Four people with heads down, concentrated on their mobiles (imitates).

The results of the in-depth interviews reveal the reason or motivation behind the intensity of the *green areas*, which indicate private social media use in isolation from other participants in the field observations. Being aware of such instances of private social media use in the new interaction ritual, the majority criticises that social media pulls them down into the rabbit hole during face engagements, yet they accept they cannot help it. One of the most considerable confessions and also criticisms of such green areas came from P8 in the in-depth interviews:

You know when we gather like this, if I sit here and these 4 or 5 people are into their mobiles and no one... this group is silent. Everybody is silent and continue with their mobiles. Then why are we, 6 people, sitting here? Why are we occupying space? We are 6 and you 5 people are already doing something on your mobiles. No one talks. This you know... I don't think this used

to be like this 30 or 40 years ago. This means something has changed.

According to the results of the study, participants have a variety of reasons to use social media privately. Participants start using social media in face engagements in public spaces and prefer staying in the rabbit hole when (1) they feel alienated from the group due to lack or loss of concentration and interest:

P3: If the topic of the conversation doesn't attract me, I finish the timeline. Actually, when I don't access to it for quite some time, there's a lot to look at, and I say why on earth I accessed to it. It happens to me a lot. You know I must finish it (laughing and imitating using the mobile on the table), I must go on until I see the last thing there. That... you know it's nonsense, this is really nonsense but well it's for seeing a close friend's recent post or an account sharing a sweepstake or something else. I feel I have to finish everything.

(2) they see no better alternative activities than checking social media in that particular space like the shuttle bus or public transportation while waiting for reaching the target destination:

P2: Well, on the bus, public transportation, shuttle on the way to school, well while waiting for something, sometimes while waiting for the meal, for example, I'm inclined to use social media.

(3) the *with(s)* start using social media in the social occasion:

P14: If I'm not alone, if you're here, I don't. But, it's like... if you do it... (looks up thinking) I might be doing it. If you do it, I do it (with a certain tone). It's a bit, yes (smiles).

(4) they do not feel like chatting because they are tired or not in the mood:

P19: It may be because I'm disturbed by the environment, or the discussion there doesn't interest me. Or I might be down or angry, then I'm directed towards my mobile. I turn inwards so that I wouldn't make others down too. Or with my silence or numb look, I don't want to cause a tension in the gathering.

(5) they intend to abdicate the responsibility of an activity or duty like studying:

P6: Because I get so bored while studying sometimes. I seek an activity and I find myself in the Instagram gutter.

(6) they need a break to relax especially while studying as they believe social media use is relaxing since it does not require a high-level intellectual effort:

P15: But you know we've studied for hours, we're tired, you know studying makes you how, I mean it makes you bored for sure... At that moment just to chill out you know... shall I say to refresh, or to rejuvenate we just digress and then we return.

(7) they are pulled into social media due to an intended short check as P4 also expresses the social media is designed for the purpose of keeping them in:

P7: Because when I look at social media, you know there are hashtags. I click on one, then another one, all of a sudden it turns into a social media tour (laughs). This is why it lasts long. I don't even recognise it, I mean I don't see time flowing.

The study shows that the size of the groups matters to participants in face engagements. They state that when the group is larger, such social media activities are tolerated or ignored, and consequently the number of the interactants in social

occasions provide them with the space where they can use social media privately during an ongoing interaction.

P5: Say we don't chat or we're in a crowded place and I can't participate in the discussion, I can't say anything, then you get bored and can't resist putting hands out to the mobile. But, as I said before, when you're 2 or 3 people together, you chat, don't feel the need to. You don't even think about it.

P4 also emphasises that the number of the interactants matter to him when he uses social media privately:

I never use my mobile in one-to-one interactions. No matter what, never... But in a large group, when I can't concentrate or don't feel I belong there and don't want to be there, I reveal it too much.

Similarly, P14 states that he avoids using social media privately when he is in a fully-focused gathering unless the *with* starts using social media in front of him, and P25 refers to the number of interactants beside her motivation to use social media in public space:

Say I'm bored. And I feel idle. What am I gonna do there? Or say we're in a group of some like 3 or 4 people chatting together. I'm out of it. There's nothing else to do. I stay there but do something on my mobile (imitates using it) at least. I quit when I see I can participate.

The results also show that participants' private use of social media appears to be an alternative way of interacting with the *with(s)* online. This reveals that an interactant using social media privately in a face engagement is also likely to target *with(s)* that are invisible to the researcher during field observations. P1 declares that she posts

comments for Instagram posts of people that are with her in a public space. In this way, she causes them to receive notifications from Instagram, which pulls them all into the social media platform during a face engagement:

All of a sudden, we all become people wandering in a bell-jar and we are like this (imitating having a mobile in her hand and her head bent over it). After like 5 minutes, the one who turns it off says come on and pulls everyone together.

Thus, the in-depth interviews reveal that what is observed in public space as private social media use in face engagements is likely to be an unobservable interaction in the social gathering realised through social media. Nonetheless, at some point participants are likely to fall into the rabbit hole after one initiates an interaction on social media.

Moreover, as P14 declares what is perceived as a face engagement in public from outside does not necessarily require the engagements of the participants all the time; that is, not all gatherings are built upon a mutual consensus among the interactants:

Let's say it's been a long tiring day, and we're on the way home with friends. We're on the boat, tired and completely done. Then one takes it out, checks Instagram.

Similar to phone calls, texting and intermittent screen checks in public, the study shows that interactants for a reasonable cause that they come up with, create a breach in the conversational engagements and use social media privately as an alternative cross-talk that they are engaged in.

2.3.5.2.4 Social Media Use During an Ongoing Conversation

Another digital cross-talk observed in field observations is using smartphones during ongoing conversations, and the in-depth interviews inquire into the use of social

media in face engagements while other interactants are speaking to that person. The most significant difference between using social media privately and during an ongoing conversation is that in the former the interactants do not intend to camouflage their social media use, but in the latter the interactants continuously give short responses to the *with(s)* verbally or use gestures like nodding, shaking heads or giving momentary glimpses. In this way, they intend to convey the message that they are still in the conversation despite using social media, which they call *multitasking*. Moreover, participants admit that using social media during a conversational engagement is wrong and unacceptable; however, they mostly fail to resist.

P9: You know that some things are wrong, and you don't do it. But this is not like that. You do this always. You can't stop... No, well (laughs) you know even now let me have a look at it (imitates sliding the screen) you say let me see what's happening there. Right now, I don't say that of course... well when with someone else... I'll leave, for example, I'll take my mobile and look at it.

The study also demonstrates the main reasons why participants cannot resist using social media in face engagements. Initially, as the results indicate, participants curious about what is going on there; social media as an alternative platform for communication is tempting for participants, so they cannot resist it during conversational engagements. Similarly, P4 comments about people who wonder if people there are doing something better than what he is doing at that moment in a face engagement. Also, P9 refers to the feeling of curiosity that she cannot resist in conversational engagements:

We talk to the person in front of us at that moment, but at the same time it's like something is flowing in a different world and it's the will to learn what's going on there. Or, you're here at

a café with your friend, and let's see where are other friends at that moment and what're they doing.

Another reason is that presence on social media brings the responsibility for following their friends and family members closely. The study shows that participants feel the pressure for checking social media so that they do not miss any posts that friends attribute importance; otherwise, they believe they experience hardships in their social relations. P7 confesses that she is one such participants. P7 explains that she does not want to miss anything because she feels the responsibility on her shoulders. She states that people share for example photos from a hospital showing they are sick, and when she does not post a get-well-soon comment, she may face troubles in her social relations. The final reason that comes up in the study is that social media they feel they must not miss anything, or they stay out of the game, and P18 is one of such participants:

I feel I'm out of the flow. You know I feel I have to make up. Say it's news, or my friends, I feel I must see them all. This is why I do it.

In such instances, the social media platforms function like the *bystanders*, who Goffman (1963) explains as “any individual present who is not a ratified member of the particular encounter in question, whether or not he is currently a member of some other encounter” (p. 91). During ongoing conversations, interactants make cross-talks over social media platforms which bring the interactants of other encounters into their face engagements. In Goffman's interaction ritual, while a cross-talk with a bystander causes interactants accept and compromise the temporary loss of eye-contact unless the interactant includes the bystander in the present face engagements, in the new interaction ritual the interactants have a different working consensus. The participants primarily admit that they are engaged in social media platforms while they (seem to) continue interacting with the interactants in face engagement. P9 admits that while

being in face engagements with other interactants, they interact with others via the stories they share on Instagram:

We actually interact with others over these (stories). I'm here, oh who are you with, with my friend, for example. Another friend writes oh where are you, who are you with...Then we meet.

The participants of the study confirm that they do multitasking in face engagements in public. P17 believes that he is confident in multitasking thus can fully grasp what *with(s)* talk about while he is checking social media. Still, he is cautious enough to say that if he cannot, he asks the *with* to excuse him so that he could finish what he is doing there and return to the conversation. P4 expresses that social media is intentionally and carefully designed to keep users engaged in; thus, he believes that it keeps people and also himself so much engaged that they cannot use it and chat with others at the same time.

The results show that the common belief is that in such cross-talks, people simply overhear rather than listening to each other.

P16: I presume I listen to them but... now let me consciously say it, while dealing with the mobile, I neither remember nor get interested in what they say. Just bla bla bla bla things are spoken but I don't care. I'm not concentrated.

P14: Well, depends on their multitasking ability. Of course, it is not as good as it would be when he fully focuses on me but well... nope he can't listen to me well. I mean there is something that he misses. He can't really well... understand. No, he can't listen. Maybe he can get the important points,

what I stressed on but in general I don't think that he can remember the whole thing.

Even though the intention seems to be giving the *with(s)* the impression that they are listening to them while they are checking social media, the results of the study also suggest that this is a choice and they do not really care if they listen or not, nor do they want to create such an impression with the smartphones in hands and eyes on them:

P25: I don't think they follow. How well can they? They don't. Actually, they wouldn't have their mobiles in their hands if they wanted to. They may select a couple of words from the talk but can't follow it.

P23 claims that people who think they can use social media and listen to the interactants(s) simultaneously are *pretentious*. He believes that they pretend listening to them and adds “you know the difference between looking and seeing. It’s hearing and really listening.” During a conversational engagement, participants may prioritise what they see or do on screen. P6 expresses that when someone like parents, siblings, friends insist on asking questions, she is annoyed. She admits having arguments with them because of this. She expects respect to the cross-talk that she is engaged in.

2.3.5.2.5 Social Media Content Exchange with Other Interactants

As long as checking and navigating social media in face engagements is common among interactants in the new interaction ritual, another cross-talk that they find themselves in is sharing and exchanging social media content that they find interesting and worthy to share with others. In this way, the content they encounter on social media platforms interferes with the ongoing conversations. The results show that such cross-talks are mostly for entertainment purposes. What participants see on social media is mostly a tool to cheer up or liven up the face engagement for them as they

mostly mention that they share funny posts with others or bring up a popular paparazzi news.

The study reveals that social media use in face engagements is instrumental and serves the continuation of the conversation. The participants intend to share and exchange social media content when they think (1) it will also interest the other(s),

P4: I show anything that I think it interests them... I mean let's say I know a movie, and he likes it... it might interest him or a plan... something that we can plan... shall we do this (imitating the action of showing his mobile) look this is good, I show this. It depends on who that person is... what I show, it's not about me but him.

P9: Again, they see a headline, or anything irrelevant comes up, say it's like if you mix this and that, it helps you lose weight or something else, makes your hair grow, even such things interfere. At that moment, she sees it, thinks it's important, shares it.

(2) it will entertain other(s) and cheer them up,

P5: I show funny posts because I laugh at some a lot and I want to share it of course. Or at that moment you look at it and start laughing, so people get curious. I show them such things. Or I like sharing when I see very interesting very beautiful photos.

(3) it offers an opportunity to make future plans together,

P2: By the way, I also like very much, you know, searching for places to eat out on Zomato (laughs). All of a sudden, I

say hey look this is a great place, let's go there (laughs) and interfere with their conversation and interrupt them.

(4) they want to bring up something that they have seen before and want to share it with other(s).

P17: If anything occurs to them, as I said if there is anything they saw before and if it's something that they can find and chat about, they show it. I do it too.

P16: it comes out there when... ah I was going to show you something or I saved something and I will show it to my friend and when he is with me, I want to show it. Then the mobile comes out.

(5) they feel the need to maintain the continuation of the conversational engagement:

P6: Chatting with friends, when the topic of conversation gets stuck, I say hey there's something like this, have you seen this, and I show it to them. Then it goes on.

Taking social media use during an ongoing conversation similar to bystanders that participants do cross-talking, based on the results of the study, social media content share and exchange appears temporarily as P16 explains:

In such group conversations, gatherings especially in public let's say there are 5 people. 4 people are chatting, 1 person is isolated there and the topic discussed... let's say he shows something that he thinks it will make the other laugh or show it to someone that he wants to share with, he looks at it, laughs, they continue chatting, that person continue using his mobile (imitating sliding the screen).

Alternatively, similar to the instances with the potential to involve and integrate the bystander in the face engagement, social media content that one participant is exposed to is integrated in the conversational engagement. In other words, the social media content becomes the focus of the conversation.

P25: Such things are daily in fact. If something current become popular, there are more than posts. When I show it to my friend, he can also show me something related to it but something similar to it. Hey look there is also this one kind of things.

The study also demonstrates that in face engagements while few participants like P11 declare that they prefer sharing social media content via WhatsApp or Instagram DM, the majority prefers sharing posts with others by showing their screens rather than using direct messaging or sharing it on social media and let them see there. Similarly, P12 states that he prefers both, but he makes a distinction between online and face-to-face social media exchange with the interactants:

When I show it to the person next to me, I surely give more detailed information, but when I share it online, it's more superficial.

P12 also adds that when he shares content showing his screen, it's disruptive because they have to extend the smartphone and reach the screen to look at the content. However, he believes when he sends the content via DM or WhatsApp, when they are commenting about the content, they can all see the content on their screens.

On the contrary, the majority of participants use smartphone screens to circulate content which is potential topic of conversation in face engagements. Smartphone screens are the channels through which they engage the *with(s)* in the cross-talks.

P9: If she is with me, why should I share it online? I directly show it. But, if it's something long and I want her to have a look at it, then I send it. But, if it's something like a photo or anything small that she can instantly look at, directly show it.

From this perspective, they intend to use the screens and social media content in the same way that participants engage the *with(s)* in the phone call in public space reporting what the one on the line is saying to the *with(s)* and the other way round.

2.3.5.2.6 Interest in/Looking at Others' Screens (Digital Eavesdropping)

This type of cross-talk is the least practiced one as the study shows. Participants mostly believe that social media content is not something extraordinary or significant, but the study demonstrates two different attitudes. One is that participants believe it is entirely insignificant, so they do not want to see it. The other attitude is that although they believe it is something unimportant, they still have an interest in their screen and what they look at in face engagements.

P4: If I check it, I check so unnecessary things. I don't think... well I don't think that the person next to me is controlling something super important. I don't know, I don't think so.

P5: I don't because we use the same thing (laughing). Most probably the same thing is on my timeline too. So, I am not curious. It's not a very different platform after all. I mean everybody sees the same things.

P8: I am (curious). Well, you... while I'm speaking here... You look at it... on Instagram. What is it there, what could be that important? I don't... well you know if it's a cat video (laughs) let me look at it. Other than that, there isn't anything important.

Similarly, P24 distinguishes random use of social media in face engagements, which he finds insignificant, from intentional ones and describes the social media content that creates curiosity on his side and depending on the level of relationship that he has with the interactant pushes him to ask to see:

When he accesses to social media, it could be anything that pops up. I wouldn't think that he opens it intentionally. You know it's because when people are bored, they open it and looks at whatever pops up. If it's some content that he intentionally opens, I'll be curious. I'd ask what he's looking at. If he says he's navigating Instagram, I don't insist. But if he says he's looking at the thing, I'm curious about it.

The duration of the person's engagement in social media creates curiosity and pushes the participant to do digital eavesdropping.

P16: If that looking at the screen thing lasts long... I can already see the screens, I am tall enough (laughing), yeah, I can just take a peep at what he looks at.

Digital eavesdropping is triggered by the feeling of frustration and annoyance due to the use of social media of *with(s)* that participants feel:

P5: I sometimes get curious because, not always, what is it that makes you interrupt the conversation and look at your mobile (laughing) I mean what is it that attracts you so much? What kind of a thing is it that makes people addicted this much. This is what I'm curious about.

The visible and audible reactions of the participant who is using social media also triggers the *with(s)* interest in the screen of that person as P25 explains:

If he really does not listen to me and well like... if he is a close friend of mine laughing at what he is looking at, you get curious and what are you looking at thing happens.

Similarly, P15 expresses that his curiosity in the social media content on the screen of the *with* depends merely on the reactions of the interactant:

Depends on his reaction, you know if his reaction is strong, it means it's something that arises curiosity. Or if he laughs a lot, it's something very funny, I say. Or if he's surprised, well it's something surprising or upsetting maybe. Because I don't see the screen, it depends on his reactions of course.

The interest in the screen of the *with(s)* also depends on the identity of the interactants. P1 states that the level of her relationship with the interactant matters when the *with* is engaged in social media in a face engagement. She thinks that what an interactant's use of social media makes her feel depends on the distance between them, and when it is a close friend, she does not feel bad, nor does she feel shy to look at the screen or hesitate to show her screen to them. However, P1 believes that she is more careful when she is with a person who is not that close. Similarly, P13 states that if the *with* is a close friend or someone from the family, she asks them what they look at on social media that distracts them during the conversation. P15 makes a distinction between male and female *with(s)*. He states that he gets interested in the screens of female *with(s)* more for stalking purposes:

You know if she has a boyfriend or not, whether she received a message from someone or not, if there is someone with a heart emoji or not. To learn this... This is due to our incompetency in face-to-face, not being able to directly ask. Well, because you're shy to ask directly, you try to understand

it from there. But, when it's men, I don't... I'm not curious if... what is there.

2.3.5.3 Single and With

2.3.5.3.1 Vulnerability

The study initially reveals that smartphones have replaced the newspapers or magazines that participants use in Goffman's interaction rituals when they are to confront the vulnerability of being *single* in public space.

P2: well, on the bus, public transportation, while coming to school on the shuttle... and (thinking) while I'm waiting for something, for example in situations like while waiting for my meal, or if I eat alone in the restaurant, I tend to use social media.

P3: For example, when I'm sitting alone waiting for someone, I have nothing else to do (imitating touching an imaginary mobile on the table), then I tap. No notifications (imitating looking at the screen), then I turn it off.

P12: I use it outside at a café if I'm sitting alone kind of situations, for example. If I'm waiting for something... I use it.

P24 explains the feeling of vulnerability as “if there are not any friends in the social environment, I immediately hold on to my mobile.” Similarly, P25 uses her smartphone to communicate with others on campus especially when she is alone. She makes phone calls to reach friends so that she would overcome the feeling of vulnerability as a *single* in public space on campus.

Moreover, social media use is a life vest for the single as it enables participants to connect with others in closer locations, which saves them staying alone in public spaces:

P15: Maybe, I can see a story and see where my friend is and say let me go there, too. You know, I sometimes use it for this. Is there anyone near here or say I'm in class, my friend is sitting at a café, shares a photo. My class is over, oh there you are, let me go there kind of stuff.

Such a feeling of vulnerability is also one of the reasons that participants express for intermittent screen checks in face engagements when participants are not alone in fact.

P24: I don't know why, but I do it. I also recognised that I'm doing it, too. People do it you know. It's like it's an obligation to look at it or when people feel vulnerable. I check it when I feel vulnerable (takes his mobile and checks the screen), like this. It might be because of lack of self-confidence, I don't know. It's like a getaway from that environment. It's like I'm in a different place, I'm not talking to you (smiles).

During the interviews, what one participant states off the record after the recording is done explains the vulnerability of *singles* in the new interaction ritual. He expresses that when they are alone in public, smartphones make them look busy to the surrounding as if they were doing something important. He adds that with the smartphones in hands, they in a way convey the message that they do not sit there doing nothing, but they have some important things to accomplish, and in this way, he comments, they feel important there. The results of the study also demonstrate that smartphones and social media use in public space when alone appears to be the most powerful tool to build the defence against the vulnerability that individuals feel.

P16: It's avoiding something, being wary of something... I don't know it has turned into distancing and isolating oneself.

P18: You know they sit idle. They feel unimportant, they are engaged in something else to feel important. Staying idle appears to be a problem. I mean it feels like a problem. Being engaged in something immediately... It can be because they want to be isolated. Secondly, it happens when they realise that they aren't listened to, cared. Also, when they are out of the discussion, if they don't know anything about the topic of discussion, you know they don't want to listen. Maybe they just want to fill in that moment. This is how I feel when I use it.

Initially, the study indicates that individuals use social media when they are alone most. P17 points out that he uses it when alone most and P14 states that being alone is one condition to his using social media: "If I'm not alone, if you're with me, I don't." In the public space, as the field observations indicate, when *with(s)* leave, the interactant(s) left behind tend to use smartphones as the shields to protect themselves from the possible judgements from outside. The interviews also demonstrate that participants tend to prevent exposing such vulnerability through looking at their smartphones. P15 refers to such a situation and states that when someone goes to the bathroom, they are into their smartphones checking stories on Instagram. However, they at the same time mostly express the time and conditions when they become *singles* in face engagements despite being in company of others, and smartphone and social media use is on the stage in such instances. They state that they use it because they "feel idle" and "desperate."

P25: I get bored and I feel idle, what else can I do there? Say there is a group of friends 3 or 4 people chatting. I'm out of it. At that moment, I have nothing else to do. No chance to leave,

and no chance to participate the chat. Then I stay and do something on my mobile (imitating taking the phone) till the time when I can participate in the conversation.

P16: If there is no one you can talk to or say there is a private conversation, then coffee, tea, mobile (imitating a cup in one hand and mobile in the other), they chat there and your try to overhear but in fact you don't... I just hang out on my mobile.

Also, it reveals that participants in public space prefer using social media when they cannot leave the space and at the same time, they do not have the control over the conditions there. In such instances, they feel they are *singles* there and use social media to hide their vulnerability.

P1: For example, I usually read articles on the service bus because it's silent. You're on the road for 2 hours. Completely idle. No one talks to you because you are an intern (laughs) whatever. When I'm so pathetic, I read articles (imitating looking at her mobile), read some information, poems.

P4: There is idle time, and say I'm on the shuttle. 20 minutes completely idle and it's noisy there. Because I can't warn people one by one, and I can't open a book, I have a book with me all the time, well if I think I can't warn them one by one, at that moment I'm fully into my mobile, 20 or 30 minutes.

2.3.5.3.2 Responsibility

The participants of the study mostly express that in a face engagement, interactants have the responsibility to the *with(s)* that they have agreed to build a mutual interaction with; hence, they address to the inappropriacy of using social media in a social gathering. P4

makes a significant distinction between social gatherings with friends and social occasions in public places such as cinema and theatre.

P4: It's a taboo for me. I mean those mobiles out in the movies... drives me crazy. I go mad in such cases. I mean you are in public and even if you don't interact with the people there, you have a responsibility for them and you must fulfil it. I don't want to steal the story that they try to watch and focus on as I sit in that hall. I don't want to violate this. And I behave super sensitively. I'm extremely against people using mobiles in collective activities.

In a public space where collective social activities take place, it is not always the responsibility for the people there, but it is at the same time an unpleasant and disturbing experience for the *with(s)* to watch one of the participants of their group focusing on social media rather than the activity that they agreed on sharing together. P14 criticises his sister because “she takes 500 million photos” when they go somewhere like a concert or match just to post on Instagram:

She always has photos, videos in her hand, I mean this is not something special. Video recording in the stadium and sharing it on Instagram or elsewhere isn't something special. Because there're more than 40.000 people in that stadium, and there are others recording too. You can watch the one recorded by someone else when home, you can watch the professional recording on TV. You can't enjoy the moment there. You'll never go back in time. So, I think this is wrong.

In a face engagement where the interactants are expected to feel responsible to each other, the study shows that the participants recognise this social obligation.

P5: When it's done to me, I feel so uncomfortable. So, I don't do it myself. It indicates this person has no respect for the other and even for himself.

P14: For example, when you sit in front of me now and let's say we're waiting for a friend, it's disrespect if I take my mobile out look at it. I shouldn't do this.

However, despite the view that using social media is disrespect to *with(s)*, the study indicates that participants use it because they mostly have a “but if” or “but when” condition. The strongest drive that the majority of participants referred to is the feeling of alienation and boredom in face engagements, which legitimises their neglect of this social responsibility. P4, who asserts that using smartphones in public space is a taboo, explains his condition:

But, in a group occasion when I can't concentrate for a reason or I feel I don't belong there, I don't want to be there, I show this too much. It's like... I think it's my character because despite knowing it's too offensive, I can't resist this. I'm detached somehow.

P17 has another “but when” condition:

When with others, I don't use it that much but of course in some occasions, people get bored (smiles). In such situations I can use it.

These “but if” and “but when” conditions also soften the attitudes towards the responsibility for the *with(s)*:

P16: In a group occasion... if one is isolated from the topic, they may check it. Other than that, sometimes we're not in

the mood, demoralised and when together we isolate ourselves. Maybe we're waiting for some news. So, social media is well... it's more like expecting messages but social media... yet when I have a problem, I check what's going on blankly (imitating screen sliding).

This soft attitude turns into tolerance and acceptance in some participants especially in large groups but still reserving the responsibility to the *with* in a fully-focused gathering:

P25: As I said before, when in a large group of friends, I think it's already integrated into our lives. I don't even recognise someone checking their mobiles in a large group of friends. But in one-to-one, it's different and annoying.

In Goffman's interaction ritual, when the *with* goes to the bathroom in a fully-focused gathering, for example, the participant left behind feels the vulnerability that they feel when they are *single* in public space. The field observations in the study indicates this uneasiness of participants and they mostly start checking their smartphones when the *with* leaves for a reason. The in-depth interviews reveal that they feel the same vulnerability and uneasiness as they become *single* in public when the *with* does not leave but is engaged in social media.

2.3.5.4 Involvements

Beside *participation units*, the study explores *the involvements* in the new interaction ritual. "The individual's own body, or an object directly associated with his body, provides a very common object for his own involvement" (Goffman, 1963, p. 64), and today the presence of smartphones and social media access available at all times takes more attention as the "object directly associated with his body" than the participants' own bodies in face engagements. How P16 perceives his smartphone expresses the place of smartphones as the objects directly associated with people's bodies:

That mobile is an assistant next to me all day, but it's technological, more than an assistant. It's next to me like... Well, that is necessary, this is necessary, I need to reach this, does he want me to do something, does she want anything from me, do I have to do something... you know, do I have to turn on and off something on the way home, and like that. I mean it's really a person next to me. So, I can neglect my smartphone as much as I can neglect a person next to me (laughs).

Similarly, P15 expresses smartphones have become “an organ of our bodies” that we carry with us at all times like watches. He states that because everything has become mobile, they can do everything with their smartphones without needing any other gadgets in everyday life.

Thus, in the new interaction ritual where the smartphones and social media use are in the centre, how the involvements are allocated within the borders of social norms, involvement shields are used and margins of disinvolvement defined are in the centre of the study.

2.3.5.4.1 The Allocation of Involvements

Goffman (1963) asserts that it is an obligation “to sustain at least a certain minimal main involvement to avoid the appearance of being utterly disengaged” and the obligation to have a main involvement requires a specific purpose on the side of the participants (p. 51). To him, participants carry out conversational engagements as subordinate engagements to other activities, or side involvements are kept as subordinate to conversational main involvement. Goffman (1963) refers to their coexistence but questions the limits or borders in this coexistence; there are social norms that determine the borders of main, side and subordinate involvements in the

interaction ritual. Goffman's example of the woman who do not want to do nail polishing when she is in the company of her husband as nail polishing requires attention and she does not want to show disrespect to him when the conversational engagement is subordinated to it clearly shows the existence of such norms.

The study explores these borders of social media use in face engagements and intends to identify the instances of social media use as main, side and subordinate involvements in relation to the conversational engagements; however, the results indicate that the main, side and subordinate involvement in the new interaction ritual are not easily detectable and clear-cut as they are in Goffman's interaction ritual. The interactants are involved in more complex face engagements where they often tend to change the allocation of involvements. To illustrate, P16 explains such a transformation:

Well, I'm using Instagram, I throw a like, tap stories or things like... oh I forgot the explore page, on the explore page... When I'm done with checking and liking my friends' stories, I go to the explore page, I watch cat videos (laughs). Cat videos, food videos, well what else any funny stuff. I hang out on the explore page, and at most if see something interesting, I show it to my friend. We chat about it. It just interferes. And then we leave it.

In this quote, it is seen that he uses social media as a main involvement where the conversational engagement is subordinated, but then he transfers social media content to the conversation as a side involvement and for a while involvement in the content becomes the main one that he and another interactant devote the major part of their attention and interest. Similarly, P7 admits that she when there is a beautiful sight, all of a sudden, she leaves everyone there and takes photos because she wants to share it

when she has is having a good time. P18 states that interactants' use of social media in face engagements as side involvements can also be mutual:

In such instances, I can be synchronised with my friends quite well. When he accesses to it, I also do it. When I quit, he also quits.

As the study shows, social media use also emerges as the main involvement individually; the participant devotes his/her attention to it in a face engagement while the conversation is a side engagement:

P17: When I'm bored I use it. If I'm bored, for like 3 minutes I navigate Twitter, Instagram, and then I'm back.

P14: Let's say it's been a long tiring day, and we're on the way home with friends. We're on the boat, tired and completely done. Then one takes it out, checks Instagram.

Furthermore, the study shows that in contexts where participants lose their interest or purpose in conversational engagements, they tend to subordinate social media use to conversational engagement where they take their time to wait until the flow of the conversation becomes promising for them.

P8: If they're talking about something I know well, I think I may look use it. Why not? There is nothing for me to learn or grasp. Then, if it's boring(laughs), yes why not?

The results also indicate that social media use in face engagements emerge as main involvements and conversational engagements as side involvements. Sharing photos and posting comments under them on social media in a face engagement is a main involvement that participants collectively devote their attention to:

P16: For example, we post the same photo and well you comment under mine, I comment under yours, he/she comments under yours.

Also, watching a video on social media is a main involvement for participants:

P25: Yes, we look at social media together with friends. Generally, we watch videos. We watch videos. We are fully fed by content yes, but it's some content after all you know, we don't watch it altogether. Mobile passes from hand to hand, well we laugh together if we're to.

Another social media use as a main involvement is checking and talking about posts on a platform.

P5: You know we directly talk about the thing on social media... The first thing that comes to my mind is we comment about someone's post. For example, we criticise a photo with her boyfriend that she posted.

P14: My friends take for example a post from a subreddit of our common interest and say "you wrote it didn't you," it is definitely you, right kind of things. Then we look at other posts and so forth... oh this is not the one kind of things...

In such instances participants mainly concentrate on social media in face engagements where the conversational engagement depends on their social media use, the content they are exposed to and their interactions on social media platforms.

The study also shows social media use emerges as side involvements in face engagements. During conversational engagements, checking social media as side involvements appear to be impulsive. Participants address to the fact that some

interactants do it without really paying attention to social media content they are exposed to but sliding it simultaneously.

P10: It's like an impulse. One is speaking, and it' like (touches his screen) all of a sudden people are like (takes his mobile and leans back) this (raises his head). It's very fast indeed. It seems he is focused, but what he generally does is (slides the screen fast). Very fast, very fast, and actually if we ask him, he can't remember what he's seen 20 seconds ago (leaves his mobile on the table), I think.

Although participants know that face engagements require a mutual agreement and admit that using social media in face engagements is unacceptable and signifies disinterest in the interactants, they believe that as long as they signal the *with* that they are listening to them, they think it is legitimised.

P9: I do this actually, but at the same time I do this, I'm listening, go on (gestures) I do this, and at the same time (pretends using her mobile) I look at it like this (laughs). You have my ears. I do this a lot. But, it's wrong. Shouldn't be like this. But I do it (lowers her voice).

Participants' tendency to show social media content when the main involvement is the conversational engagement is the most common one, which requires a high level of multitasking ability that most participants confess not mastering it. In the study, one participant claims that he is totally capable of participating in the conversational engagement (the main involvement) and check his smartphone and use social media as side involvements.

P17: ... I think I can do 2 or 3 things simultaneously. For example, while looking at my mobile, the person in front

me... you know I don't focus on it too much. Well, whatever I'm doing, I don't focus on it too much. I've got the habit of following my surrounding. I try to follow the location I'm in, my surrounding. If someone says something, I definitely hear it. Well, how interesting I find it is arguable, but I definitely hear it. I give a reaction to it.

In this quote from P17, it is seen that in a face engagement, the participant argues that social media use and conversation engagement coexist on equal terms. He claims he is able to use social media both as a main involvement and a side involvement. He claims that he is not losing his focus and can follow the surroundings after all, and as long as he gives a reaction to another interactant, he maintains that he is fully mastering the conversational engagement as the main involvement:

if I have to look at my mobile at that moment, even if I have an important thing to do, I can respond to others while looking at my mobile.

At a different level, P14 believes that the content that he is exposed to on social media matters if he intends to use it as a side involvement while being engaged in a conversational involvement:

Well, it depends on the importance of the thing on social media. Let's say I'm navigation on my timeline... I can completely understand what he says to me.

Other participants in the study present social media use as side involvements that they are engaged in temporarily as very short breaks during their conversational engagements for different reasons.

P4: At that moment... say there is a topic that attracts me. Although that topic would never attract me under normal

circumstances, at that moment because it becomes the most interesting topic in that context, I use it to check.

P5: There are times when we intentionally open something about an event and chat about it but this is not something like as I said before... It's not the way like my friend opens it in the middle of the conversation, looks at something, then shows it to us, well then, we don't talk about it. Sometimes we intentionally open it and say this and this happened... we show our comments to each other.

On the other hand, P20 distinguishes navigating the Internet in order to find some information related to the topic of discussion from social media use in face engagements. He maintains that when he searches such information, because there is a link between their conversation and the content on the screen, he can simultaneously listen to the *with*, which indicates that he uses his smartphone as a side involvement. However, P20, who states that when he is on social media, he is fully concentrated on the content on screen, thinks that all those visuals like cat photos attract his attention and he cannot follow what the *withs* says to him as what he sees on the screen is completely irrelevant to what they talk about.

The data also indicate that social media use is subordinated to main involvements. One of the most significant responses during the interviews is a striking metaphor used for social media use as a subordinate involvement in face engagements. P16 uses the metaphor *tespih*. *Tespih*, or *misbaha*, is in fact the Muslim prayer beads that believers use to count the times that they repeat words to glorify Allah. However, in Turkish culture, it is a common predominantly male culture to count the beads with fingers not necessarily repeating the religious words all the time in daily routine. Counting the beads is a very significant subordinate involvement in face engagements in Turkish

society. P16 maintains that using social media is similar to counting such prayer beads subordinated to conversational engagements:

The mobile functions like a tespih you know (imitating counting beads). Things just flow, but I talk to them here, or this side is on automatic (imitating tapping on the screen but looking at the person next to him, not the mobile). Someone's posted something, like it, posted, like it, posted, like it... I mean this is on automatic, and I'm here chatting. Or let's say I'm on Instagram, stories piled up there, as I said, they don't attract me, I slide and pass, pass, here I talk about something else. Well, it's a tespih (laughs), it's become a tespih. In the past, it was tespih, now it's the mobile.

Another striking metaphor for social media use in daily routine that participants use in the study is “a sleep companion” that a child cannot give up as P1 expresses:

Because it is there at all times, and it is something that you feel the absence of, it's like the sleep companions that children have. It's like the sleep companion that has become our daily companion. Maybe it's because we're afraid of being alone, we're always trying to be engaged in something.

Similarly, P25 explains that subordinated to her conversational engagement, she just slides it without a specific purpose or attention:

I navigate Instagram a lot. I just look at it (imitating holding her mobile) ... sometimes I look at it for the sake of looking at it actually. I don't look at something specific. I just slide

it you know (imitating sliding the screen) ... main page... well, explore page... both. I just look at both sliding.

The results also demonstrate that social media is used as a subordinate involvement when participants are in a condition where they need to pass waiting for someone or something.

P14: If I don't have an interaction with you and we're waiting for a friend, for instance, you navigate Instagram and I also open mine and check Reddit, you know. Because it's not really a social environment. It's just two friends (correcting)... two people strangers to each other sitting somewhere side by side. Well, he's not any different from the man sitting next to me on the bus. If we don't chat...

Social media use functions as waiting rooms when interactants are not interested in the topic of discussion but prefer staying in the social gathering until withs start a new topic of discussion they find interesting and decide to participate in the conversational engagement:

P20: He doesn't leave. After all, it's an occasion and we're all together. When that conversation ends, then let's say when we start talking about something that interests him, he'll leave his mobile and come back. Actually, he's waiting for this. He's hanging around on his mobile. This is his aim. He's hanging around, so he'll leave it and start talking to me when I start a conversation that he also wants to participate in.

Contrary to using social media in conversational engagements, the participants reject using social media as a side or subordinate involvement when they study in face

engagements because they find it distracting. Rather they prefer using it as main involvement when they give a break because they want to relax and let themselves go.

P5: I try to do something when there is a break just to kill some time, rest my mind. I try to stay away from such things. When you are in it, even if you don't show or tell it to others, you get lost in it.

P17: No, because I don't check social media while studying, and I don't need to, it's not distracted. If we give a break, I may need to look at it.

P14: If the deadline of the project is close... well because our stress level is high. Actually, then we say it's like giving a break or everybody relaxing.

2.3.5.4.2 Involvement Shields

The results of the study demonstrate that social media access emerges as an option for participants who tend to conceal their reluctance to participate in face engagements. The main difference between Goffman's involvement shields and the use of smartphones and social media as involvement shields is that while the former "involvement can be shielded by blocking perception of either bodily signs of involvement or objects of involvement, or both" (Goffman, 1963, p. 39), the latter bears no concerns of such. The study reveals that social media use in the new interaction ritual signifies the shield behind interactants find a safe space out of sight. P24 clearly defines the what it means to use social media in face engagements: "It's a tactic to be *invisible*. I'm *not* here." Participants confess that when they lose their interest in the topic of the conversation, sense of belonging to the community, or they are not in the mood, they do not leave or pretend appropriate behaviour especially in multi-focused gatherings. Instead, they start navigating social media.

P4: When everybody talks to one another, two topics are discussed, if I find none interesting, I look at my mobile.

P5: Say we don't chat or we're in a crowded place and I can't participate in the discussion, I can't say anything, then you get bored and can't resist putting hands out to the mobile. But, as I said before, when you're 2 or 3 people together, you chat, don't feel the need to. You don't even think about it.

The results of the study indicate that participants in the new interaction ritual use social media in order that they signal the interactant(s) they prefer avoiding conversation with them.

You can do it to people you don't want to... I mean my attention isn't on you (laughs), I'm not interested in you (gestures of surprise). How weird (smiles).

Moreover, social media use in face engagements is perceived as so common that it shields participants' intention of disengagements but does not receive strong reactions as P20 believes:

I think it's a tactic to drop our gaze you know. For example, if you don't want to maintain eye contact with someone continuously, well... to avoid the eye contact, you know not to upset that person. For example, while talking to you, if I look over there (looking up the ceiling), you would say what the hell. But, while talking to you, if I take my mobile and (imitating looking at his screen) then I am back, there won't be a problem most probably. Because you'd say what is he looking at, is there something? But I think... this... this is what I think... I think it's for avoiding the eye contact. But not sure.

In the context of studying, social media shields participants' incompetence in the subject matter discussed in face engagements. P7 confesses that she is into social media when she does not master the topic the group studies because she can neither understand what they discuss nor contribute to the discussion. On the contrary, if participants believe that they fully master the subject matter, while the rest is discussing the topic, they may prefer using social media to pass time in order not to get bored there.

P8: If they're talking about something I know well, I think I may look use it. Why not? There is nothing for me to learn or grasp. Then, if it's boring(laughs), yes why not?

Also, one participant using social media as the involvement shield in the face engagement legitimises the activity for other interactants:

P14: If you do it... (looks up) I may be doing it. If you do it, I do it (in a certain tone).

P23: When, for example, my friend takes his mobile and looks at it, then I also feel like looking at it. The one in front of you taking his mobile pushes you to do it.

P10 explains that one interactant triggers others' inclination to use social media in face engagements:

I think people are influenced by each other. You know when one takes the mobile out, oh OK if he has the mobile out, he's not looking at me, then when I don't speak, when there is no interaction, I think people are into that. They're into the mobiles. I don't know if there are like 5 people, and when one is looking at the mobile, it's exactly like yawning, it's like everybody is affected by that person.

Consequently, social media use in face engagements appear to be shield known, accepted and used by the majority; thus, it is the new involvement shields of the new interaction ritual in public space.

2.3.5.4.3 Margins of Disinvolvement

As the results suggest, using social media in face engagements is due to boredom, intention to isolate themselves, loss of concentration, sense of belonging to the group, or mood. When participants are into the social media, the study demonstrates that participants are provided with *visible evidence* that the interactant has lost his devotion to the social occasion, which shows the margins of disinvolvement in the new interaction ritual.

P25: I think well he probably has something else to and needs to go or he is bored of me speaking, he is uncomfortable, I say when someone is checking his mobile in front of me.

P16: If it's in my hand, say I have taken it out, well I'm shaking it, playing with the cover... these are signs of boredom. Signs of let me go (laughs).

P8: Uh-huh, yes, exactly, and so on. But it's just a reaction. You know it's like the one someone gives when you hit him. Not different, I guess.

The margins of disinvolvement are even more visible to the interactants when there is a conversation going on without any blockage but one participant continuously engaged in the screen.

P6: While we are having a good time, right from the start if someone texts... texts, texts, texts, and then does Instagram,

I consider if they are bored of us. Well, because I also do it, but I join the conversation at some point. But if one is entirely alien to us... texting others, you know I reckon if he's bored and this irritates me.

Another signal of such disengagements is that they cannot follow the conversation and miss the flow of topics. The interactants certainly notice the gaps in the conversations:

P5: I am telling something... while I'm speaking, he's responding someone on his mobile, I keep on calmly (laughs) somehow, but you feel the disconnection in that part. I mean in that part... you can't get any advice for that part or any comments about that part, you notice it.

P9: You ask something when he's into it, he says something irrelevant. It's completely unrelated to what you say (laughs). It means he's not listening.

Such gaps in conversations cause discomfort on both sides. When one is caught out in such a dissociated side involvements, regret and embarrassment occurs on their sides:

P4: I'm embarrassed. I feel embarrassed because I am doing something that annoys me as I said before... I'll be doing it then. So, I feel seriously embarrassed, apologise and I say I'll not do it again but (unpleasant facial gesture) I'm not sure how true it is.

P14: Well, when I miss something... well, I hate pretending that I got it and when people do it, I get really annoyed. That's why... well... I take it... shoot me, you know... I directly say I couldn't understand it, will you

repeat, I was into that, I couldn't get it, can you say it again, so on. I get shot.

P22: To be frank, I feel guilty because if it is done to me, I feel uncomfortable.

The interactants also signal the disengaged participants that they are aware of the disinvolvement:

P5: To check how well he's listening to what I'm telling or to what extent he understood what I said, I ask questions. Of course, I can't get any answers (laughs).

P14: I shut up when... well I check when they'll notice it. I keep silent, watch him for 5 minutes and he's still navigating on Instagram, this is a red flag for me. I should reconsider my relationship with him. But well, some people might check social media while chatting to let themselves go. When I shut up, if they say what's happening, you were telling this and that and so on, it's OK. But when I shut up and after 5 minutes if he says something totally irrelevant, I question why I'm talking to him.

The results study also reveals that the degree of relationships with the interactants is a factor in determining the margins of disinvolvement. The participants act according to the degree of their relationships:

P1: For example, if it's my mum who is interested in her mobile, it's not important 'cause it's my mum. Let her do it. We can talk later. But, if it's a friend, I may say hey what's that, what are you looking at. I may say hey listen

to me, I'm telling you something... I can say this to my close friends... (If the person is not that close) I don't say anything until she's done, but then I may say "are you done" to make a crack about it and then I may go on or maybe not. It depends.

P6: If they are very close friends of mine, I get upset. They can see that I'm upset (frowns) and they say OK I'm listening to you and leave their mobiles aside.

2.3.6 The Rules of Conduct – Deference

Research Question: What are the new rules of conduct in the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access?

As a result of adaptation to digital communication tools in daily practice and their integration into face engagements in public space, the patterns of behaviour have transformed in the new interaction ritual as the results suggest. The change of patterns of behaviour certainly brings alternative rules of conduct to society for the sake of the maintenance of social bonds. One of the participants of the study clearly addresses to this change or rather a transformation in society where social media use in public space is pervasive:

P12: Some things have already changed and the societal rules will change anyway. I mean it's not looking at each other face-to-face. Maybe in 10 years' time, it won't be inappropriate to look at the mobile (looks at his mobile) and talk to someone. It's not already seen inappropriate in our generation though... not much. It's going to affect face-to-face negatively... Someone looking at his mobile and

answering you has been normalised. This'll ruin not the face-to-face (laughs) but eye-to-eye completely... Sincerity. The sincerity that you show between you and the other looking at his face and looking at your mobile will be different. You won't understand his feelings fully. I'm taking it from an emotional perspective. There'll be instances of not understanding and knowing each other completely.

Similarly, P18 explain the transformation in the new interaction order and he at the same time questions mutual sincerity in the new codes of conduct:

I think it changes. It's like giving a message. With that guy... because otherwise you have to talk to him. Or you have to leave. It makes us insincere (laughs)... I've never thought in this way, but it affects... I mean conversations, dialogues are superficial, I think. I think it's superficial for learning about the person in front of us. Because there is always somewhere to turn, you're not bound to that person. You're not doomed to it. (thinking) Not bound I mean.

Contrarily, participants express discomfort regarding the use of social media in the new interaction ritual. P13 mentions someone suddenly starting to like photos on Instagram while they are watching a movie together, which disturbs her. She refers to the mutual contract between them stating that if it is a collective activity, mutual communication, this is disrespect:

Well, because normally when two people talk, we don't stop listening to the other suddenly and talk to someone else because you now this is a code of conduct. But it's like you behave as if no one is there, well it's like talking to someone

else on the phone. I mean you start communicating with a different social environment. That moment harms communication, I believe... With the life going on there... because each platform has brought the psychology of instant updates. It's the same logic in stories. Other people's lives go on, and they see this as a way of following them. I live my life here, but what are they doing there? I mean it's the reflexive instinct to access and check how the other life goes on.

The study explores *the rules of conduct* in the new interaction ritual under the categories of avoidance rituals and presentation rituals.

2.3.6.1 Avoidance Rituals (what is not to be done)

The participants of the study expressed the rules of conduct that determine what they believe people and certainly themselves must not do in face engagements where social media is used. To begin with, the results reveal that the participants in general reach a consensus on the idea that putting smartphones on the table and using social media in any face engagements means *disrespect* to the interactants. However, participants at the same time confess that they also use social media in face engagements because they have legitimate *reasons*, and to them there are certain conditions to using social media in front of the *with(s)*.

P2: Because if I'm with someone, meet someone face-to-face, I meet him, for I want to mutually communicate with him. If we don't, then we could have such conversations over social media through the internet. So, especially if we're talking about something serious or I'm sharing something with him, I feel I'm not taken seriously when he stays there looking at

his mobile without any eye contact or body language, which annoys me.

The results indicate that when *with(s)* express their discomfort or disturbance due to an interactant's social media use in face engagements, participants believe that they should stop doing it as a rule of conduct under specific circumstances. One of the conditions that they put forward is the type/size of social gathering:

P4: When I'm with him, I quit, yes. Because it... the second warning (unpleasant facial gesture) ... it's you know. It's hurtful, really hurtful. I condition myself. I definitely condition myself because in a one-to-one conversation, I want to tell and share everything. I want to listen to them at the same time. I treat in the way that it should be. At least in one-to-one relations... but in groups it might be interrupted. Today I can say I don't do it, but I might in a group. Because lots of things change, quite a lot of things are discussed.

Similarly, P20 who states that in partly- or multi-focused gatherings in public it is common and acceptable that while some participants maintain a conversation, other(s) use social media because they are not interested in the topic of conversation. However, he points out that when it is a fully-focused gathering, it is a problem since the talk turns into a monologue for the interactant who speaks. P22 also points out that he avoids using social media in fully-focused gatherings; nonetheless, when there are 3 or four people, he states, while 2 interactants are having a conversation about something that he cannot contribute to, he prefers checking his Twitter timeline.

Another condition is whether the social occasion requires full concentration and commitment or not; with this condition, the participants show they see social media

interruptive in face engagements. P4 argues that in public places like cinema or theatre, using smartphones and social media is unacceptable. He states that he is completely against people using smartphones in collective activities in such places. Besides, there are other places and social occasions that participants avoid smartphones and social media use.

P5: Actually, in daily life it happens in lots of places. I mean in class, when we visit someone, such things happen, yes. Well, now for example, I don't check it. I must not, and I don't. It's so. You know, the situation is not appropriate, it's more disturbing than ever here. Well, as said it's all about the focus. Because I really want to do some jobs and focus on the thing I'm doing, I keep my mobile away.

P16: I have it with me, but I put my mobile with the screen facing down the table (imitating) ... in my eyesight or not... in flight mode, whatever... I know the situations I should not reach it. In serious conversations especially. I think well strictly speaking if I don't touch my mobile, there must be a serious talk. Obviously, it's ringing, my phone's ringing, wait a minute, I say (looking at his iWatch and imitating switching it off) and I reject the call. I know this's interruption, too, but it disturbs me, the vibration I mean... Actually, before I go, I should turn on flight mode. Whatever, if it's serious, I don't. Never, whoever calls... But, in other situations, I'm more flexible.

According to the results, what participants do on social media is another condition in determining the rules of conduct:

*P5: I don't do the explore page on Instagram anywhere
or with my friends because once go in there, my attention
is fully there. I notice nothing spoken around me there.
So, I don't use it.*

Similarly, participants address to the importance of being on task and the motivation of interactants while studying, which determines their decision to use social media in face engagements. P6 explains that when people are back on the task, she realises how serious it is. Then, as she states, she tends to be more careful and tries to avoid using her smartphone while admitting that it is not an easy thing to do for her. However, she cares others and does not show them anything on social media in order not to spoil their concentration. Similarly, when conversational engagements are distracted due to social media use and participants even forget what they have been discussing previously, P19 finds it annoying if they are on task studying but believes that it is fine in random daily talks.

The results show that when the individual maintains that using social media in face engagements is commonly adapted and everybody does it today for a *reason*, they tend not to talk about any avoidance rituals. For instance, P25 expresses feeling annoyed of others using social media in fully-focused gatherings; nevertheless, she does not express any views regarding what is not to be done in partly- or multi-focused gatherings in public because she rationalises that when she feels isolated and out of context, she does use social media in face engagements, which legitimises not only her but also others' use of social media. When there is an ongoing conversation that excites her, she states that she does not feel the need to check social media on her smartphone anyway. Likewise, P17, who believes that he is capable of checking social media and chatting simultaneously, legitimises using social media in public by stating that people

and himself do it when they are bored and uninterested in the conversation. However, the rules of conduct in the presence of smartphones and social media, as the study shows, do not put using social media in face engagements in the to-do list unconditionally.

There are also participants who empathise with the interactants using social media in face engagements and develop a tolerant attitude to such behaviour in public space unless they are engaged in an important social occasion that requires complete concentration of interactants:

P14: I like empathising with people. It depends on the situation. Let's say it's been a long tiring day, and we're on the way home with friends. We're on the boat, tired and completely done. Then one takes it out, checks Instagram. I don't get offended, well I'm not hurt. I say he's tired, let him be. It's perfectly OK for me. But while working on a project or during the time that we must be productive, well we must do this and that kind of planning, if he's on Instagram there, I feel annoyed.

It is also possible that participants see instances of social media use in face engagements as alternative communication with people who are not with them. P7 states that she looks at the screen of the *with* and even reads the messages if she also knows the person the *with* is communicating at that moment, which cause them have a positive attitude towards interactants looking at screens.

What determines the rules of conduct is also the privacy concerns of participants who use social media in public space. One of the attitudes towards privacy in public space is that participants do not like the idea that others touch and play with their smartphones not because there is something secret necessarily but because smartphones signify the

personal space of individuals in public. Thus, they expect others respect the borders of their personal space.

P2: I don't really like it when they play with my mobile. I don't like people seeing my messages, content. It's not because they are secret, but it's as I said before, because of our borders. My idea is that I play with no one's mobile, and I don't want anyone doing that.

Moreover, the results show that there is a distinction in privacy concerns between general public space like public transportation vehicles and face engagements in public. In a general public space, where participants are surrounded with complete strangers, they feel extremely disturbed when someone intentionally or unintentionally see their screens and they believe the rules of conduct require people to avoid looking at others' screens:

P5: It's disturbing. Well, while communicating or doing anything on Instagram, Twitter, doesn't matter. It's disturbing when you're on any accounts because maybe you are writing something or looking at something private. On buses, metrobus you face such things. There are people deliberately standing and reading what you're writing (laughs). Yes, you're between saying or not saying something to them and can't really, so absurd. You are hopeless you know (laughs).

P25: For example, on the bus I open... well I can't look at it that comfortably (imitating having a mobile in her hand). At any moment something may appear on screen... well it's you know. That's why I look at my

screen like this on the bus (imitating shielding the screen with her hands).

The study also reveals that participants utilise the features of their smartphones to protect their privacy in public. One of the common precautions that they take is that they lower the brightness of their screens so that especially strangers around them cannot clearly see their screens.

P6: I lower the brightness of my screen when something like this happens. If it's too crowded around, I lower the brightness. Especially when I look at something on Instagram because both the time line and the explore... sometimes something really stupid pops up... a video, like it's a loud video, and I don't want to attract others' attention. WhatsApp is the same. I never want others read my messages. They are certainly strangers. Not a problem for the close ones.

The same participant, P6, also mentions that she has friends who put dark screen films on their screens so that people around them could not see what they look at on their screens. She states that it is like the films on the car windows which allow the owner of the phone see what is on the screen but not others. Also, P9 states that it is possible to hide the content of the messages while they are typing. In this way, it is possible to expose only the name of the recipient but not the verbal message and photos to be sent. In face engagements, when they are participants of a social occasion, on the other hand, their privacy concerns vary. When the *with(s)* are friends, there is still sensitivity towards specifically messages seen by other interactants.

P4: It disturbs me. It disturbs me a lot because I might be telling something private at that moment or I don't want anyone to see a message from someone even if it's an ordinary message from my family. You know, it's violation of personal rights and so disturbing. Phone is completely yours and full of personal information... someone seeing some information with or without your consent disturbs me, it's horrible.

However, the study also reveals that when with friends, some participants feel more comfortable. P6 states that friends can look at the content on her screen unless it is not her WhatsApp messages.

Similarly, P17 expresses that he does not have anything to hide from the people he is with. P15 states that he deliberately leaves his smartphone on the table when he goes to the bathroom in order to make the *withs* comfortable and signify that he trusts them. P22 refers to the habit of keeping smartphones on tables in face engagements and explains that it is the most common thus the socially accepted behaviour. Although he feels alright when he leaves his smartphone in his pocket, he feels the pressure to put it on the table due to the pressure he feels:

It's like is he hiding something. Especially when I meet my girlfriend and put my mobile screen down, (gestures meaning it is over). Of course, the perception is I'm hiding something. So, some people give importance to such things. It's like an obsession. To avoid this, I keep my mobile screen up although it's not that important to me. If someone keeps his mobile screen down, it doesn't attract my attention, but while sitting

with someone who pays attention to such things, I leave it on the table. Just to prevent people from having different opinions.

Another significant result of the study reveals that participants do not have serious privacy concerns regarding the social media platforms on their screens in public space. Participants expressed their privacy concerns regarding their messages (WhatsApp and direct messages on social media apps) and galleries (photos they send, receive and save) instead. For instance, P5 believes that not the social media pages but the messages, specifically WhatsApp messages, must be avoided in face engagements. P16 also declares that he does not care if someone sees his Instagram or Twitter pages; however, he asserts that messages are private. He states that if the *with* is a friend, *maybe* it is acceptable, but in general he prefers keeping messages private. P25 also points out that they do not worry about their social media timelines because they are open to everyone after all. She states that they could use the privacy settings if they want some privacy. However, she believes that in WhatsApp they are alone or at least with the ones that they want to interact with in groups, and she thinks that only intimate messages must be avoided. P9 points out that she avoids looking at the screens of *withs* when their galleries are open. She addresses to the importance of privacy regarding photos because to her, people can send each other special photos that they take or are taken and seeing such content is not proper.

A different concern is pronounced by P7 who states that she feels uncomfortable with a friend opening her social media application on her phone because there is the risk that that friend may accidentally tap like for a post that she may not approve. Similarly, P24 expresses his concerns regarding the possibility that someone else may like a post that he does not approve or send someone that he does not know a request to follow them. P14 explains that the social media platform matters in terms of privacy: he is sensitive if he is an anonymous user on that platform because he prefers staying anonymous and

does not reveal his account to no one including close friends and family members, but he points out that he does not care if someone looks at his Twitter timeline.

The study also shows that in the new interaction ritual, participants generally state that it is inappropriate to look at someone's screen without their consent in face engagements:

P14: I have a look at it if that person definitely gives consent and shows it to me. Never... I would never look at it because it's private. If I'm disturbed when someone looks at my screen, then they'll be disturbed I say and I never look at them.

P4: I look at someone's screen when that person says here, take it, look at this. Other than that, ... I don't... someone's phone... oh look at that (imitating secretly looking at something), oh what is he talking about, what's he checking, no I don't, it embarrasses me.

Using social media as a side involvement or even main involvement occasionally creates curiosity on the side of the other interactants. One of the factors that causes such a curiosity is the duration of the *with*'s engagement in social media. P16 states that if he navigates social media for a long time, he can comfortably crane forward to see the screen, and if he cannot see it, he states that he can even poke that person, poke the mobile and learn what they do there. The other factor, as the results suggest, is the degree of concentration or the attention that the *with* pays to social media in face engagements.

P13: Well, if he just glimpses at it, it's OK, but if I see he is focused, he is examining something, and if we're in the middle of a conversation, what's it that attracts his

attention and not me... you know this is not selfishness because there's communication at stake. I mean I wonder what's it that he's so focused on. If he's a close friend or family, I ask it openly. I mean what's it that distracts you (laughs). It's something I'm curious about. But, if it's not something that he's focused on, just a general navigation I mean, it doesn't attract my attention.

The study demonstrates that when the duration of social media use is long and the with concentrates on social media content in face engagements, the participants develop curiosity and show this to the interactants without any privacy concerns.

2.3.6.2 Presentation Rituals (what is to be done)

The participants refer to the obligation that smartphone and social media use must be avoided in fully-focused gatherings. P5 addresses to the necessity to be able to communicate in a face engagement though, but she asserts that social media is not a necessity.

The results also show that people put their smartphones away when they are in certain public spaces. P4 believes people must be detached from smartphones and social media in theatres and cinemas, P16 in the institution where he does internship, P25 in family gatherings, P6 during meals, and P17 in class or in the process of studying elsewhere. As expressed by the participants, the common reason behind their use of social media is boredom and isolation from the conversation. They in a way feel alienated. Thus, it is pointed out that when they enjoy the conversation with friends and family, they believe people do not use social media because they do not feel the need to.

P25: Well, there are occasions where I don't feel the need to actually. You know if we maintain effective mutual communication, such people, there are such people. I

don't touch my mobile when I'm with them. I don't feel the need to when I'm with them.

P5: Actually, as the name suggests it's social (emphasis put) media, there is socialness and you participate in it. While you are already on a social platform, you don't need another account, another world, I think.

Participants also avoid looking at their smartphones and checking social media when the social gathering requires them to have full concentration as the majority of the participants of the study assert that smartphones and social media access is distractive in face engagements.

P10: I don't like being distracted. I'm already such a person. I mean, why shall I look at my mobile when I go to a seminar or I want to listen to someone? I go there for that person in fact. I can look at my mobile anytime I want, but I want to be there. It's important to be there.

The study also shows that participants expect other interactants to communicate their use of social media in face engagements. They state that if the interactants state that they need to check something, it is acceptable.

P1: If that person says something like sorry, I need to check this, then I feel good again. Otherwise, I feel down.

Also, they assert that if they express their need to look at their smartphones, it is tolerated.

P8: You know maybe someone wrote something on WhatsApp, and there are like 30 notifications. Then I have a look at it. I look at it like this, checking what's

happened. Then I say oh this is the class group, then I move on. Of course, when I do this, I say oh sorry just a second, then I put it aside. It's not like oh OK you talk, but I'm looking at this kind of a thing.

2.3.7 Face-Work & Region Behaviour

Research Question: How do participants design and maintain the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access?

2.3.7.1 Face-Work

Goffman (1967) argues that when an incident that creates a threat for the *face* of interactants, the interactants use certain strategies to save their face and re-establish the order in the interaction ritual. The study explores *face-work* in the new interaction ritual where the instances of social media use occur under the categories of avoidance processes (*defensive strategies, protecting strategies, preventive strategies, and ignorance*) and corrective processes.

2.3.7.1.1 Avoidance Processes

The results of the study demonstrate that in the new interaction ritual, participants use defensive strategies in public space to save their *face*. The participants are likely to see an interactant's use of social media in a face engagement a threat to their *face* and tend to distance themselves so that they can avoid communicating messages inconsistent with their *line* to be preserved. In such an instance, the participants express that they also use social media so that they could save their *face*.

P16: Say I'm speaking, then I see nobody takes me seriously, everyone is on the mobile. I mean when they are on the mobile, then I'm at the table like this (imitating looking

around). You know instead of staying there doing nothing, I also check my mobile.

P14: If I'm not alone, if you're with me, I don't. But, well it may happen... if you do it... (looks up) I may be doing it (in a certain tone). Oh, this sounds a bit... yes (smiles).

Another defensive strategy that participants use is to move away from the face engagements in order to save their face:

P25: I definitely keep the conversation short. And you know... I feel uncomfortable because I think he's bored of me or what I say. That's why, I keep it short, and if it's possible, I leave the place. I go somewhere else or I also pretend I have something else to do. Yes, I do this.

Moreover, the results also indicate that participants also use social media to save their face and maintain their line when they feel threatened in a face engagement where they feel alienated.

P5: Say we don't chat or we're in a crowded place and I can't participate in the discussion, I can't say anything, then you get bored and can't resist putting hands out to the mobile.

P25: I think people do this because they feel bored. I mean... I don't know it's the friends... For myself, if the chat in the occasion doesn't really attract me, I check it. I think people do this for this, too. Because they are bored.

Another result of the study shows that using social media itself is used as a tool to save the interactants' face when they break the mutual consensus when they are bored in a face engagement:

P1: When I'm really bored, I read something on Twitter (imitating scrolling down the timeline and having half an eye on her mobile), then I say sorry I'm reading something and then I switch it off. There (laughs) they see the texts, so I prove myself... it's more valid I guess.

P21: You know you're talking about something, and then there is nothing left to say. When you just look at each other's face (imitating taking his mobile out of his pocket) this... only one... you look at your mobile like this.

Beside defensive strategies, the results also show that participants use protecting strategies showing courtesy, politeness and respect to *with(s)* when instances of social media use occur in face engagements. Their courtesy, politeness and respect are rooted in their power of empathy as the results suggest.

P17: Well, again, because I use it due to that feeling of boredom, I suppose that person in front of me is also bored and I try to attract his attention. I try to involve him. I feel sad because I feel that person is bored, and I try to attract his attention. In the end... you know I don't like being in a social occasion with people I'm not that close. And if someone I'm close to is bored, I deeply feel the need to attract his attention. I try to do this.

P14: I like empathising with people. It depends on the situation. Let's say it's been a long tiring day, and we're on the way home with friends. We're on the boat, tired and completely done. Then one takes it out, checks Instagram. I don't get

offended, well, I'm not hurt. I say he's tired, let him be. It's perfectly OK for me.

P15: Maybe, you know it's important... let's be fair... maybe he's expecting an important message. He may be checking it to see if it's here or not. You know we can't know what he's thinking. We can't know why he's doing it. That's why, before judging him that he's doing this because of this and that is wrong, I think. We can never know.

The study also reveals that participant use protecting strategies to save their own *face* when they use social media in face engagements and cause a gap or breach in the ongoing conversational engagement. They tend to accept the fact that they have missed the flow of the conversation, apologise and kindly ask to repeat so that they could compensate their loss of interest in face engagements.

P5: That's why I ask him to repeat what he's said with apologies because I feel so uncomfortable. I mean even if that person doesn't feel uncomfortable, or it's a completely insignificant thing, I do feel so uncomfortable as I didn't hear that part.

P15: Oh, sorry, there was an important message and I looked at it. Could you explain once again, I say. He tells again you know. No one has ever said no, I won't (laughs). Well, I make him feel that I don't do it intentionally. Not a problem among us.

Furthermore, they use protecting strategies in face engagement in advance not to create an inappropriacy in the conversational engagement and take precautions so that they would not cause with(s) lose their *face*.

P16: I don't check it if I receive private messages if there is someone in front of me, but if messages are from the board and there are some... I mean if it's something urgent I say... give me 1 minute, I have to answer this, and then I write to the board. Well, I do something truly urgent, and then I leave it without checking other things there.

In face engagements, participants use preventive strategies against social media use to save their *face* and maintain their *line*. The results demonstrate that participants avoid creating inconsistencies beforehand through measuring the right time to communicate.

P17: When he has social media, the mobile in his hand, I'm careful at not saying something to him even if I want to say it. In the end, I know I'll not receive a concrete response, so I don't deal with it. I mean what's the use (laughs)?

P14: I shut up when... well I check when they'll notice it. I keep silent, watch him for 5 minutes and he's still navigating on Instagram, this is a red flag for me. I should reconsider my relationship with him. But well, some people might check social media while chatting to let themselves go. When I shut up, if they say what's happening, you were telling this and that and so on, it's OK. But when I shut up and after 5 minutes if he says something totally irrelevant, I question why I'm talking to him.

P1: I say he is tired of me when he behaves like that. Or I say there is something wrong... I mean there is a

disconnectedness in the environment, so he is looking at social media. He may also feel peckish, but you know I behave more carefully. It's like going on a diet. You know I am on a diet until I reach my ideal weight, until I reach the communication I aim at (laughs).

When they want to share some social media content with others, they also use preventive strategies. P4 states that he hesitates showing something on his screen in a face engagement because if he does not show it to a friend at the right time secretly, he reveals to the *with(s)* that he is using social media there:

Then I declare I am not listening to them. You tell me something, right now... while you're asking me a question, it's like come on forget about the question (imitating showing the mobile to the researcher) it's as terrible as I show it to you now. Well, you know I would never want to see the expression on your face. I don't want to do that because this scares me.

P19 explains that he alternatively uses social media in face engagements to save his and others' face as he thinks if they realise that he is not in the mood or demoralised and not into the conversation, this also causes disruptions in the conversational engagements. To prevent such instances of conversations where he cannot retain the interaction, he is into his smartphone.

The results also show that participants use ignorance as a strategy during the avoidance process to save their *face*. First of all, they ignore the use of social media of *with(s)* and accept the new face engagements as they are. P15, who notes that everything changes rapidly, but everybody adapts to the new situations fast and easily, admits that all of them are aware of the fact that social media use has become a habit that they cannot

resist, but because all of them are the same, they are fully in acceptance of the situation. Thus, he believes that when a *with* uses social media in a face engagement, there is nothing intentional. P16 states that if what they do is simply chitchat, nothing important, they can use social media there, and it is not a problem for him. P25 similarly states that she does not even recognise it because it is already integrated in daily life. P21, on the other hand, declares that he ignores *withs* using social media in face engagements as long as the conversation is stuck and they do not talk about something significant or *withs* show some contents to each other and have a good time; nonetheless, he is disturbed if they use social media when he is speaking to *withs*. What really disturbs him is the unpleasant feeling that he is not listened to as he declares.

Another way of using ignorance strategies is that participants state that they play the same game as other when they use social media in face engagements. P9 points out that she does not give any reactions to the interactants using social media because she thinks that if she is ignored, she also ignores them. Participants also tend to either ignore the use of social media of *with(s)* when people

admit they cause a breach in face engagements; however, if they do not, then they refuse seeing that person. P10 is one of the participants who believes that such people lack empathy, so they use social media in conversational engagements:

There're some people, and you know they say sorry (takes and leaves his mobile on the table). I sympathise with such people. OK, he's aware of it. Some are no... well they are disconnected. Then I let it go.

P5 is one of the participants in the study who states that she does not meet the person once again if she is attached to his mobile that much. She also expresses her denial of the situation:

P5: This means he doesn't care about me or he is not concentrated at that moment. If he is not, I treat him in the same way. I mean I behave in the way it's suitable to that moment for that day.

The participants, as the study reveals, also consider the level of the relationship with the interactant to decide whether to ignore or show a reaction to social media use in face engagements.

P10: Well, I let it go you know. I mean if the person facing me doesn't listen to me, I do nothing. It depends on my relationship though. For example, we've newly met, and if you look at your phone, my reaction to you and my close friend will be different. I say to my close friend, hey what are doing dude! Why are you looking at that kind of reactions? What's so important there? If it's you, I let it go. I let it go or change the subject.

The study also reveals that participants ignore social media use in face engagements since they believe that whatever they do or say, nothing changes. Thus, they tend to use protecting and consequent ignorance strategies to save their face in the new interaction ritual:

P18: I used to get furious... when I was in high school... then I got furious. But now, I'm impassive... What has changed? Nothing's gonna change. People tend to do what they prefer. And to pull them away from their preferences is like dictating something, I think. I mean let them do what they want, what makes them happy. I talk to them, OK, but this means what I say is not worthy. If it wasn't, they could

hear it while using it too. It would attract their attention, I think. I support they do what they are free to do.

2.3.7.1.2 Corrective Processes

The study concentrates on the corrective processes in face engagements where interactants are likely to use social media. It reveals that despite their declarations of not using social media in face engagements in the surveys they completed before the interviews and no matter how strong their denial is at the beginning, at one point during the interviews, participants accept that they also use social media in conversational engagements for some reasons that they put forward to legitimise their behaviour. They at the same time project on their own use of social media together with others doing it together with their attitude towards others' behaviour of such. Thus, the results are processed under two categories: self-correction and correcting others.

The study reveals that regardless of the amount of own social media use participants are engaged in, they are responsive to interactants looking at their smartphones when they expect them to listen to them. The working consensus is broken when one or more interactants ignore the conversational engagement; thus, most participants find this disturbing, unpleasant, and even offensive.

P3: I think everybody gives the same reaction when they realise that they are not listened to. No matter how often she also does that. Even if she does it more than I do... you know not being listened to... in the one-to-one, it's a trouble... well it's sadness... you know it's not maybe sadness but... it's like you know a slight annoyance and they rebuke.

The study also reveals that participants show different reactions to *withs* based on who they are; they have different reactions to friends, family members, acquaintances, and almost strangers who they first meet in face engagements.

P21: If he's a close friend of mine, I say switch it off. But if he's someone I've newly met, I say nothing in fact. I don't know but I think he eliminates himself (laughs)... I mean I say I think I can't have a conversation with this guy.

P1: For example, when my mum is into her mobile, it's not important for me because it's my mum. Let her look at it, we can talk about it later. If it's a friend of mine, then I may say what's that, what are you looking at. I may say hey I'm talking to you, listen to me.

P11: What're you doing, I'm telling you something here, I say (with an angry gesture) if it's a close friend of mine. Or I can say is it so urgent that you look at it now. [if not a close friend] I may ask if what he looks at is something significant (in a cynical tone). I mean, I'm not shy to show such a reaction. I say it openly.

P25, who believes that social media use is very much integrated into daily life practices, also refers to the level of friendship in the corrective process. She explains that she warns her friends but not acquaintances who she keeps the conversation short with in such instances. She thinks that when she warns them, they do not really understand or respond to it as expected:

Well, we say see you and leave, and then we continue as always. If they understood, they would apologise,

something... I mean there would be chat about it among us. But no such things happen. Well, I don't know (laughs). It depends on how close we are. You know if we are close enough, I would not cut it short, but I ask why you're not listening to me.

The majority of participants express their feelings of embarrassment and sadness and accept that what they do is unpleasant. The results show that when they are warned by *with(s)*, they tend to compensate their “fault” but confess that in the long run, they may not change their behaviour or habit (as some suggest) permanently. P5 complains that when she reacts to others’ using social media, she receives unpleasant responses:

It turns into an argument after a while. Because when you say you are on the phone and don't listen to me, you receive a reaction as if you had said something bad to them. Well, when you make them face their mistake, you receive terrible responses. Actually, you are right. You know I sometimes ask them what I have just said. What's your answer? No answer of course. You know you are right, but get negative reactions. It's something absurd.

P5, who states that she reacts to *with(s)* using social media and not devoting themselves to the conversational engagement, accepts that she also receives strong reactions from others, too, but she is confident that she saves her *face* as much as she can only if she recognises the times she is tempted to:

They react in the same way (laughs) but I don't think that I react as much as they do. Because I really stop using it and listen to them, you know. I listen to them even better

because I feel I have to concentrate more because of what I have done and I listen to them better. I reduce using it, but to tell the truth sometimes you are not aware of it. Well although you say you don't like it, you don't do it, you do it unwittingly. But I try to pay attention as much as I can.

Similarly, P14 believes that his reactions to others using social media in conversational engagement do not cause them change their behaviour while questioning himself showing the same behaviour:

While a person who is talking to me and talking about something important but doing it [using social media], I don't think he values me. I don't think he values what I'm telling him either. You know it's different... I think I'm contradicting to myself a bit. While I'm playing a game, I listen to a conversation, but at the same time I get angry with others because they don't listen to me (in a questioning tone).

Participants commonly prefer teaching a lesson to *with* who is engaged in social media in a face engagement. One of the ways to teach *with* a lesson is to create silence in the middle of the conversation. P14, who states that he stops speaking when the *with* uses social media in a conversational engagement in order to correct them when they are disengaged:

Well, when I shut up, he continues looking at it. You know if he's fully into the content but not listening to me, well sure there is so much noise around, I don't think he recognises me being silent... People are sensitive to their names. In the middle of the conversation, if I say... say

you're looking at you mobile now... if I say Ms. Tüge you... because you're sensitive your name, you raise your head and reply and there you are. Well, how much attention he pays or not... You know when I say Ms. Tüge while listening to me, see you're looking at me listening. Now I understand you listen to me. But if you don't, you directly say "pardon me" etc.

Another one is that they check if the *with* is listening. P22 points out that when he realises the *with* is completely into the social media not listening to his, he says something completely irrelevant to the flow of conversation. If the *with* continues nodding to confirm, then P22 shows a reaction jokingly or seriously depending on the level of the relationship they have.

Furthermore, participants show interest in *with*'s screen to signal that he needs to stop looking at the screen. P8 explains that rather than reacting to their social media engagement, she asks them what they are looking at and show them her intention to look at the screen. Similarly, participants also test the interactants when they realise that they are engaged in social media in a face engagement so that they could make them face the breach that they create in the mutual consensus:

P1: Doesn't matter what I tell at that moment. I say something that she must oppose to, but she says like, oh OK why not. Actually, she must say no, don't do that, you know. But she can't be there, can't listen... She responds like that because she's playing with her mobile... I raise my voice to attract her attention. I say, oh you say that (raises her voice with a surprised intonation) kind of things so that she could panic and say what have I done.

Then she could raise her head and say what have you said. This is a working mechanism (laughs).

More directly, as the study indicates, participants choose to make the interactant face that the conversation is more important than what they look at on social media. To do this, as P6 explains, they have a look at what they look at on screen and say “oh, that’s what you look at” in a belittling manner and signal that she tells something else there. She certainly notes that she can do this to an interactant who she has a close relationship with.

The study demonstrates that when one is disengaged in a conversational engagement, they admit it and ask the interactant to explain again on condition that they have a close relationship with the interactant.

P6: Can you tell again (laughs)? I mean I generally say this. If we are close, he does. But sometimes he’s not someone I know well... I can’t ask it (laughs with a gesture expressing desperateness) ... can’t do it, I don’t dare.

A different attitude towards own social media use behaviour in face engagements is concealing the emerging disengagement as the results of the study show. P25 confesses that when she realises that she is disengaged, she stops using it and tries to catch up with the conversation picking up some words, hints, as much as she can trying not to reveal her disengagement to *with(s)*, and she states that she is more careful then. P25 also mentions that in such instances of disengagements, they can tease each other because they are close friends. She states that she is exposed to such teasing, and she thinks that they are right to do it.

Due to a general acceptance of the new rules of conduct in face engagements, it is also seen that some participants do not see an inappropriate behaviour to correct. P16 refers

to the degree of interest in the topic of the conversation and also the level of friendship in such instances. He expresses that when he is in company of close friends, if the topic of the conversation is out of his interest, he navigates social media and no one really cares. However, if he is or others are expected to express an opinion and contribute to the conversation, he points out that they warn each other to listen to it. Such warnings do not cause them self-correct their behaviour of disengagement, as he states, they are close friends and such things happen among them. In other words, in casual talks, such warnings are common to them. Finally, he addresses to the fact that in fully-focused gatherings, if the *with* is sensitive about such disengagements, he states that he is more careful when he meets the same person. Similarly, P15 states that because he takes it easy and approaches the interactant lightly, the interactant does not change his behaviour or try to avoid using social media in face engagements. He also adds that he is not critical about such people. P17, who is confident that he can talk and simultaneously use social media without being disengaged, states that such corrective processes are experienced because everybody uses social media in face engagements, so they do not feel the need to warn each other.

2.3.7.2 Region Behaviour

The study focuses on the *region behaviour* in the new interaction ritual under the categories of back stage/region and front stage/region. During conversational engagements, or rather an ongoing performance in the front stage, participants tend to shift from the front to the back stage, which is the social media platforms, and then back to the front. The main focus of the study is to explore how such shifts between the front and back stages shape the region behaviour in the new interaction ritual.

2.3.7.2.1 Back Stage/Region

The results of the study indicate that social media platforms that participants simultaneously interact with in face engagements turn into the back stage where the

performance in the front stage is fabricated. When participants lose their interest in the conversational engagement, they think that they have the right to use social media. In this case, they leave the front stage and access to social media, which turns into the back stage of the face engagement that they participate in.

It influences the topics in face-to-face communication. I mean when people see something viewed and shared many times, the idea that all people have seen this pops out... Without even explaining what it is, just giving a bit of information, they say have you seen this. A conversation opens, and this happens frequently... (Social media) is a platform that influences the content and dynamics of conversations I think.

It is likely that participants use social media content as a tool, or rather a key to the door of the front stage, to be back to the front stage when they are disengaged:

P2: The first thing I do is watching the Instagram stories. Then, I check the Instagram feeds. If not enough, I check Facebook or the events there. By the way, I also like very much, you know, searching for places to eat out on Zomato (laughs). All of a sudden, I say hey look this is a great place, let's go there (laughs) and interfere with their conversation and interrupt them.

Similarly, social media use provides participants with resources that they can utilise to maintain their performances in the front stage. P9 explains how social media content contributes to the face engagements. She states that anything ranging from recent popular headlines to cosmetic tips that interactants think it may interest others comes

up during face engagements. When the social media content has the potential to lead other topics, P9 reports that one social media content brings out other topics, different interactants start showing different content, but if the content shown does not have this potential, interactants shortly express their ideas and cut the conversation. One of the participants, on the other hand, brings an explanation to the instances when conversations are stuck. P15 believes that it is the social media that makes interactants indifferent towards each other in face engagements:

I believe social media is antisocial media. On the contrary, it makes us lonely because you can get some things more easily, see things more easily. Then, you need neither to text nor to meet. You know what everybody is doing. Nothing is special then, there is no excitement. Everything is mundane. Then it is... there is nothing to talk about when you meet people face-to-face. Why? Because you can always reach them via WhatsApp or Instagram whenever you want to.

Still, the same participant, P15, admits that social media provides them with resources to maintain the conversational engagements:

It elaborates the conversation. Well, it... it doesn't cut a topic of conversation or interrupt it. It's like adding some other ingredients or spices to the meal. If we take the conversation like a recipe, you add some of this and some of that, and then there is conversation. You know they say the topics... one leads to another; social media is a tool for that. A video or a funny content that you see there is the thing that you talk about at that instance.

Similarly, for P22, social media is resourceful in a conversational engagement:

As I said, I'm interested in photography. There's an Instagram influencer I follow. He's also a photographer. When my friend and I were about to go on holiday, we said Sezgin Yilmaz had a post like that. Look here it is, we're going there too. We said we can go there and shoot photos like this.

The results indicate that in this process of fabrication, social media content integrated into conversational engagement derives from both their simultaneous use of social media in face engagements and their previous exposure to social media that they remember to bring out in the front stage. Participants express that during face engagements, when they leave the front for a reason and access to social media and stay there as the back stage, they are likely to bring some content to the front:

P4: You like books... At that moment we have a conversation about books and say you like science-fiction, I hate it, at that moment I see it, read it (imitating) and like that. Then I say you know (imitating showing his screen) hocam this might interest you. Well based on what we talked about and that post, this might be shaped. This is like I'm bored of hanging out there alone, come on let's do it together kind of thing I guess (imitating showing his screen).

The study also reveals that prior exposure to social media content contributes to the development and continuation of conversational engagements in the new interaction ritual. P11 expresses that when they see social media content related to a topic of discussion that they have had in a face engagement before, they share such content with other interactants online. Then, when they gather in a face engagement later, they again

use the social media content as a tool to generate discussion. In this way, the previously interaction online among the interactants functions as the process of fabrication that they utilise in face engagements.

Also, the participants visiting the back stage use the content that they are exposed to on social media platforms in face engagements to generate topics of discussion when participants feel the conversation is stuck.

P13: I mean maybe the topic is finalised. There is a moment of silence (laughs). In such cases many... I think many people turn to or even if it's not like that, people may see or remember something and say let me say this, let's laugh, talk about it.

Similarly, P2 explains that when they were on holiday “in the middle of nowhere,” at one point they were done with chatting and ran out of topics to talk about. She states that everybody was into social media navigating privately but sending social media content they found interesting to each other from Instagram direct messaging. She points out that in that way they initiated conversations among themselves because they used to check the content sent and then discuss the comments verbally. In this way, participants use social media platforms as the back stage to nurture the conversational engagement in the front stage when it is in crisis; in other words, participants use social media to fabricate content that they can utilise to initiate and foster conversational engagements in the front stage.

When participants bring content from the back stage to the front performance in face engagements, such content has the potential to control the conversational engagement in the front stage.

P4: Well, we... say we talk about something at that moment, and as you say he checked his mobile and

overreacted to it. Then I'm directed to it, and next we can entirely continue the conversation with that topic.

P16: Sometimes my friend shows it to me (imitating). Well, how do you find this guy thing, and this can be our topic then. Maybe it lasts for 1,2,3 minutes, maybe it goes on for 5 minutes. If he is on Instagram, you know it's like come on check his Instagram, look what's there kind of things just go on and on. Oh, if his profile is public (laughs) it lasts even longer.

Alternatively, P20 claims that the motivation behind social media use in face engagements is to fabricate the conversational engagement when the flow of the dialogue is stuck for that interactant who finds the topic of discussion uninteresting:

Especially when there're friend who aren't involved in the discussion but use social media, it's more... for example, he wants to be involved, but let's say the topic of conversation doesn't attract him. Then what's he gonna do? He'll change the subject. Then one of the reasons why he uses social media might be this. He's searching something to change the subject. When he puts it forth, we'll divert to that topic directly. We'll fabricate new topics from that one. I mean it's quite convenient. Social media can be used even to change the topic of discussion.

Participants at the same time make use of their reservoir of social media content that they are previously exposed to:

P17: If anything occurs to them, as I said if there is anything they saw before and if it's something that they can find and chat about, they show it. I do it too.

P17: For example, if I don't really believe some news, I read is trustworthy, I try to confirm it with the opinions of others.

P25: If there's something that comes to their mind, as I said anything that they have seen before and they can talk about and find, they show it. I do it, too.

It is also seen that participants tend to save and store social media content prior to conversational engagements when they believe that specific content could initiate conversation with friends in a face engagement:

P1: Yes, yes, I say like I've seen something on Twitter or I say there was a statement like this and it's so right, isn't it?... I initiate a discussion... I also show it. If I hadn't lost it... If I had taken the screenshots (nods and laughs) otherwise it gets lost.

However, previous exposure to social media content that ignites the dynamics of conversational engagements can be a disadvantage for those who do not closely follow the trends on social media. P8 is one of such participants who reports that she follows some content of her interest like cosmetics, make-up videos on her anonymous account rather than following and interacting with people she knows on her other account with her real name. She intends to put a distance between social media and herself because she thinks it makes her unhappy and cause her to feel miserable when she is exposed to all these 'happy' people. Then, in a face engagement, where interactants utilise their knowledge of trends on social media, she feels excluded:

Because I don't follow, if anything popular happens there, especially on Twitter, everybody talks about it, but I don't understand it. Hey tell me about it, I don't understand, what's happened, I say. Well, there comes one person tells this and that happened because he has to but he huffs and puffs of course.

It is also common that when they use social media, they relate the content to certain people that they are not together at that moment. They intentionally save contents because they think it will interest them, and when they meet, they share the contents, which become the centre of the conversational engagement then, with them.

P6: There are people who I haven't seen for ages. You know I see some contents and say if she were here, she'd laugh at this a lot. I save it. That day I show it to her for example. She laughs really, but I intentionally search and find things and show them to her you know. I think sometimes people look at social media for this reason.

Beside saving social media content for future reference, participants also share content online when they are not together, and then they put the content in the centre of the conversational engagement:

P22: I shared some content some time ago. They scored a basket that made them win the match, and I shared it online in the morning. At noon, when I met my friends, I brought it up, I said have you seen how he scored. Everyone expressed their surprise, and we talked about it.

Moreover, participants use social media as a resource to collect information about the people they meet first. If they interact with users on social media and then meet them,

before the face engagement, they check the users' profiles and build the conversation on what they learn about them on social media.

P9: Well, everybody today meets on social media and sees each other afterwards. If she's someone I meet there and I don't know her well, I check which places she has visited, what she does, or what kind of posts she's shared, what content she's shared, and then I open topics of conversation accordingly.

The results also indicate that participants use the conversational engagements as the back stage where they fabricate their performance on social media platforms. Their use of social media as the front stage where they show their performance to the audience is mostly concerned with the photos that they take and prefer sharing them with that larger audience. In face engagements, they collectively fabricate the impression and the message within the photo that they take.

P16: We first look at the photo taken because we don't take only one. 10 or 20 photos are taken. We choose there. I'm posting this photo (imitating pointing at the photo on the screen), you know edit it, use some colours, some contrast whatever. Before doing it, I say hey, have a look at it, I'm posting a photo. In fact, let's say everybody is OK, give permission, I've arranged and edited it, look I've edited it, this is the edited version like that (imitating showing it to someone), shall I post it? I ask, you know, I ask if I would post it.

P7: Together on social media... For example, it can be posting a comment. For example, when with me she says write this comment.

The concern in fabricating the content in the front stage is due to the impression that participants intent to create on social media.

P3: Say, I look terrible (in the photo) ... (thinking). Depending on the users she follows, I say don't share it. Well, I don't really care, but let's say if there is someone important (implying someone she's flirting with and laughing), then I definitely say you can't share this (laughs).

P19: To show off or when I want to present myself, it's about me, I mean physically, I make people comment on my state. Will you write this sort of stuff?

The back stage evolves into an even more complex one in the new interaction ritual in different ways as the results demonstrate. One of such complex patterns of interaction is that when they have a photo taken, they fabricate the impression that intend to build on social media not only with the interactants in face engagements by showing them on their screens but also via WhatsApp where they discuss whether it is a photo of shareable value or not with both the interactants present there and also people away.

P9: When not with me, then that's what WhatsApp groups are for (laughs). The photo is shared there, people are asked if they liked it or not. Or, well usually we're between two photos. We ask which one between the selected we should post.

Another complex pattern is fabricating social media content in face engagements in order that they create an interaction with someone who is not present there through social media platforms:

P24: A close friend of mine shares a photo with a beautiful view and he looks handsome there. We all post comments that are linked to each other. For example, I write "hand," and he

writes “some”, and it’s “handsome” in comments one after the other... Then he understands us and gets we’re together. He also laughs, gets happy.

The participants also realised the contradiction that they have during the interviews. When they are asked whether they care likes and comments for their posts on social media, the majority declared that they do not. However, they at the same time expressed that they fabricate primarily photos and also comments or messages in face engagements due to their concerns of self-representation.

P9: It’s the will of posting the good one (laughs). In fact, it’s contradicting... (laughs). It really contradicts. Right now I do see... I’ve just realised it when I said it, yeah. Contradictory, yes. At first glance, you don’t care about likes but you do care how you look in the photo. Then you try to choose the beautiful one (laughs). Wow, that’s good (laughs).

Moreover, they are engaged in the social media performance together and use the face engagements as the back stage for this performance. Participants let the interactants in face engagements know and see the photo they post on social media and ask them to interact with that post.

P5: Hey look, I’ve posted a photo, check it. Is it nice, is it OK kind of things happen for sure. Even if he asks your comments before posting it, after he posts, he says I posted it, check it you know. The expectation from this check it thing is about receiving likes and comments I think because you’ll see it eventually after all. You’ll like it or not. But, when he says

check it, even if you don't post a comment there, you'll say oh nice (laughs). He seeks some satisfaction.

P6: Once she asked me to post a comment for her photo. And I said OK, I will. What comment should I make, I asked, and we discussed.

Another common practice is that participants ask opinions of *with(s)* when they interact with social media posts. P2 expresses that she asks her friends' opinions when she posts a comment, and she is also asked to give her opinions when her friends post comments on social media. She states that especially if she is flirting with someone, she asks a friend what to write or if she would use an emoji or not. In this way, the face engagements in the new interaction ritual serve the interactants save their *face* on social media platforms. Moreover, the *with(s)* like the friend's post and/or post comments under it on the social media platform, or at least make compliments in the conversational engagement to save both own and the others' *face* both on social media and in the social occasion they are engaged in.

2.3.7.2.2 Front Stage/Region

The presence of smartphones and social media access in face engagements and the fact that participants cannot resist using it for different reasons certainly changed the nature of front stage performances in the front stage as the results indicate. The study demonstrates that social media content appears or is brought into the front stage/region by interactants in different ways and for various reasons. The participants explain that social media contents can appear in conversational engagements independent from the topic of conversation.

P24: I mean in general it's free of topics we discuss. I mean let's say a friend is talking. If I see something, if something attracts my attention, you know it's not connected to our topic.

At that moment, I've seen this and also this, this attracted my attention I say and feel like sharing it. So, it's usually independent.

The results also indicate that the areas of interest of the interactants determine participants' decision to share social media contents with others in face engagements. P15, who states that the social media content that they share in conversational engagements with other interactants is not necessarily connected to the topic of conversation, refer to the importance of their interest areas in bringing social media into the new interaction ritual:

If it's a shared area of interest, it happens often. If it's not something that wouldn't really interest them, I don't say it of course. It's mostly because I know the person in front of me. I tell something that they can also show interest and we can continue talking about.

In this way, interactants of the new interaction ritual bring social media to the front stage/region as an alternative source of topic of discussion to maintain the continuum of the social gathering in public.

Another reason for the emergence of social media content in the front stage/region is the current popular topics that interactants are exposed to are also potential topics in face engagements.

P12: If something is on the social agenda, something trendy, it happens often. We open up a discussion, when the conversation is over and we are off home, I see the same topic on social media. It has to be something popular though. Not like the chats about games or music.

The majority of participants point out that they prefer sharing social media content with the other interactants in face engagements by primarily showing them on their screens to them, which is one of the most common actions in the front performance in the new interaction ritual. They state that if the content is too long or the with is not able to check it there, they send it over direct messaging (DM) but never share it on social media and let them see it there unless they are away.

P17: If they are with me, I show it or tell it to them. If they're not, I share it online at that moment. With the people next to me, I don't send a message online.

The general inclination is that participants share social media content which is funny, amusing, entertaining and also any content that they think the *with(s)* are attracted to. The results indicate that the social media content integrated into conversational engagements interrupt the flow of the conversation among the participants; the participants declare that the focus of the conversations is likely to change.

P5: (To the previous conversation) We can't go back to it (laughs). His concentration, my concentration is completely broken. Actually, you don't want to on the other hand. You know the topic is closed somehow, and we can't go back to it unfortunately. It stays like that... It happens sometimes. I mean it's because the conversation diverges so much that the topic simply hangs in the air.

The conversational engagements are so much disrupted that participants expressed that the topic of the conversation simply diverges and they mostly forget what they have been talking about. Initially, the level of importance of the previously spoken topic is emphasised.

P14: It depends on the level of importance of the previously spoken topic. If we talk about something important, as I said before, this is not the right time, what are you doing thing happens. But, if we simply chitchat, it certainly diverges.

P5: Afterwards we forget the topic at that moment. And it goes somewhere else and we don't really care about it.

The results also show that in the new interaction ritual, the interruption of conversations and the change in the flow of their conversational engagements do not make participants feel uneasy, nor do they see it as losing their face in the front stage.

P25: I don't recognise I forget it (laughs). Yes, exactly (laughs). I've just realised that actually, yes. I don't feel uncomfortable for this.

P14: If I forget... most probably I don't recognise that it diverged from there to here. It's like you know... a natural flow, a drainage. Well, I don't think that I can recognise this transition personally, but it might be this... oh what was it that we were talking about situation.

P22: Yeah, we definitely forget at times. Sometimes while two people are talking about something, I want to add something but even while waiting, I forget it (laughs).

The study also demonstrates the degree of importance of both the social media content and the topic of conversation play a part in determining the flow of conversational engagements. There are participants who express that social media content does not influence the flow of the conversation. P17 states that unless the topic of conversation is finalised, they do not experience an interruption. He also states that it depends on the content; if it is something funny, they laugh at it for like 10 or 15 seconds, then

they move on. However, he points out that if the content is important, then they talk about it for some time but not long. On the contrary, there are participants who assert that social media can dominate the conversational engagements and change the topics of conversations.

P5: I mean, social media can fully dominate it... well, in one-to-one relations or group relations, it can dominate conversations, behaviour, time, etc.

P2: The topic of the conversation may change (nods), and you know sometimes it happens... I, you know, show them something, she shows something else saying oh it's beautiful and all of a sudden, we go somewhere else. Well, something connected to this, something connected to that, connected to the other, but in fact we may visit topics totally independent from each other.

P22: It definitely changes. The current news or funny posts or individual posts can definitely change it [the topics of conversation].

The front stage performance in the new interaction ritual also includes participants utilising or rather consuming social media content in the front stage collectively as the study suggests.

P25: Yes, we look at social media together with friends. Generally, we watch videos. We watch videos. We are fully fed by content yes, but it's some content after all you know, we don't watch it altogether. Mobile passes from hand to hand, well we laugh together if we're to.

P16: Say a friend posted a photo. We're in a group, it's like... there are times when we say let's write this, let's write something we say and it's like what should we write.

P1: I want to be seen on Instagram... Yes. I posted a photo, like it (blinks)... yes, yes, sure. My notifications are open for my close friends. They directly receive this, I. Posted a photo... I say I posted a photo.

2.3.8 Implications

Initially, social media use is a component of conversational engagement. It is embedded in the patterns of interaction in the new interaction ritual. It is not odd to witness interactants looking at their screens in face engagements. As the data prove, it is not possible to have any face engagements free of smartphones in the new interaction ritual.

The results indicate that phone calls in public space as cross-talks are replaced by extensive texting in face engagements. During the day, participants are engaged in WhatsApp to communicate, exchange content, and it is the cross-talk that they cannot resist because they are concerned about missing messages. There is a social pressure in the social environment of participants that they must be reachable at all times and have the responsibility to return to the messages as soon as possible; otherwise, they face problems. Hence, they are alert and ready to read and reply messages on WhatsApp during the day, which is at the same time one of the reasons for intermittent screen checks in public space.

In the new interaction ritual, participants are engaged in cross-talks of all kinds where they interact with others invisible to the *with(s)* in public space, which cause them to break the mutual consensus. It can be interpreted that social media platforms functions as the *bystanders* of the new interaction ritual that interactants frequently have cross-

talks with in conversational engagements. Whilst in Goffman's interaction ritual, bystanders are limited to individuals near the social gatherings and have restricted access to face engagements, social media platforms in the new interaction ritual have strong access to conversational engagements as interactants take it for granted. In other words, the new interaction ritual has brought a new working consensus among interactants who accept and allow interactions via social media and multitasking in conversational engagements. Even though multitasking is primarily seen problematic in general since individuals find it difficult to listen to withs when they are simultaneously engaged in social media, they cannot resist using it due to curiosity and the new social pressure on them to closely follow people and trends on social media. It is seen that as long as they overhear the conversation, they can follow the signals that call them back to the face engagements or tell them that they can stay there more.

Another significant implication of the study is that using social media in face engagements is not surreptitious anymore. Even though the majority asserts that social media use in face engagements is inappropriate and a sign of disrespect, they cannot deny that they use it for a reason that legitimises their engagement in social media. They do not intend to hide their engagements, nor do they commonly believe that they lose their *face* due to social media use despite violating the working consensus. On the contrary, interactants communicate their use of social media with the interactants, accept that the social gatherings and conversational engagements have transformed into hybrid ones where interactants use social media but face the consequences and develop tactics to save their *face* and stay in *line*.

It is found that the level of the relationship with the interactants is a powerful indicator in conversational engagements. In different conditions, people choose a behaviour pattern for people with different levels of relationship. They differentiate people as family, close friends and people they do not know well but happen to be in a face engagement together. The nature of their relationship determines how they adapt social

media use and at the same time how they respond to each other's social media use in face engagements. Not only the level of relationships but also the size of social gatherings determines interactants' social media use. It is common that social media use is found to be inappropriate and intolerable in fully-focused gatherings where conversational engagements require both interactants to stay in *line* unless both interactants use social media at the same time, which is a different working consensus in the new interaction ritual; otherwise, conversational engagements are blocked and interactants lose their *face*. In partly-focused and multi-focused gatherings, on the other hand, participants find space to use social media so that they could avoid interaction due to boredom, indifference, reluctance to speak, and so on. In other words, when there are alternative interactants as options, their smartphones are their invisibility cloaks in face engagements that take them away from the gathering and bring them different opportunities for alternative social interactions on social media platforms. In a way, they share the responsibility to maintain the conversational engagements which they have to fully take on in fully-focused gatherings with others. They take the liberty to leave the front stage/region and come back when they want to.

Due to the fact that social media algorithms are designed to keep users in engaged as long as possible, in the new interaction ritual, when interactants find a space to check their social media accounts in face engagements, they are likely to stay in the rabbit hole more than they intend to. Rather than leaving the social gathering because they lose interest in the conversation, they use social media privately behind the curtain that they draw between *withs* and themselves. They use social media platforms as alternative waiting rooms where they can keep themselves engaged, and when they decide to come back to the front stage/region, they do so.

The data also reveal that participants are merely passive consumers of social media in face engagements. Rather than creating and posting social media content in face engagements, they primarily navigate social media platforms and consume social

media content. The social media content that keeps them engaged has the potential to nurture their conversational engagements though. On condition that the content that they are exposed to is interesting, fun, of interest of *withs* as well, participants utilize the content to maintain the conversational engagements. The content is usually so powerful that it dominates the conversation. It has the potential to change the topic of conversations, lead *withs* to search for or utilize priorly consumed alternative related content to the face engagements and fabricate the performance in the front stage/region. The social media content brought into conversational engagements are usually so powerful that it diverges the conversation and participants even forget their previous talks, which does not generally disturb them.

The study demonstrates that participants find intermittent screen checks insignificant and not worthy to pay attention, whereas *withs*' intentional use of social media and their attention to the content they are exposed attracts participants' attention. The digital eavesdropping, one of the forms of cross-talk in the new interaction ritual, is triggered by the duration of *withs*' engagement in social media and the reactions that they show rather than the curiosity aroused for the social media content *withs* are exposed to.

In Goffman's interaction ritual, *singles* in public space, who are vulnerable in front of the eyes of others, intend to seem engaged in usually newspapers and magazines. However, the study reveals that the instrument that they use is smartphones in order to build a defence mechanism. The data indicate that participants merely use smartphones to communicate with others, often check screens intermittently and access to social media platforms when they are alone in public space, which help them seem busy and engaged. The responsibility that Goffman attributes to *withs* is retained in the new interaction ritual because the common belief is still that it is inappropriate, unpleasant and disturbing to use social media in face engagements; however, today participants

put forward certain conditions that give them the opportunity to shrink from bearing this moral responsibility of theirs.

The study reveals that social media use emerge as main, side and subordinate involvements in different forms in the new interaction ritual. Interactants use social media as the main involvement in social gatherings with others where they put social media content in the centre or they do not hesitate to let themselves into the rabbit hole. Moreover, similar to drinking coffee or smoking as side involvements in interaction ritual as Goffman exemplifies, social media use is allocated as side involvements when interactants believe that they check their timelines and listen to what *withs* tell them without one obstructing the other, for example. Social media platforms also serve interactants well as accessible waiting rooms that they pass some time when they have a target to reach.

Contrary to the expectation that the conversation discourse requires mutual consensus to maintain the exchange of utterances, the conversational engagements in the new interaction ritual is full of visible evidence that shows the disinvolvements of interactants. The interactants observe certain gaps in conversations which cause discomfort and embarrassment in face engagements. However, today the mutual consensus in the new interaction seems to be primarily on the possibility that any interactant can be disengaged at some points of conversational engagements because the data demonstrate that the majority finds such disinvolvements disturbing, but at the same time they cannot resist using social media for a reason to legitimise their use.

The denial of social media use in face engagements and the subsequent acceptance of *some* screen engagement for certain *reasons* reveal that a *with* looking at the screen in a conversational engagement is inescapable in the new interaction ritual. Consequently, the new interaction ritual exists with its new rules of conduct so that the social relations and bonds are maintained avoiding serious social conflicts in public space. In other words, the avoidance and presentation rituals that Goffman outline for

the pre-digital social gatherings alter in the new interaction ritual. Despite the acceptance of social media that is designed to keep users in being distractive, the study demonstrates that the interactants in the new interaction ritual are in the recognition of social media being irresistible; hence, they intend to avoid using it, even keep their smartphones out of sight, when they need to concentrate on a conversational engagement or tasks in public space. Moreover, while interactants put effort in not using social media in fully-focused gatherings, except that the *with* is also engaged in the screen, in partly- and multi-focused gatherings, they understate the maintenance of the working consensus in order not to create a breach in the conversational engagements because they rely on the fact that there are other alternative interactants who compensate the breaches.

In the new interaction ritual, it is indicated that interactants do not raise overriding concerns over privacy regarding social media use in social gatherings public space; nonetheless, they are more concerned when they are among strangers in a public space like public transportation, which smartphone technology brings solutions to already. When among strangers, they switch on the brightness of screens or use screen films, for instance. In the new interaction ritual, the idea that social media is open and accessible to everyone lead individuals to think that there is nothing extraordinary to hide from the people around them. On the other hand, individuals mostly express genuine privacy concerns when it comes to WhatsApp messages visible on their screens. The text messages and photographs are mostly intimate as they believe; thus, exposing or peeking messages is crossing the red line and their privacy must be preserved. Looking at screens of others when there are WhatsApp conversations is like eavesdropping on private conversations in the new interaction ritual. They avoid both seeing others' messages even accidentally and letting others see their own messages not only when they are among strangers but also when they are with friends in a social occasion.

Despite all the negative remarks upon smartphone and social media use in public space, as smartphones and social media use are deeply embedded in the face engagements in the interaction ritual and individuals have become inured to this new fabric of conversational engagements, individuals express very few presentation rituals. In the new interaction ritual, smartphones and social media are expressed to be out of sight in public spaces like theatres, cinemas, concerts, or while studying, which means in any place or occasion that requires full concentration and courtesy to the *withs*. Another rule of conduct in face engagements is that they address to the importance of communicating the reason for their screen engagements during conversations; that is, what is not eliminated must be communicated and reconciled in the new interaction ritual. According to the results of the study, face engagements are multi-layered when the social media use in front stage is considered. The layers are fluid and interactants flow through the layers and interact with the interactants present face-to-face or via social media platforms, and interactants away.

As social media use in face engagements become pervasive, individuals adapted new strategies to save their *face* in the new interaction ritual in times of communication breaches that they need to confront. Interactants use defensive strategies to save their *face* when there is the risk to lose the *face* due to social media use in face engagements. The use of social media in conversational engagements breaks the working consensus among interactants, and when they face such a threat, they also start using social media to save their *face*, which is the most common strategy in the new interaction ritual. In such instances, interactants rarely take the liberty to leave the social gathering. Beside defensive strategies, interactants use protecting strategies to save their *face*. In acceptance of the social media use in face engagements, interactants tend to display empathy towards *withs* disengaged. In order to maintain their *line* and save their *face*, they also apologise for the breach that they cause and kindly ask to repeat what they miss in the conversation and try to avoid using social media in order to take precautions

not to lose their *face*. Furthermore, interactants use preventive strategies to save their *face*. In instances when the *with* uses social media in face engagements, they measure the right time to communicate with them. When interactants are exposed to social media content that they want to share with others in the social gathering, they also wait for the right time to share the content especially when they are on a task that requires concentration, which is usually the case of studying. An interesting strategy that they use is that they use social media as a preventive one when they are not in good mood and do not want to reflect to the interactants. Since they are used to social media use in face engagements, they are less likely to question one's screen engagement. Thus, they seem to be busy with the content that they are exposed to on the screen and avoid interaction. In this way, they believe they prevent spoiling the dynamics of the social gathering. Finally, in the new interaction ritual, interactants frequently use ignorance strategies. As they accept the new face engagements as they are and believe that whatever they do will not change anything, they either play the same game as *withs* using social media to ignore the breach or tolerate *withs* causing the breach but admitting their role in this situation. They tend to ignore *withs* who are acquaintances more than friend and family members who they dare to warn or express their discomfort to.

The general acceptance of social media use in the new interaction ritual does not mean that interactant do not try to correct others and themselves in instances of social media use. Beside accepting social media use based on the legitimate reasons that they put forward, interactants are mostly responsive to *withs* causing breaches unless they are acquaintances, who they mostly prefer ignoring. They articulate their discomfort and frustration to friends and family members as they feel the responsibility for maintaining conversational engagements and social bonds. The most common strategy in this corrective process is teaching a lesson to *withs*. Interactants today prefer staying silent in the middle of conversations to make *with(s)* recognise the breach that they

cause, ask questions or say something completely irrelevant to the topic of conversation and test their listening, or tease the *with(s)* by looking at their screens and asking what makes them so interested. In the corrective process, they tend to make *with(s)* face the breach and give them the opportunity to self-correct for the sake of the conversational engagement. However, such efforts do not lead to any attitude changes in the long run. No matter how responsive interactants are and how embarrassed or sad they feel as a result of facing the breach they create, social media use in face engagements remain as they are. While there are interactants who strive to conceal their part in the emergence of breaches and catch up with the topic of conversation utilising gist from what they have overheard, interactants mostly prefer admitting their contribution to the breach and ask them to retell what they have missed in order to compensate the problem in the conversational engagement; however, things go on as they are in next conversational engagements because they always have a legitimate cause that affirm their use of social media.

Smartphones appear to be the new instrument for non-verbal language in communication as the present study indicates. Social media use communicates the intention of interactants to ignore *withs* or their disinterest and boredom. It is seen that the new huff and puff of conversational engagements is using social media. The study demonstrates that in the new interaction ritual there is mutual understanding and acceptance of this new gesture in face engagements.

In the new interaction ritual, social media platforms function as the back stage/region where interactants fabricate their performance in the front stage/region. It is significant to note that social media is resourceful in face engagements where interactants feel that they cannot maintain the conversation. They access to social media platforms which provide them with resources for alternative topics that they can bring to the front stage/region so that they could maintain the performance which is interrupted. When interactants feel isolated due to their lack of interest or knowledge regarding the topic

of conversation, they are more likely to transfer to the social media platforms, the back stage/region, where they can keep themselves busy. However, rather than being completely isolated from the conversational engagement, they utilise the social media content as a key to the front stage/region that they can use to be back to the performance going on. Alternatively, interactants use social media content that they are priorly consumed, or rather their reservoir of content, to maintain the continuation of conversations. They are likely to bring up alternative topics or related supporting information, which also has the potential to dominate the rest of the conversations. In this way, interactants use social media to nurture their conversational engagements when they are in crisis. On the other hand, interactants utilise their conversational engagements in the front stage/region as the back stage/region where they fabricate social media content. They contribute to very complex and elaborate patterns of region behaviour in the new interaction ritual. To illustrate, when photos are taken in a face engagement, they are more likely to post at least one online; however, they decide on which photo to post collectively and post it after they fabricate the impression that they intend to create online in front stage/region. They share the photos via WhatsApp and discuss which one fits better. They even share it with individuals away. Or, they interact with social media content posted by one of the interactants among them or someone away collectively in the front stage/region. In other words, while social media as the back region/stage nurtures the conversations, conversational engagements serve as the back stage/region to the social media which contributes to the content creation.

The region behaviour in the front stage/region is rather elaborate in the new interaction. The conversational engagements are interwoven with social media use that makes the communication in public space rather intricate. Interactants open channels from front stage/region to social media platforms and the other way round. It is common that interactants bring social media content to the front stage/region and share content over which the conversational engagements are led. Social media content selected to

interfere with conversations are selected based on the common interests of interactants and the popularity of certain topics discussed on social media. The content can even be independent from the topic of conversation in the front stage/region as interactants may prefer bringing up some content that they think it can nurture the performance that is stuck or that they feel they cannot contribute to. When some content interferes with the conversation, it also has the potential to dominate the whole performance that is nurtured by alternative content brought up by different interactants, which may lead the performance to a different direction. This shows that the performance in the front stage/region is inseparable from the social media content that interactants are exposed to simultaneously; moreover, the social media use is potentially influential in the continuation of the performance and determines the dynamics within. The interactants, who merely state that social media is distractive, disturbing and inappropriate in face engagements, do not feel any discomfort regarding the diverging effect of social media content in fact. They confess that it is quite common that they forget the topics of conversation or lose the track of conversations. However, they believe the social media content predominantly entertaining and fun enriches their performances and the importance of topics, whether it is the social media content or the topic that they raise in social gatherings, determine the flow of conversations.

2.4 Discussion

2.4.1 Not Without WhatsApp

In public space, individuals speaking on the phone are not currently common except for urgent short calls. While phone-calls are outdated, texting emerges as the most pervasive screen activity depending on both the field observations and the interviews. Being quite practical and fast, WhatsApp is the most popular app among individuals. The study reveals that the interactants in face engagements in public space, both *single* and *with*, are mostly engaged in WhatsApp during the day. Social media platforms like Instagram or Twitter are secondary to their motivation for using smartphones in face

engagements. This means that there are often multiple conversations going on in social gatherings beside the observable conversational engagements. These conversations are likely to be not only among some of the *with(s)* who they want to share something private with or other individuals who are not present in the social gatherings. Moreover, it is possible individuals are engaged in group conversations on WhatsApp where *with(s)* can also be participating at the same time, which makes the conversational engagements rather fluid and across platforms.

WhatsApp appears to be extremely irresistible because it is used by different social groups for different purposes. Individuals are present in various groups such as family, course (students taking the same course), university, social clubs, colleagues, best friends, and so on. Depending on the purpose of the groups and the level of social relations with the members, individuals send and receive a large variety of content not limited to only text messages. Individuals send and receive photographs, class materials, any necessary and even important documents in Microsoft file types, social media content both as screenshots and web links. As the variety of content shared increases, the need and consequent use of WhatsApp expands and occupies a considerable amount of their time during the day. Besides the variety, hence the extensive need and frequency of WhatsApp use, there is a common acceptance of the application as the easiest and fastest means of communication in everyday life.

WhatsApp has also brought the idea and also the consequent obligation that individuals are reachable at all times. Although some individuals find the assumption that people can reach them any time they want disturbing, it is a fact that there is a social pressure on individuals that they must respond to WhatsApp content as soon as possible. This pressure usually comes from the family members, primarily the parents as the study suggests. Thus, in the new interaction ritual, interactants' screen engagement in public space is more WhatsApp use than social media navigation due to the fact that all participants, who reject using social media in face engagements but admit that they are

involved in texting during the day and regardless of time and space, point out that they cannot neglect incoming messages and delay their answers for a long time because of this social expectancy. As a result, the new code of conduct, which interactants reach a consensus over, allows interactants to use WhatsApp and in a way urges them to tolerate or ignore *withs*' use in face engagements in the new interaction ritual and also legitimising own engagement in screens.

2.4.2 Social Media: The Waiting Rooms of the New Interaction Ritual

Contrary to the common belief that individuals isolate themselves from *with(s)* when they are engaged in social media in social gatherings, it reveals that in public space, the interactants looking at their screens in face engagements are not necessarily completely isolated from *with(s)*. It is observable that they give glimpses to other(s) speaking at the same time and give short responses or use gestures to indicate they are still following the conversation. There is also the possibility that as stated earlier, individuals observed to be engaged in their screens pursue a conversation on WhatsApp with each other and also individuals not present in the social gatherings. Thus, an observable glimpse or a short response is potentially a meaningful sign of engagement to each other. Beside WhatsApp, individuals are engaged in social media platforms checking their timelines, tapping on stories, liking and posting comments for their friends' stories or posts.

The study demonstrates that social media content is tempting and engaging but insignificant. Individuals assert that they do not need a high-level intellectual and cognitive capacity to comprehend social media content. Social media offers them rather fast-moving entertaining content they can consume fast and easy to amuse not also themselves but also others in social gatherings. Thus, in the new interaction ritual, access to social media platforms during conversational engagements is not a barrier to talk to others simultaneously despite their belief that multitasking is not fulfilling and completely achievable.

As a matter of fact, interactants tend to use social media platforms as *waiting rooms* when they choose to shield their disinvolvement but at the same time wait for the right time to come back to the front stage/region. In other words, it is now like the *screen* that Goffman refers to and individuals carry it around and raise it as an excuse for any disengagements due to a particular legitimised reason. However, different from Goffman's screen, social media functions as a waiting room better because while individuals consume social media content to amuse themselves, they at the same time try to check the flow of conversations waiting for the right moment to be back to the conversation. From this perspective, they are like individuals in the doctor's office checking the door to see who is entering the room and also listening for the nurse who will be calling out their names. Despite their disability to listen to *withs(s)* as conversational engagements require them to do so, they overhear the conversations so that they could catch up with the conversations when *with(s)* demand them to come back to the front performance or they decide to return to the conversation because the topic has shifted to something interesting for them. Also, they may text or send social media content that they think it requires time to read via direct messaging or WhatsApp to *with(s)*.

In the new interaction ritual, the interactants may not also be limited to the ones in public space. An interactant into the screen is possibly in a social interaction via digital platforms. It is also important to note that the interactants looking at their screen are potential communication channels through which content flows into face engagements and the other way round. The new interaction ritual is not free of two-way streams of information. Thus, the borders of face engagements and digital platforms shift, and there is always the possibility in face engagements that interactants can take content back to the front performance and also take *with(s)* to the social media platforms with them.

2.4.3 The Ghost Interactants

In Goffman's face engagements, a bystander or a passer-by who an interactant can decide to have a cross-talk with is exposed to both *with(s)* and observers. During field observations, it used to be clear for the observer to determine cross-talks and with whom interactants decide to interact with temporarily and if and to what extent they wanted the bystander or passer-by access to the social gathering. However, in today's face engagements, the number of interactants and the cross talks that they are engaged in can be different from the one that is observed. To clarify, in the new interaction ritual, during a social gathering interactants have access to alternative conversations through their smartphones, and because they would rather text than speak on the phone, the ones that they interact with are invisible to the observer and also to *with(s)*. The new interaction ritual welcomes a bystander or a passer-by that are invisible to the interactants in public space. They are invited for a cross-talk with a notification that appears on a screen or with a short screen check that individuals themselves do not definitely know the reason why they do this intermittently. They are the new ghosts of the new interaction ritual that pass by and wink at interactants. Interactants both feel disturbed when *with(s)* are enchanted by them, but at the same time they themselves cannot resist a bystander or a passer-by when they do not feel they belong to the gathering any more. One way or another, today, in the new interaction ritual there are numerous silent conversations held with invisible bystanders.

2.4.4 Fluidity in Face Engagements

One of the significant results that this study reveals is that fluidity governs not only the patterns of interactions but also the discursive nature of conversations in the new interaction ritual today. Contrary to the pre-digital conversational engagements where messages are produced, sent and interpreted by interactants, in the new interaction ritual, there are multiple messages received from various sources and sent to different recipients, present either in the face encounter or on digital platforms. During a

conversational engagement, beside the messages that interactants produce and send or circulate within the group, there is always the probability that interactants carry messages from different digital platforms, and such messages have the potential to lead the conversational discourse and even manipulate the flow of conversations. Moreover, interactants produce and send messages to recipients on digital platforms and receive responses from them and pursue conversations in accordance with this flow of messages, and also, different interactants are likely to bring in related messages from digital platforms to elaborate the conversation. In other words, there is a complex structure in the streams of messages in the new interaction ritual.

Beside the messages, interactants in face engagements seem to be on vessels sailing from front to the back or from back to the front stages depending on their decisions to make a contributions to conversations or to stay in the waiting room until they relate themselves to the gatherings. Thus, it is possible to picture the conversational engagements as rivers where interactants are on vessels sailing back and forth in the centre of face engagements and whenever they sail away to different shores, they may bring in something to conversations. Furthermore, there are frequent streams from different shores to face engagements or vessels of outsiders carrying resources to face engagements. This fluid nature of face engagements is the result of smartphone and social media access available for individuals at all times in public spaces, and today individuals are quite proficient in sailing back and forth on this river of communication.

2.4.5 Cannot Help Touching It

One of the most frequent patterns of behaviour in face engagements is the seemingly habitual intermittent screens checks as observed, which is also confirmed by the participants of the study. Although the majority of the participants state that they check time, the study proves that there are different motivations underneath this habitual pattern of behaviour in the new interaction ritual, and it appears to be habitual because

the general reaction to the description of this behaviour was responded with remarks expressing surprise to realise own or others' continuous screen checks that they had not thought or noticed before.

The study enabled participants to dig deep in order to find their motivation to do this. The common idea is that individuals are curious about what is happening on social media platforms and that is why they continuously check the notifications on screens is partially true. According to the self-reflexive comments of participants, their intermittent screen checks are loaded with various signals that communicate the following messages that (1) they are bored with either the topic conversation or *with(s)* and they want to ignore the front performance, (2) they are scared to miss primarily the WhatsApp and incoming call notifications due to the pressure coming from families and friends who want them to be reachable and available at all times, or (3) they have alternatives for socialising in different places with different interactants other than being in that social gathering with those interactants in the public space.

2.4.6 Down into the Rabbit Hole

To Goffman (1963), when an interactant intends to *insulate* himself from a gathering that he feels isolated, he is likely to direct his attention to an alternative engagement that is more entertaining and satisfying, and in the new interaction ritual, interactants use social media content as “materials for the construction of this alienated world that are visible to others” (p. 73). Today, the private social media use in isolation from others in face engagements is the deepest activity that interactants have the opportunity to *insulate* themselves from the gathering. The private social media use in face engagements that are one of the most significant patterns of behaviour in observations are confirmed by the participants of the study.

In the new interaction ritual, one or more interactants are pulled into the rabbit hole either as a result of an intermittent screen check or a supposedly short check of timeline

because of boredom or disinterest in a face engagement. First of all, feelings of boredom, isolation, alienation, disinterest are put forward as legitimate causes for private social media use in face engagements. Even interactants who refuse that they use social media in face engagements admit that when they feel they do not belong to the gathering, they tend to use it. Then, they surely develop empathy for interactants doing the same thing because they take it as a signal marking disengagement and there seems to be consensus over this signal in the new interaction ritual which also brings new codes of conduct. Whereas in Goffman's interaction ritual an interactant's visible disengagement for a considerable time could cause serious problems in the maintenance of social bonds, in the new interaction ritual interactants neither give fierce responses to the ones fully engaged in their screen nor they leave the gathering. Thus, according to the new code, participants do not seem to have any expectations for mutualness from each other, nor do they signal the *we-rationale* to each other or to the public eye. Additionally, although they express the discomfort that they feel upon silent gatherings where the majority hides in the rabbit hole, it is inevitable that they also do the same thing for a legitimate cause. Then, why not checking the timeline or watching some stories when they do not feel like participating in the conversation? And they always have a chance to come back because they overhear what they talk about, so when they find it more interesting, they can come back to the front stage/region. Consequently, what is unacceptable in Goffman's interaction ritual is somehow normal and regular in the new interaction ritual.

2.4.7 Leave Me Alone, I am Busy

Smartphones are the symbolic tools that empower individuals in public space when they feel vulnerable. With the help of smartphones, being there alone individuals convey various message that they are already busy with something 'important' so that they could avoid eye contact to control others access to as Goffman also puts it concerning individuals' engagement in newspapers and magazines in public space

when they are single. The data obtained from the field observations demonstrate that the first thing that interactants do when *with* temporarily leaves the table and they become *single* in public space is to reach their smartphones and look at their screens. The participants of the study also confirm that when they are alone, they are into their smartphones so that they could seem busy with some alleged important tasks.

Smartphones and social media access in the new interaction ritual have become the shield that interactants use to hide behind when they are vulnerable in front of the public eye, which refers to a basic difference in the object of involvement when the new interaction ritual is compared to that of Goffman. Interactants do not carry their magazines or newspapers that they read when they are *single* in public space but look at their screens in order to seem busy with something ‘serious.’ However, the study demonstrates that the new interaction ritual consists of different patterns of behaviour when it is the responsibility felt towards *with(s)*. As the random screen engagement is a common pattern of behaviour in the new interaction ritual, interactants do not stay in *line* to maintain the working consensus. Despite the common remark that they find it inappropriate to look at screens in fully-focused gatherings, what is observed in public space does not exactly reflect this *responsibility* of *with(s)*. For a legitimate cause, they are engaged in screens that is tolerable in the new interaction ritual, and contrary to Goffman’s interaction ritual where interactants give visual signal in order to mark that they appreciate the presence of *with(s)* in face engagements, they have the liberty to leave the front performance and they even dare to express that that they do not appreciate the presence of *with(s)* because they are bored or disinterested. Because screen engagement is common among the majority of the public, it is a sign safer than avoiding eye-contact today. When almost everybody is likely to stay out of the *line* any minute for a reason legitimate to all, staying in *line* and fulfilling the *responsibility* for maintaining the mutuality is not the primary concern of interactants evidently.

2.4.8 The Larger the Better

The field observations indicate that in multi-focused gatherings, interactants feel more comfortable because they have enough space to leave the front stage/region and start looking at their screens while others continue speaking to each other. In such cases, individuals believe that the interactants do not care if they contribute to the front performance or not because there are always some other players occupying the front stage/region after all. In other words, individuals enjoy the freedom to hide or wait in the social media platforms when they feel they do not belong to the conversational engagement at specific moments. This situation has also been quite challenging for the researcher to observe. Here is a typical multi-focused gathering scene: people come and leave, talk to each other and then leave the front performance to look at their screens, then they decide to come back, and they may come back with some content on their screens and share it with others, and so on. In the meantime, they do not seem to be bothered to signal their arrival or departure to everyone in the face engagement but signal it to someone if they feel like doing it. This sounds like a railway station where people come and go, and one might wonder or rather question if such a gathering is called a social gathering. In fact, as the gatherings get larger, interactants have more space to move from the front performance to the back and then return, which means they enjoy the fluidity in interactional patterns, and this is the new social gathering that one can observe in public spaces today.

The interviews also confirm that interactants feel more comfortable when they are in larger groups in public space because it is more likely that social media use in conversational engagements can be ignored or tolerated because there are alternative interactants that the conversation can be maintained. In one-to-one gatherings, on the other hand, the conversation is doomed to turned into a monologue, create distress and frustration and eventually cause the *with* start looking at the screen as well, which confirms the finding of the observations that indicate the commonality of one screen

check or engagement leading the *with* do the same. When interactants intend to avoid screen engagement in fully-focused gatherings in order not to create distress in face engagements, still they cannot ignore WhatsApp, for instance. There is always an instance that makes them touch their screen. Then, to save both their own and the *with's face* they use strategies like apologising to, informing, and asking permission to have a look at the screen to complete a digital responsibility.

2.4.9 Social Media Content in the Conversational Discourse

The conversational discourse in the new interaction ritual is rarely free of social media content that individuals are priorly or simultaneously exposed to in the new interaction ritual. The common idea that social media content that individuals look at during conversational engagements or bring in the social gathering cause significant breaches in the conversational discourse and also interaction patterns is not completely true in the new interaction ritual.

The social media content is carried into face engagements to nurture conversations when interactants believe they are stuck and need to fill in the silence to continue conversation. For the interactants who feel alien to the conversation thus leave the front performance and pass time on social media platforms, the waiting rooms in the new interaction ritual, the content that they are exposed to becomes a passport for them to come back to the social front. As *with(s)* take occasional screen checks for granted, they do not react to or find social media content carried into conversational engagements odd. Thus, the flow of social media content into conversations is inevitable in public space. Moreover, the impact of social media trends is reflected onto the conversational engagements. Once social media content is brought into the social front, it has the power to dominate the conversation and trigger *with(s)* to bring similar content. The study demonstrates that social media is not solely disruptive always. The interactants turn such disruptions into a tactic to maintain the continuation of conversations, and because they are used to social media content that they find

generally fun and entertaining, they do not get uncomfortable with the dominating effect of the flow of social media content into their social gatherings. It is also very common that interactants lose the track of their conversations due to the interference of social media content in the social front; nevertheless, due to the fact that they are accustomed to such interferences and they even enjoy the times social media content appears in conversations as they are entertaining and joyful for them, they do not feel uncomfortable with such divergences in face engagements in general. The codes of conduct in the new interaction ritual are tolerant towards the circulation of social media content for the sake of the new social order. This also creates a new understanding of *mutualness*, the mutual consensus to use social media for the sake of the maintenance of conversations.

2.4.10 The Social Distance and Social Media Use in Public Space

In Goffman's analysis of face engagements in the hospital setting where doctors, nurses and patients are the interactants in the social order, power relations in public space determine the meaning of forms of deference. Goffman (1956b) refers to asking someone's health, his family's well-being, for example, can either function as a sign of sympathetic concern or an invasion of personal space and privacy depending on the social status of interactants. The social status and the social distance between interactants also play a role in the new interaction ritual. The instances when an individual feels uncomfortable with an interactant's use of social media in a face engagement, the relationship between them determines the behaviour to be displayed in the social front. When interactants are close friends, looking at the screen of the individual engaged in social media long enough to create curiosity on the side of the *with(s)* or giving visible reactions to the content he is exposed to that makes *with(s)* curious about the content on the screen, poking, teasing, being cynical about his behaviour is predictable and not inappropriate. Similarly, family members are directly and openly warned or even teased when an individual feels that social media content

is preferred to a conversation with him. In other words, with interactants that are close to them, they tend to compete with social media and seek for the attention of *with(s)*. However, the same behaviour is avoided with acquaintances or individuals newly met and at the same time it determines how the future relations with such individuals is shaped. In other words, individuals use avoidance rituals in order not to violate the ideal sphere but observe their behaviours in social gatherings.

2.4.11 The Allocation of Involvements

Social media use in face engagements is allocated as main, side and subordinate involvements in the new interaction ritual. It has the potential to absorb the major part of interactants' attention and interest which is visible to *with(s)* while it also works as side involvements as interactants speak to *with(s)* but check their timelines or watch stories thinking that their engagement in social media is not a threat to their main involvement which is the ongoing conversation. Social media use is also allocated as subordinate involvements that interactants believe they use it for short periods of time especially when they notice notifications on screens. They quickly check and decide if it is worthy to direct their attention to or not. However, using social media is not comparable to Goffman's examples like working and smoking or drinking coffee. Since social media is designed to keep users engaged in for a long time, it is not simple to draw the borders of involvements in the new interaction ritual, nor do interactant have the power to control them. To illustrate, when an individual checks the notifications while having a conversation with an interactant (=subordinate involvement), he can notice that there is a notification from a social media platform informing him that there is a comment made for some content that he posted and decide to check what is posted while speaking to the interactant simultaneously (=side involvement). In the meantime, he uses gestures to assure that he is checking social media but listening simultaneously. However, when he decides to respond to the comment, he may see other comments and also similar posts that attracts his attention

and interest, which pulls him into the rabbit hole. Then he may fully concentrate on social media (=main involvement) and stay there until the *with* signals his discomfort, or he may stay there longer if the *with* also finds a space to be engaged in social media. As it is seen in this example, which is a common instance in the new interaction ritual, the rules about the allocation of involvement are vague and the transition from one involvement to another is likely to be fast and continuous; moreover, such transitions are likely to be out of interactants' control because social media is engaging and irresistible by its design.

2.4.12 Privacy

It is commonly accepted that smartphones represent a private space for individuals. That is why, individuals put passwords and mobile phone technologies have brought fingerprint and face recognition sensors to the devices. While the technological advancements bring such security options to users to protect their smartphones as their private spaces, the present study indicates that smartphones emerge as devices that individuals comfortably share among each other in face encounters. The observations regarding individuals exchanging content through showing their screens each other indicate that touching and looking at the screens of others does not create serious privacy concerns in face engagements in public space. However, it is significant that while social media content their screens does not create privacy concerns, individuals are pretty sensitive about their WhatsApp conversations and their photos in the galleries not only among friends and family members but also when surrounded with complete strangers. Thus, they do not want others gaze at their screens while they are texting on WhatsApp, nor do they want others open their galleries and look at their photos. The borders of privacy around WhatsApp and personal photos are quite strict.

Individuals also draw the borders of their privacy based on the level of their relationship. Their social media feeds on their screens are private to them and they beware strangers around them. For instance, they do not want complete strangers see

their friends' posts, so they use all the technological security options to protect their privacy. They are perfectly comfortable with their social media feeds when they are with friends and family. The idea behind this attitude is that social media is accessible for all; thus, there is no need to be careful not to expose the content on their screens.

CONCLUSION

This final chapter is to conclude the study through a summary of the significant research findings in relation to the stated aims and research questions and a discussion of the value and contribution to the literature. It will also review the limitations of the study and state potential areas for future research.

The study aims to explore and describe the new interaction ritual in the everyday life of individuals in the digital age through four main research questions. The first research question aims at discovering the *emerging patterns of behaviour* in the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access. The second research question explores individuals' allocation of involvements *in focused and unfocused interactions* in the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access. The third research question examines *the new rules of conduct* in the current interaction ritual in the presence of smartphones and social media access. Finally, the study intends to explore how individuals *design and maintain the current interaction order* in face encounters in the presence of smartphones and social media access.

Overall, the present research reveals that individuals display new patterns of behaviour where the use of smartphones and social media is embedded and taken for granted in face encounters, and social media use emerge in different forms of involvements in conversational engagements in everyday communication practices in public. The results indicate that the new interaction ritual is constructed and maintained with new rules of conduct and strategies that enable individuals save not only own *faces* but those of other interactants. Further findings show that the performance in the front and back stage/region is shaped and maintained in the presence of digital platforms available in face encounters. In fact, in the new interaction ritual, the world is not divided into two; the virtual and the physical/real worlds; thus, the world is not the same as the one-dimensional Shakespearean one. The virtual is neither a copy nor a reproduction of the

physical/real world. Individuals in the everyday constantly participate in both worlds that go hand in hand. Individuals enjoy this fluidity in the everyday communication with their smartphones, timelines, and WhatsApp groups in their hands; they have their streams of exits and entrances that are mainly dominated by the digital platforms.

The present study initially verifies the everyday observations and experience of common people stating that smartphones are visibly and actively used in the front stage/region in face engagements in the new interaction ritual and demonstrates how they are used in social gatherings with a primary focus on individuals' social media use. Smartphones co-exist with individuals in the front stage/region playing an active role in the construction of communication activities; thus, the study shows that smartphones have been attributed important roles and meanings in social gatherings where individuals, or participants (P) exist as social actors in the front performance connected to their smartphones which function as doors to digital platforms (P'). Consequently, in the new interaction ritual, there exist multiple sources of messages and content; that is, the messages exchanged in face encounters are not limited to verbal messages of individuals but extend to sorts of messages that individuals not only are exposed to but also carry to the social front, share them with other interactants and use them as resources to nurture conversational engagements. Hence, such multiple messages and content in circulation in social gatherings create a complicated communication flow; for example, while one interactant speaks to the *with*, they at the same time send and/or receive messages and content from social media platforms and share it with multiple interactants both online and offline. The existence of multiple sources of messages and the flow of such messages among participants (P) and smartphones as doors to digital platforms and their consequent interactions with alternative social platforms and communities (P') create a fluid nature in face engagements in public space where multiple social interactions at micro level are actualised while the ongoing social gathering is maintained in its own terms. As a

result, the present study demonstrates that the interactants in the front stage/region are bombarded with various messages constructed through their exposure to social media content beside the ones that they receive from other interactants in face engagements, which makes multitasking an inevitable communicative skill that they must master in everyday life. The individuals of the digital age, then, go through different cognitive processes to decode, encode and give feedback to messages in social gatherings and the conversational discourses vary from that of the pre-digital interaction ritual, which has a promising potential for further study.

The multiplicity in the sources of messages circulated in face encounters creates a dynamic multi-layered conversational engagement that emerge in front stage/region and back stage/region at times, which is not easy to observe and document. In other words, interactants generally go with the flow of the messages that they are exposed to and integrate them into their conversations. The results of the present study indicate that individuals in the new interaction ritual enjoy the fluid nature of front and back stages/regions in public space. It is this fluidity that enable individuals shift from the front performance to the back stage/region where they have both the space and resources to fabricate messages utilising social media platforms and then carry it back to the front performance where they contribute to the construction of the conversation discourses. In the meantime, individuals also have the convenience to turn a front performance into the back stage/region where they fabricate social media content collectively. Hence, compared to Goffman's pre-digital interaction ritual that require interactants to actualise social interaction that aligns with the social norms in the front stage/region and fabricate messages in the back stage/region where they are confident that they are not observed by the audience of the front performance, the new interaction ritual require participants master such complex cognitive capabilities to manage both the messages in the front performances and the messages that they are exposed to on

social media platforms. Moreover, they are expected to participate in the processes of fabrication both in front and back stages/regions.

The pervasive use of mobile phones and consequent phone-calls in public space has led to discussions around digital cross-talks that cause leaks in the working consensus among interactants during conversational engagements. The findings of the present study, however, enables the researcher expand the concept of digital cross-talks and argue that digital cross-talks cannot be limited to phone calls in public anymore. Phone-calls in public space is the rarest cross-talk that emerges in face engagements, in fact. The digital cross-talks in the new interaction ritual more frequently emerge in different silent forms such as texting (mainly WhatsApp), intermittent screen checks, private social media use, social media use during ongoing conversations, social media content exchange with other interactants, and digital *screen-eavesdropping*.

The research takes these digital activities as digital cross-talks due to the fact that interactants often leave the front stage/region and exit the front performance to communicate with individuals out of the circle, and engage *with(s)* in the cross-talks through exchanging social media content. Furthermore, interactants are engaged in digital screen-eavesdropping similar to the interest in phone-call talks; they glance over *with(s)*' screens as the engagement gets longer and *with(s)* show visible reactions to the content on screens that cause curiosity. The new interaction ritual, then, involves bystanders invisible to *with(s)* but manifesting themselves through the channels that the interactant enables them to be exposed to.

The present study reaches the conclusion that despite the ongoing common complaints regarding screen engagements and social media use in face encounters as main distractors, today access to digital platforms available at all times is irresistible for individuals. It is found that going "back to basics" is not an option any more. In a community where individuals in public space pervasively touch their smartphones and access to social media without much hesitation and build empathy towards others doing

it, the rules of conduct that urge individuals maintain eye contact and attention cannot certainly function effectively to preserve the social order. If smartphones and social media platforms have been adapted to conversational engagements in public space, then what are the new rules of conduct in face encounters in public spaces?

Social media use usually opens up discussions regarding the privacy issues. However, the present study reveals that as long as individuals are with people they know, they do not develop serious concerns regarding their screens exposed to *with(s)*. On the contrary, screens in face engagements have the potential to be the common ground where participants continue communicating with each other. Social media content and what they look at on their screens has material value because they circulate, utilise and fabricate it to foster interaction in face engagements even at times of crisis. What is accepted as inappropriate in face encounters is looking at others' screens when they have WhatsApp messages open or their photo galleries. Digital eavesdropping becomes truly disturbing and discomforting if *with(s)* glance at their messages or photos that they believe are private and intimate. Thus, the new rules of conduct in general allow interactants to digital *screen-eavesdrop* the social media content but not the WhatsApp messages and photos in public space. Moreover, the study reveals a consensus that social media use is considered to be inappropriate and unacceptable in face engagements, specifically in fully-focused gatherings, and it is believed to break the social order in social gatherings.

Contrary to this consensus among participants, they all confess that they also use it because they have a *valid reason*. Regardless of the reasons that they put forward, what is significant is that they feel the need to find a reason to their behaviour in public space so that they can affirm the behaviour that they condemn, but they cannot stop doing it. The field observations in the study contrarily demonstrates that the emergence of smartphones in the front stage/region do not cause a visible unrest among interactants, nor do individuals display detectable negative reactions in public spaces when *with(s)*

start looking at their screens. Even in face engagements, where interactants prefer staying in rabbit holes with no interaction with others but show no intentions to leave the place, they display a sort of consensus on using smartphones and social media but ignoring each other. Thus, the present study proves that smartphones and social media use have been adapted in everyday conversational engagements, and this is the new interaction ritual with its new rules of conduct and social norms.

The *mutualness* that individuals of the new interaction ritual agree upon is the mutual agreement that they all have the space to use their smartphones and social media in public space. Therefore, the attempts to describe the current interaction ritual with the norms of pre-digital social rules is futile, nor do the arguments that screen engagements spoil conversational engagements and social order contribute to understanding the new interaction ritual. This study reveals that it is time to acknowledge the new patterns of behaviour with the new social rules and norms not defined but silently adapted to understand and improve communication in public space. It is this attitude towards the new face encounters in the presence of smartphones and social media access that can contribute to detecting the possible problems and bringing solutions rather than denying or rejecting what actually exists and even governs the *everyday*.

Contrary to the idea that smartphones and social media platforms distract interactants, disrupts communication and spoil social order, they are embedded into the communication taking place in face encounters. Whereas in Goffman's interaction ritual, individuals show courtesy by tipping their hats, for example, in the new interaction ritual smartphones are the new objects of involvements that take on various meanings in public space. They appear as a new tool of non-verbal language to transmit a message to the *with(s)*. In the new interaction ritual, interactant express their (un)willingness to communicate and their mood touching their screens. Moreover, while the common belief is said to be seeing smartphone and social media use as rudeness, individuals today utilise them to transmit their mood and feelings without

creating serious conflicts in face engagements because both the use and the meaning embedded in such uses are taken for granted.

Smartphones in the new interaction ritual have replaced Goffman's magazines and newspapers that individuals hold on to in public space when they wait for someone or something. Goffman's analysis does not include the specific motivations behind turning to newspapers or magazines say in a restaurant while waiting for someone or the meal to hide their vulnerability or stay engaged while waiting. The present study, however, demonstrates that smartphones are the life vests for individuals who feel idle, lonely, alienated, or disengaged. Today, it is the smartphones, the timelines on social media platforms, or the WhatsApp messages that they first think of in such situations since it is the ideal way to seem engaged or rather build intangible walls around oneself in public spaces. Although individuals reject using social media or even touching their smartphones in fully-focused gatherings, the present study also demonstrates that regardless of the number of interactants, smartphones are in the front stage/region as long as a valid reason is found to affirm their use of social media. In the new interaction ritual, it is this shared motivation that also causes individuals to reach a consensus and develop empathy towards others using their smartphones in face engagements. The study also reveals that there are also instances when individuals touch and slide their screens unconsciously without even thinking why. Interactants may call it an addiction or habit, but it is a fact that smartphones are like the *tespih*, the Muslim prayer beads that mostly males count in everyday practices in public space as one of the participants in the study describes. Therefore, today smartphones in individuals' hand may represent either fortresses that they build around themselves or accessories that they carry without even noticing their existence. Researchers and professionals need to consider the motivation underneath the creation of such fortresses or unconscious habits of touching screens in different areas of everyday life in order to develop effective communication strategies.

The use of social media in face encounters still cause interactants feel that they lose their *faces*, and they use certain strategies to save their faces. The present study demonstrates that interactants tend to use social media when *with(s)* use it as a response, which is ironic because social media use in face engagements is both a reason for losing the *face* and also a strategy to save the *face*. Furthermore, social media use is so pervasively adapted into the everyday face encounters that interactants predominantly reveal their use of social media, and to save their face they openly express their distraction, apologise and ask *with(s)* to repeat what they have said, which appears to be a common negotiation strategy in the new interaction ritual.

In fact, as the study reveals, individuals in the new interaction ritual are in acceptance of social media use at any moment of an ongoing face engagement; hence, they mostly tend to ignore *with(s)*' use of social media so that they could save their *faces*. Interactants show tolerance and empathy because they are conscious of the fact that they cannot claim they *never* use social media in face engagements. After all, there is *no one without sin* among them, so they prefer ignoring, or tolerating, social media use in face encounters rather than *casting a stone* to *with(s)*. Also, the power of social media is so overwhelming that interactants do not dare try to change behaviours of social media use in conversational engagements because they strongly believe that there is no use in combating.

The study shows that the way the interaction ritual is evolved into is irreversible, so they accept the things that they do not have the power to change. Do they not have the courage to change it? In fact, deep down they do not seem to be willing to change it since they also enjoy the liberty to use social media in face engagements when they do not want to be there but think that they need to stay there. Social media platforms are the new waiting rooms available at all times, and it is great to know that whenever they prefer staying there until they feel like coming back to the front stage/region. They are even more practical and functional than the bathrooms in Goffman's interaction ritual

as they do not have to say “excuse me” when they leave the social front and signal their return when they are back.

The research is intended to contribute to not only the literature of communication studies but also the studies in sociology of everyday life. Contrary to the current small-scale research that utilises Erving Goffman’s conceptualisation of interaction ritual limited to certain concepts, the present research revisits Goffman’s interaction ritual in the digital age as a whole scrutinising both dramaturgical and ritualistic aspects of it and intends to explore and describe the face engagements in the new interaction ritual following a similar path that Goffman followed more than half a century ago. Hence, this study is a tribute to Goffman’s legacy in the study of the *quotidian*, the everyday life of the individuals who have adapted smartphones as their new organs and social media platforms as the alternative social environments that they cannot resist despite their engagements in face-to-face encounters.

The study is limited to a specific age group and space. It explores how the new interaction ritual is constructed among young adults and in face engagements on campus. Also, the data are based on field observations and participants’ declarations but not the actual practices of participants in face engagements. Thus, future research focusing on the discursive practices of individuals in face encounters where they shift from front performance to back stage/region and fabricate messages will bring new insights into both the communication and discourse studies. Further research should also concentrate on different age groups and also different social environments. The new interaction ritual in professional social settings in work places, in education, family interactions, romantic relationships, cafés and restaurants, and so on. Moreover, a cross-cultural study that explores how the new interaction ritual is constructed in different countries where individuals’ attachment to smartphones and social media platforms alters. Research that explores how conversational discourses have transformed in the new interaction ritual can also be of academic interest. This study

indicates no significant results based on gender, but further research designed with a specific focus on gender will make a contribution to the academy.

To conclude, this study provides an objective eye onto the new interaction ritual; it neither condemns nor glorifies the use of smartphones and social media platforms in face encounters but rather intends to expose the current picture of the new interaction ritual in which individuals play the game with new rules and norms and maintain the new social order. To understand the new game and the new rules will certainly enable researchers and professionals to understand the current communication practices and develop alternative strategies to increase effective and productive communication.

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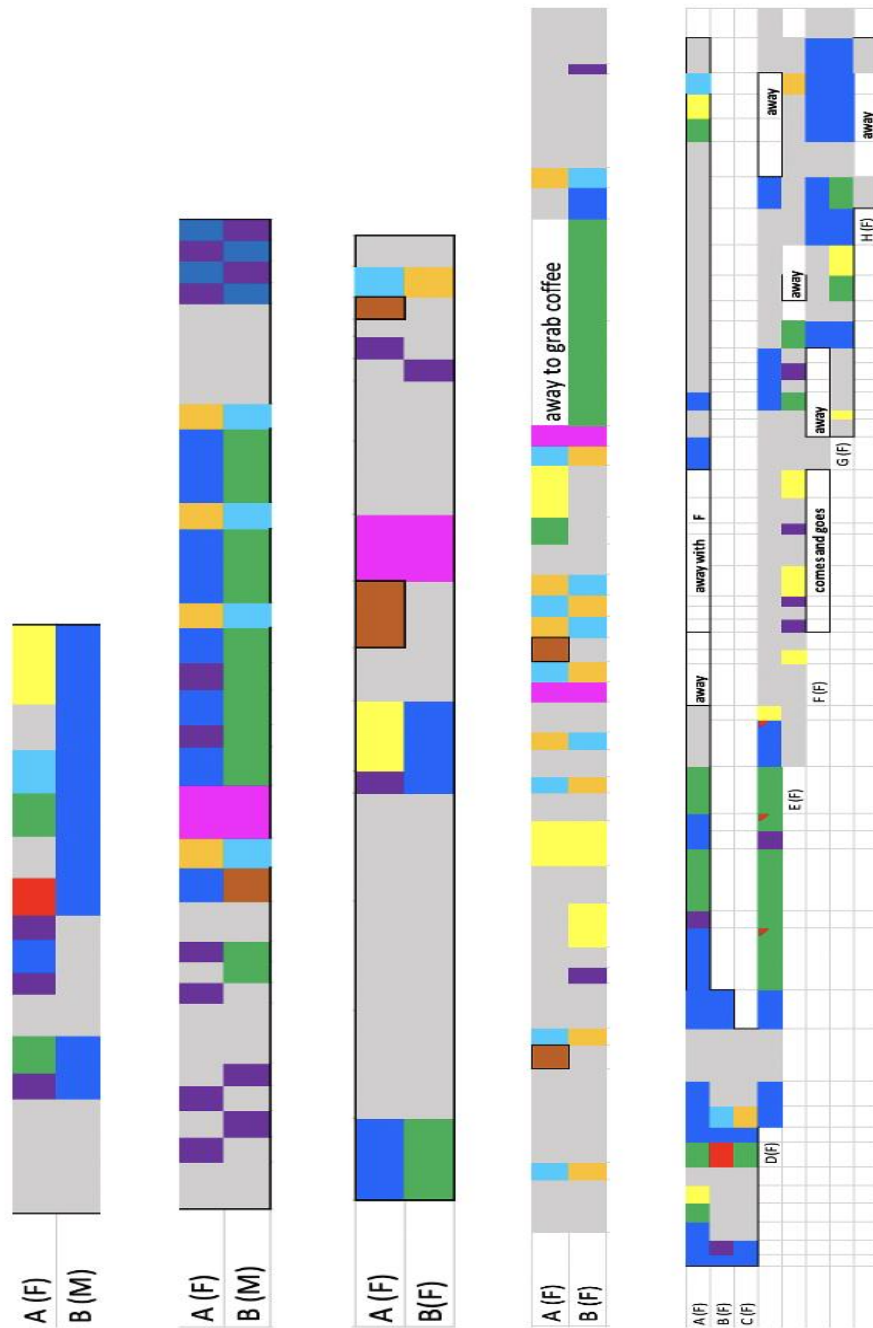
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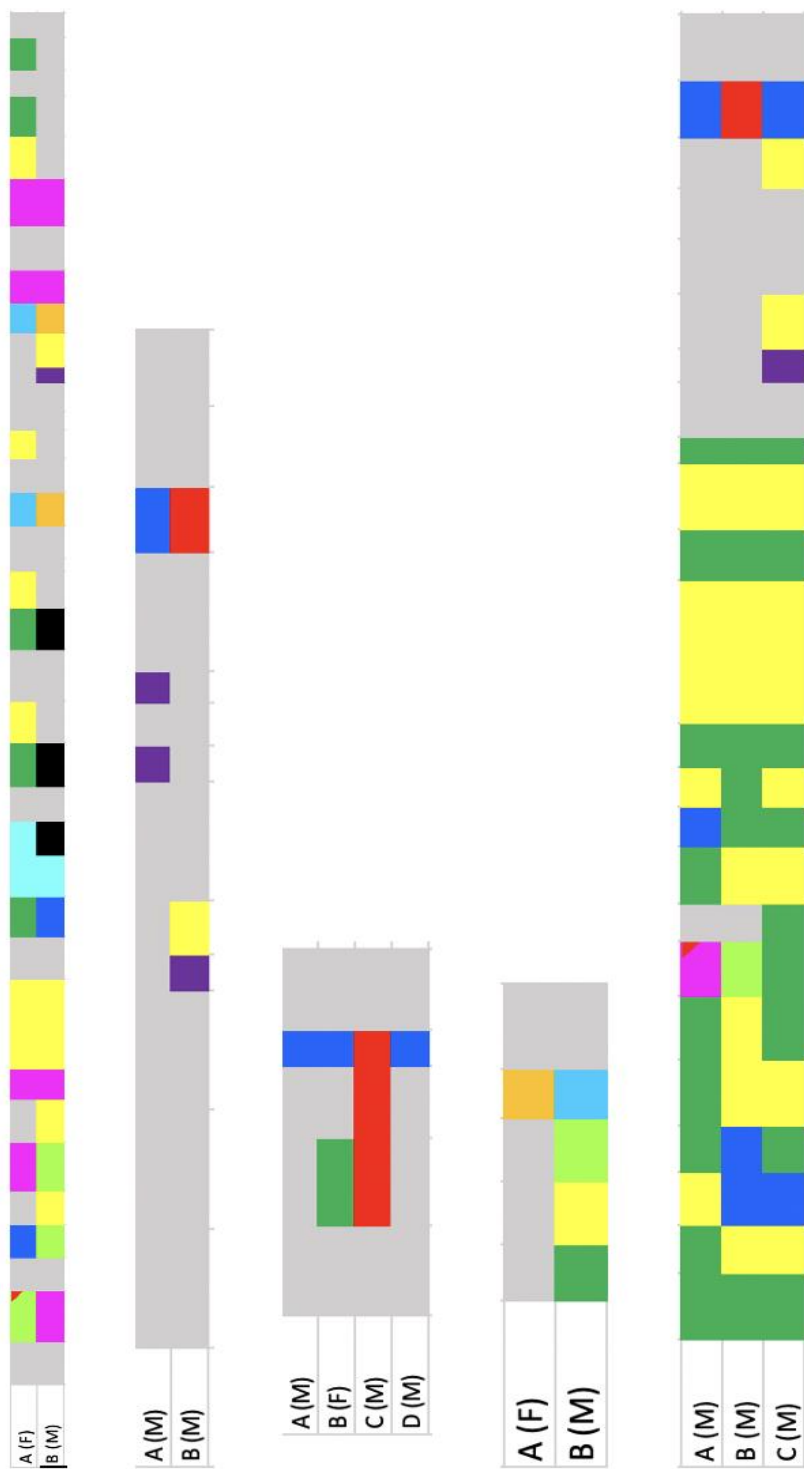
APPENDICES

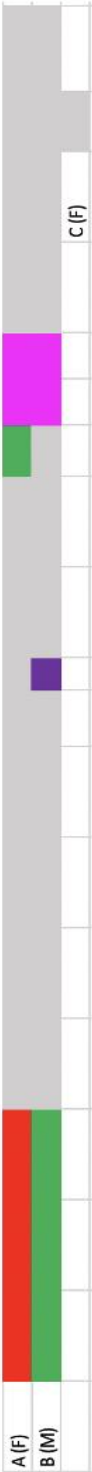
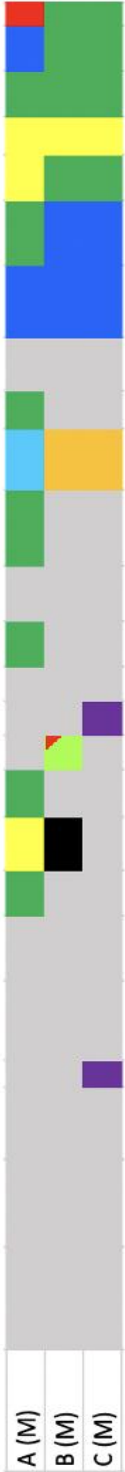
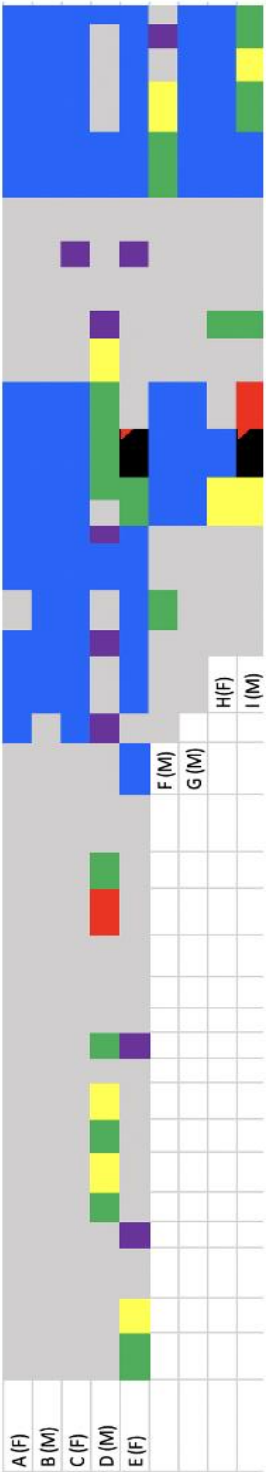
Appendix A – The Colour Codes & The Field Observation Colour Maps of Face Encounters

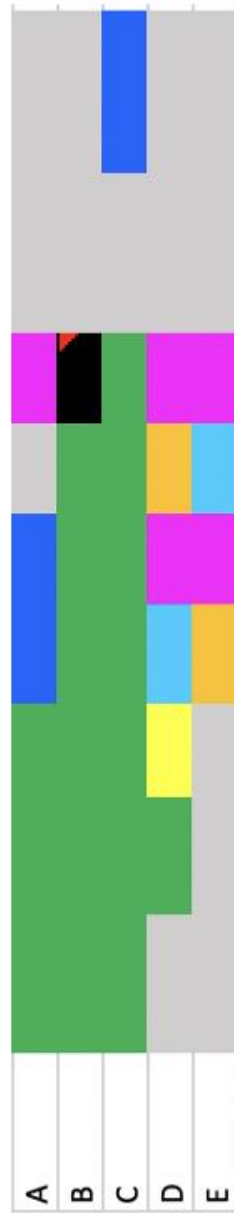
Colour codes	Patterns of Behaviour	Goffman's concepts
	individual use of mobile phone without contact with others	involvement shield - single & with
		digital cross talk
	show/verbally share content from mobile phone	digital cross talk
	receive content from someone's mobile phone	digital cross talk
	talk on the mobile phone	digital cross talk
	look at screen together and talk about the content on the screen	digital cross talk
	responding to (verbally or physically) or talking to someone while using mobile phone	digital cross talk
	searching content on mobile phone raised in conversation	digital cross talk
	touching mobile phone habitually/ checking notifications on the mobile phone	digital cross talk
	look at someone's screen	digital cross talk
	speaking to someone without any contacts with mobile phones	face engagement - mutual contact
	non-digital activities ignoring verbal exchange	involvement shield - single & with
	one taking selfie or recording a video and others participating	objects of involvement
	using someone else's mobile phone to reach/check content	objects of involvement
	study and interact with others only for this purpose	face engagement - mutual contact
	use mobile phone as a tool/source to study	objects of involvement

Chatting Encounters:

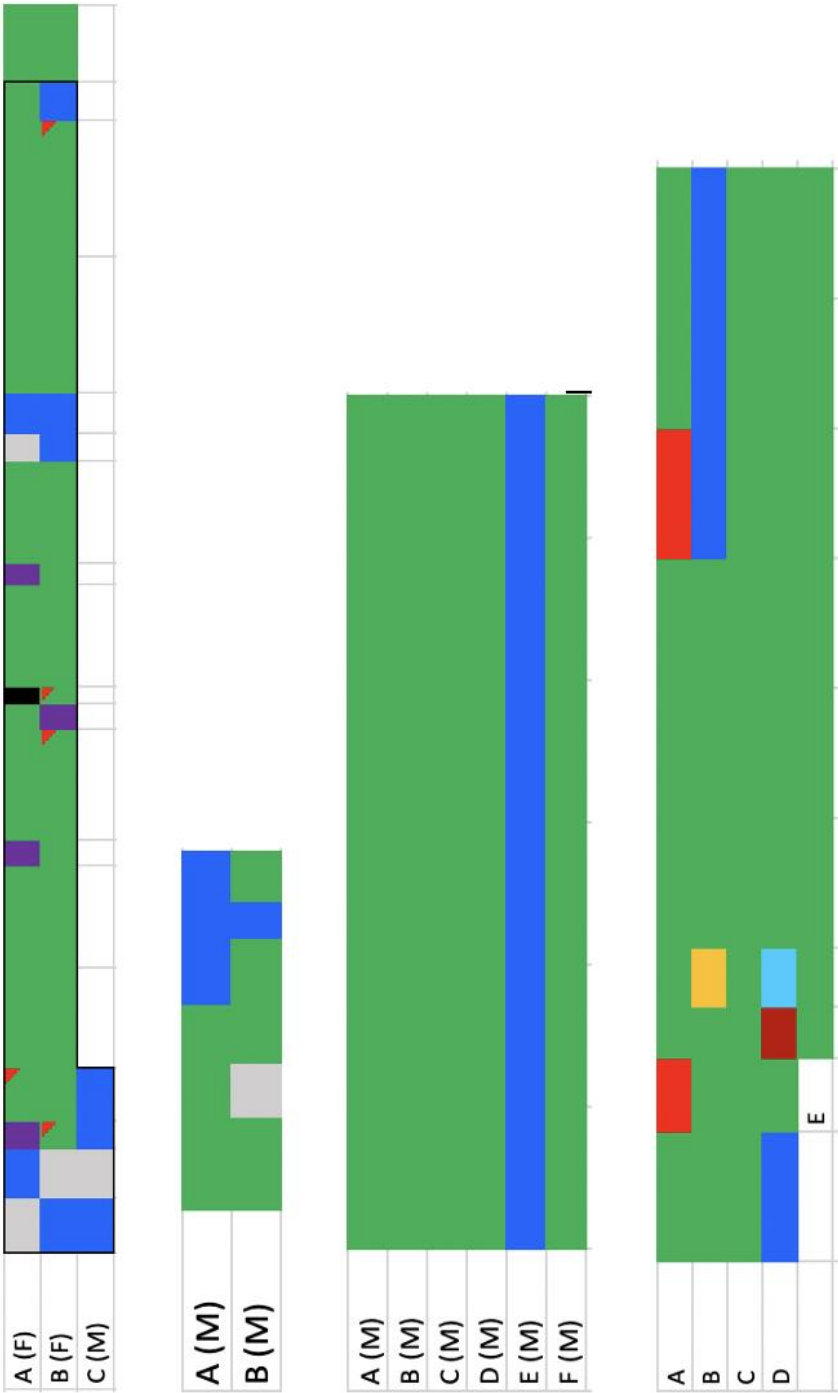




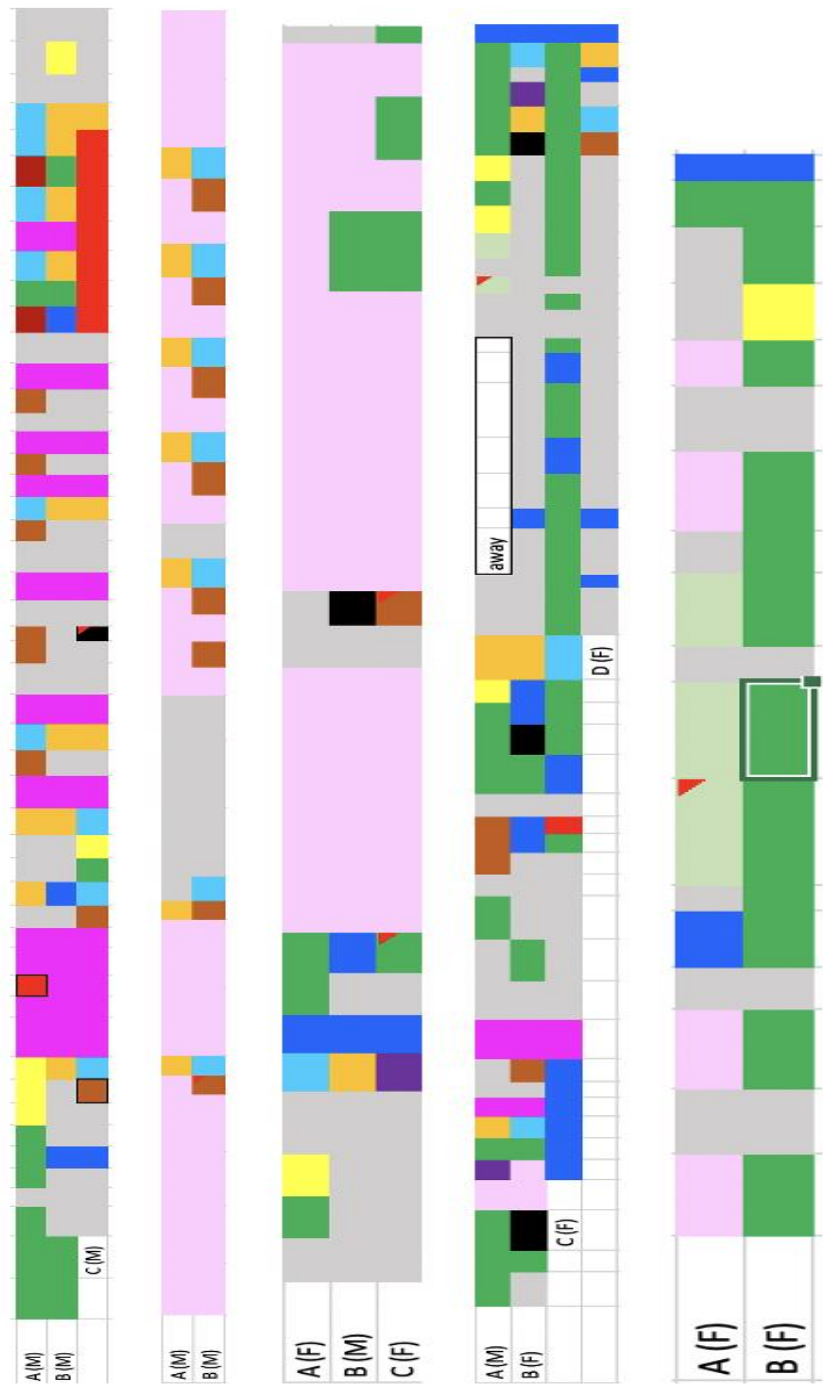


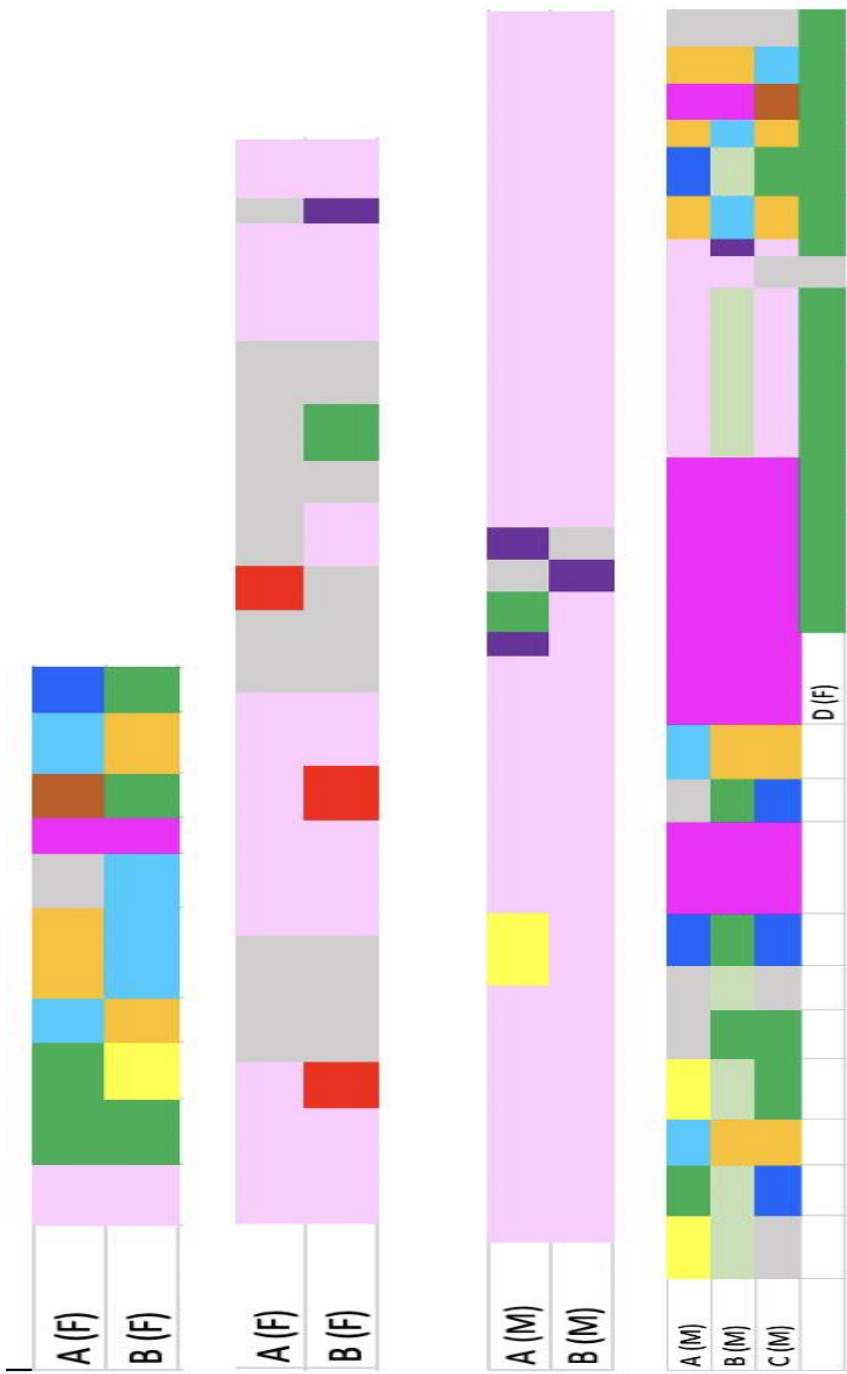


Passing Time Encounters:



Studying Encounters:





A (F)	Cyan			Blue	Green
B (M)	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Grey
C (F)	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
D (F)	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue

A	Pink			Pink	
B	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink
C	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink
D	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink

Appendix B - The semi-structured in-depth interview questions

1. Sosyal medyayı ne kadar aktif kullanırsınız?
2. Bir sosyal ortamda başkalarıyla birlikteyken cep telefonunuzu genellikle nerede bulundurursunuz/tutarsınız?
3. Bir sosyal ortamda başkalarıyla birlikteyken onları dinlerken ya da onlarla konuşurken cep telefonunuzda genellikle ne tür işlemler yaparsınız?
4. Sizce insanlar bir sosyal ortamda başkalarıyla birlikte sohbet ederken cep telefonlarından neden sosyal medya kullanma ihtiyacı hissederler?
5. Siz bir sosyal ortamda başkalarıyla birlikte sohbet ederken cep telefonunuzdan neden sosyal medya kullanma ihtiyacı hissediyorsunuz?
6. Bir sosyal ortamda başkalarıyla birlikteyken onların cep telefonlarında sosyal medyada bir şeyler yapıyor olmaları size ne hissettirir?
7. Bir sosyal ortamda sizinle birlikteyken cep telefonluklarında sosyal medyada bir şeyler yapan kişiler aynı anda siz onlarla konuşurken söylediklerinizi sizce ne kadar iyi takip edebilirler?
8. Sosyal medya kullanımı nedeniyle o esnada aslında sizin ne söylediğinizi dinlemediklerini fark ettiğinizde ne tür bir reaksiyon verirsiniz, ne yaparsınız?
9. Bir sosyal ortamda başkalarıyla birlikteyken cep telefonunuzda sosyal medyada bir şeyler yaparken aynı anda siz başkalarının size söylediğini sizce ne kadar iyi takip edebilirsiniz?
10. Siz sosyal medya nedeniyle başkalarının söylediklerini kaçırdığınız ya da anlamadığınızda onların size tepkisi ne olur? Ne yaparlar?
11. Başkalarıyla ders çalışırken sosyal medyada ne tür işlemler gerçekleştirirsiniz?

12. Sizce sosyal medya kullanımınız sizin yüz yüze iletişiminizi nasıl etkiliyor?
13. Sosyal medya hesabınız açıkken başkalarının telefonunuzun ekranına bakması ya da ekranı görmesi size ne hissettirir?
14. Hangi amaçla/ne gibi durumlarda başkalarının telefon ekranında bir içeriğe bakarsınız?
15. Bir sosyal ortamda başkalarıyla birlikteyken cep telefonunuz üzerinden sosyal medyada sıklıkla içinde bulunduğunuz hareket/işlem/eylemler nelerdir? Neler yaparsınız sosyal medyada?
16. Ne tür durumlarda sosyal medyadaki içerik ile sizin başkalarıyla konuştuğunuz konu arasında bir bağlantı olabilir? Belirli örnekler verebilir misiniz?
17. Ders çalışırken kontrol ettiğiniz sosyal medya içeriklerini çevrimiçi mi paylaşırsınız yoksa yanınızdaki kişilere de gösterir misiniz?
18. Ne tür durumlarda siz ve yanınızdaki kişiler sosyal medyada birlikte bir şeyler yaparsınız? Belirli örnekler verebilir misiniz?
19. Ne tür sosyal medya içeriklerini yanınızdaki arkadaşlarınıza gösterirsiniz?
20. Ekranınızda bir içeriği başkalarına göstermeyi mi yoksa onlarla bu içeriği çevrimiçi mi paylaşmayı tercih edersiniz? Neden?
21. Cep telefonunuzu yanınıza almadığınız ya da yanınızda olsa dahi onu veya en azından ekranını göremeyeceğiniz bir yere koyduğunuz bir sosyal ortam var mı?

Appendix C – In-Depth Interview Informed Consent Form and Survey

İsim:

Tarih:

Bölüm:

Yer ve saat:

Öğrenim yılı:

Doğum yılı:

Cep telefonu numarası:

E-mail:

İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi İletişim Bilimleri Doktora programı öğrencisi Z. Tüge T. Gülşen'in Prof. Dr. Halil Nalçaoğlu'nun danışmanlığında yürüttüğü "Sosyal Medya Kullanımının Gençlerin Yüz Yüze Söylem Üretimlerindeki Rolü" başlıklı doktora çalışmasının veri toplama çalışması olan görüşmeye gönüllü olarak katılıyorum. Bu görüşme sonucunda verdiğim bilgiler doğrudur ve benim gerçek görüşlerimi yansıtır. Kimlik bilgilerimin gizli tutulması ve kişilik haklarımın korunması kaydıyla bu görüşmede söylediklerimin bu çalışmada ver olarak kullanılabileceğini kabul ediyorum. Ayrıca bu görüşmenin kayıt edilmesini kabul ediyorum/etmiyorum.

İmza:

Görüşmeye başlamadan önce lütfen aşağıdaki soruları cevaplayınız. Herhangi bir sorunuz olursa lütfen bunu araştırmacıya yöneltiniz.

TEŞEKKÜRLER

1. Akıllı telefon kullanıyor musunuz? Evet _____ / Hayır _____
2. Kampüsteyken her zaman cep telefonunuzda internet bağlantınız var mıdır?
Evet _____ / Hayır _____
3. Sosyal medya kullanıyor musunuz? Evet _____ / Hayır _____
4. Hangi sosyal medya platformlarını ne sıklıkla kullanıyorsunuz? (Birden fazla seçenek işaretleyebilirsiniz)

Instagram	1 Asla	2 Nadiren	3 Bazen	4 Sıklıkla	5 Her zaman
Twitter	1 Asla	2 Nadiren	3 Bazen	4 Sıklıkla	5 Her zaman
Snapchat	1 Asla	2 Nadiren	3 Bazen	4 Sıklıkla	5 Her zaman
Facebook	1 Asla	2 Nadiren	3 Bazen	4 Sıklıkla	5 Her zaman
YouTube	1 Asla	2 Nadiren	3 Bazen	4 Sıklıkla	5 Her zaman
Diğer (Yazınız) _____	1 Asla	2 Nadiren	3 Bazen	4 Sıklıkla	5 Her zaman
5. Bir sosyal ortamda başkalarıyla yüz yüze iletişim içindeyken hangi sıklıkla sosyal medya hesaplarınızı kontrol edersiniz?

1 Asla	2 Nadiren	3 Bazen	4 Sıklıkla	5 Her zaman
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ETHICS BOARD APPROVAL

Ethics Board Approval is available in the printed version of this dissertation.