



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue on Gender, Mobile and Mobile Internet: Opportunities and Challenges in Mobile-Centric Use

Guest Editors:

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Summary:

Mobile access, as well as mobile Internet access, is increasing exponentially around the world (World Bank 2012). A number of studies already show engaged use of both by and for women, from using mobiles to supporting oneself financially (Tacchi & Chandola 2016) to mutual support in healthcare (Chib & Chen 2011), finance (Wallis 2011), civic technology (Rumbul 2016) and education (Balasubramanian et al. 2010). Reflecting on the implications of mobile access, a point of discussion emerges: do the particular affordances of mobile, increasingly dissociated from place and context (Donner 2015), have the potential to affect women (for many of whom mobiles are the first and foremost ICT device to be used) disproportionately to men?

Other questions arise in conceptualizing gendered affordances of mobile. In particular, limited gender-disaggregated data are available on mobile and mobile Internet access, which limits our capability to draw inferences. Poor access may be the result of a number of issues: cost; male control of finances as well as use; literacy and digital literacy; and fear of use. For example, Potnis (2015) finds women in rural Maharashtra, India, are afraid of being harassed or of “breaking” the phone by mistake. Schoemaker (2015) elaborates on cultural constraints affecting the use of mobile Internet in Pakistan (“digital purdah”). Further research brings forth restricted agency – female street traders in Kampala switch off phones in the presence of men to preserve the status quo (Masika & Bailur 2015), and Vietnamese brides in Singapore use mobile Internet within confines only (Thi Hoan et al. 2016).



This Special Issue seeks to focus on three specific areas with a gender lens:

- Theories and frameworks of gender empowerment through mobile phones, e.g. Sen's capability (see Thi Hoan et al., 2016), Alcott's theory of positionality (Wallis 2011) and so on. What examples of empowerment do we see and how can we theorize these, whether selling through WhatsApp (Venkatraman 2015) or self-educating through mobile YouTube (Caribou Digital 2015)?
- Conceptualizing "grey areas" of empowerment, e.g. poor regulation when conducting micro-work (Harris 2014), negotiating sex work (Tacchi & Chandola 2016) or using images or videos for it (Veena 2007) as well as harassment (WWWF 2015).
- Nuances and intersectionality – e.g., who are the intermediaries (male and female) who enable or constrain women's access? What role does intersectionality (class, caste, race, age, location etc) play? Can we draw upon granulated data to extend and unpick binary male/female discussions? What tactics of agency do we see? Sharing devices may be one, but is problematic (see Burrell 2010).

Author submission instructions

Prepare your manuscripts according to the following guidelines after your abstract is approved by the guest editors:

1. Abstracts are a maximum 175 words.
2. Both abstract and keywords must be included in the manuscript.
3. Papers must be single-column, 12 pt. Times Roman font, 1.5 spacing
4. Papers should be a maximum 8,900 words (all-inclusive).
5. Papers are anonymized including in "Properties."
6. Papers are formatted according to APA 6th edition guidelines.
7. When your paper is ready, submit it directly to the ITID platform at itidjournal.org

Papers that do not comply with guidelines will be immediately returned to the author(s).

Important Dates

30 October, 2016

Deadline for abstract to Savita Bailur at
S.Bailur@lse.ac.uk

30 January, 2017

Deadline for manuscript to be submitted to the ITID
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