August 2020

Interview conducted in August 2020. The participant received a participant information sheet before the interview and provided written consent. The purpose of the interview was explained prior to asking any questions and recording the interview. The participant had then the opportunity to ask any additional questions for clarification. It was explained that when the interview questions asked for digital devices or ICT devices this implied smartphones, tablets, computers and TVs. Depending on the situation of the participant the relevant device could be referred to. The recording was transcribed non verbatim.

The interview was conducted in English.

**Speaker 1: Could you please state your name.**

Speaker 2: My name is [anonymised].

**Speaker 1: And are you working?**

Speaker 2: I am an assistant professor at the University of [anonymised] in dual physics. So, I am working at the university.

**Speaker 1: Could you please state your age?**

Speaker 2: 40.

**Speaker 1: And where do you currently live?**

Speaker 2: In [anonymised].

**Speaker 1: Do you live alone or do you live with others?**

Speaker 2: Alone.

**Speaker 1: And how long are you living where you are living now?**

Speaker 2: 12 years.

**Speaker 1: And then we are going to jump right into the main dis which going be breakfast. On an**

**average day during the week, when would you normally get up?**

Speaker 2: Like 7 and 7.20.

**Speaker 1: And on the weekend would that be kind of the same?**

Speaker 2: Between 9 and 10.

**Speaker 1: When you get up, would you normally eat breakfast?**

Speaker 2: Yes.

**Speaker 1: And that breakfast, would you prepare it yourself, or do you buy it somewhere?**

Speaker 2: I mix it a little bit. So often I do go out to have a coffee and some bun or something outside at different cafes, and sometimes I prepare at home some bread and some coffee.

**Speaker 1: And would that be kind of the same during the week and on the weekend?**

Speaker 2: Yes, actually yes.

**Speaker 1: And when you make your breakfast at home, would you then normally prepare it and sit down, or do you prepare it and it eat while you do something else?**

Speaker 2: I prepare it and sit down.

**Speaker 1: And when you get it outside... you mentioned that you sometimes get it at a cafe. So, do you mix it there? Like do you eat it while walking or do you really try to sit down whenever you eat your breakfast?**

Speaker 2: Also mix. Sometimes I sit down and eat. Sometimes I take it to the park and sit in the park and eat. Usually, I sit down somewhere.

**Speaker 1: And your breakfast, do you normally eat that alone or do you eat it with other people?**

Speaker 2: That is always alone.

**Speaker 1: And when you prepare your breakfast or you eat your breakfast, would you use an ICT device? So, do you use your smartphone or is there a TV running in the background?**

Speaker 2: Yeah, often I watch something on the smartphone or the tablet when I have breakfast. Often emails as such checking, or... I read something in the news. And when I go out, I grab a newspaper. Usually, I do something on the phone or the iPad.

**Speaker 1: And would you say that it is kind of the same during the week and on the weekend? Or do you have different habits?**

Speaker 2: It is a bit the same.

**Speaker 1: So, it would be mainly like news and emails or would you use it as well for social media or watching a film or something?**

Speaker 2: Yeah, it's... sometimes I watch series. Sometimes I watch stuff on Facebook that people posed or I watch videos that people pose. Sometimes I watch some YouTube, especially now like about Corona and stuff.

**Speaker 1: And do you feel that the use of the ICT devices influences the way you eat?**

Speaker 2: It does, yes. Yeah, it does.

**Speaker 1: Do you feel that it is a positive or a negative influence?**

Speaker 2: Yeah, it is a negative influence I would say, because I don't really focus on eating and sometimes, I eat faster or so, or not really... Or I am not really fully aware of how I eat.

**Speaker 1: So, do you feel that it is a bit distracting?**

Speaker 2: Yes.

**Speaker 1: And do you feel, that depending on what you do with the phone or the iPad that it is more or less distracting? So, for example, do you feel like reading the newspaper online has a different effect than watching a series?**

Speaker 2: Yeah, I find it is a bit of a different effect if you really read like a newspaper not on an ICT device. It is more natural somehow but on the phone it is more focused on the small screen. Yeah, that feels different.

**Speaker 1: Do you feel like during the peak of Corona so during the lock down that your breakfast**

**eating habit was adjusted?**

Speaker 2: Yeah, I would say so. I would use the phone much more and much more multimedia stuff and be distracted much more by these things.

**Speaker 1: Do you feel that it was just the breakfast or do you feel that throughout the day you would use the phone more while eating?**

Speaker 2: Yes, throughout the day.

**Speaker 1: And do you feel that it was just the intensity or did you use different kind of apps? You just mentioned social media in this context. So, did you use the devices for different things?**

Speaker 2: Yeah, I realised starting using more social media and really more all these links to different studies and stuff, and I started reading more which I wouldn't do. I wouldn't be much on Facebook in the past. That has changed for instance. I also wouldn't use YouTube so much. That has really increased quite a bit.

**Speaker 1: And why do you feel that is? Do you feel you have more time?**

Speaker 2: I think because there is just less social interaction. I am working from home all the time and yeah... less outer structure in your days so it requires more discipline to uhm.... Yeah, to not distract with reading stuff on the phone or so.

**Speaker 1: Then the next main meal: On an average day during the week, when would you normally eat lunch?**

Speaker 2: Between 12 and 1.30.

**Speaker 1: And do you feel that it is on the weekend kind of the same or is it different?**

Speaker 2: On the weekend, I often skip lunch and I have like an early dinner.

**Speaker 1: And for lunch, on an average day during the week whatwould you eat?**

Speaker 2: What I would eat?

**Speaker 1: Yes, what would you eat for lunch?**

Speaker 2: I would mainly go out for lunch and then I would have salad or there is like a Vegetarian restaurant close by. I have like a few restaurants which I like or more places where I go. I don't eat meat. So sometimes Thai noodles. It depends what they have. And sometimes I cook here and then I prepare salad and like pasta. Sometimes pizza or I have like Indian food. Something that is like fast and convenient. It really depends a bit how fast I can get it. But I really prefer to go out for lunch often because actually then I often meet some people also, because I know all the people sitting in the restaurants and then I don't use the phone so much because I meet other people.

**Speaker 1: And when you don't meet other people when you go out for lunch, would you use your phone?**

Speaker 2: Usually, yes.

**Speaker 1: What kind of apps would you use?**

Speaker 2: I think I am quite addicted to my email inbox. So, I feel like I am just one swipe away to checking... and just receiving emails and then I would read through emails. Sometimes through emails I didn't really care to read in the morning, then I would read them again or sometimes also emails I had already written and sent. I would read through them again and see if I wrote everything properly or so, and then again, the news that I would check. But that varies a bit so if I catch myself being too distracted. I would also stop and put the phone aside and focus more on my dining.

**Speaker 1: So, would you use the phone while you wait for the food but as well while you are eating?**

Speaker 2: While I wait for food, yes. And while I would be eating also sometimes. Yes. But when I go out... I mean when I go out, I would say it is even less then when I am home. When I am at home, I would often put up my tablet and then I watch... yeah, I watch some YouTube or some new post or so. Yeah... that I wouldn't do... take my tablet and watch something while I go out and eat. Then I would have the phone and I check something but I also don't wear earphones while eating so I would only read something on the phone.

**Speaker 1: And do you feel that it is kind of the same during the week and on the weekends? Ah well, sorry. You already mentioned that you don't lunch on the weekend and skip right to dinner. So, when you eat lunch at your workplace, would you sometimes eat lunch there alone or do you eat it with other people when you don't go out?**

Speaker 2: The thing is that I am only in the home office now, so it depends if I go to the office. I often go and eat alone or I get something and I take it to my office and then I eat in front of the computer.

**Speaker 1: So, you would keep on working while eating?**

Speaker 2: Yeah, not fully but... yeah it is difficult to work while you are really eating so a little bit like. Sometimes you move the mouse and you click on something. I don't know, you check the football news or so.... Or more like distant... not fully with the food but still looking at stuff on the computer.

**Speaker 1: And do you like eating lunch this way? So that you use the ICT device in the context?**

Speaker 2: No, it is more like that I get hungry and that I have to eat but I don't... it's often in a fast procedure then. Especially when I am in the office. And there I also have places where I go to that I forgot to mention. So, I also have my fixed spots, so my restaurants close to my workplace and there I always meet people who are not from my workplace and not from my work themselves but from outside and then I don't use any ICT device, we are just talking about stuff.

**Speaker 1: And do you feel that you have to force yourself not to use an ICT device in this context or does it just come natural to you?**

Speaker 2: Then it comes natural to me because then I am with other people and I really enjoy the company but when I am alone, I really need to force myself to use an ICT device.

**Speaker 1: But you pay... you mentioned that you sometimes pay attention to it and to not use it during lunch. Is that right?**

Speaker 2: Yes, like when I am... also sometimes really sometimes I try to pay attention because I am like... I mean you feel it when you eat that you are not really present.

**Speaker 1: And looking back at Corona again. Do you feel it has influenced the way you eat your lunch?**

Speaker 2: It has influenced it because I am in the home office, so that is probably one of the breaks when I go outside, because as I said, I mainly go outside if I find time to have lunch. And that is like sometimes the first time during the day that I go outside. So, in a way I combine it with having a walk outside and then go find a place for lunch or so and yes that has changed during Corona. It is like... I mean eating is a bit like the highlight of the day at least... at least during the first weeks of the lockdown.

**Speaker 1: Then the next main meal: Dinner. On an average day, when would you eat dinner?**

Speaker 2: I would say between 8 and 10. Sometimes I eat very late. No 7 and 10...

**Speaker 1: And is that kind of same at the weekend as well?**

Speaker 2: Uhm... at the weekend, it really depends if I have an early dinner because I had a late breakfast and then I don't eat late anymore. Often it is that I get hungry before I go to bed. Or I come home late or so and then I eat. Then I eat bread or so but, in the evening, so it depends also if I meet friends. If I meet friends in the weekend, I would probably go and have dinner with them somewhere. Then I would adjust to it. So, if I know that I meet someone at 7 or 8 and we are going to eat then I wouldn't eat at 5... so it depends a bit. Let's say on the weekend I am more... a little bit more flexible in my whole schedules, sometimes I just... flow through the day so yeah...

**Speaker 1: And you mentioned that you eat on the weekend dinner with friends. During the week, would you normally eat your dinner alone or do you try to eat it with other people?**

Speaker 2: Also, with other people. So, there are some restaurants that... where often I know people who are there and it also depends a bit what I do with my schedule what I do in the evening. If I have time to go, or if I don't. So twice the week I have some sport that I do and then I eat alone and then I go to do some sports because then I eat earlier and it also really depends how intense my day was in terms of working. If I feel like I need company and want to see some people or have some social contact then I would go to a restaurant where I meet people or so.

**Speaker 1: And when you eat your dinner alone, would you use an ICT device in this context?**

Speaker 2: Yes.

**Speaker 1: What kind of device?**

Speaker 2: Tablet or phone again. Tablet is... I wouldn't sit in front of my working computer but I would use my tablet, yeah.

**Speaker 1: And what kind of apps would you use?**

Speaker 2: YouTube... I think YouTube and Facebook are the main ones. Sometimes I watch on Amazon Prime a movie or a series. Sometimes I watch the ZDF Mediathek or so. But I think mainly YouTube and Facebook.

**Speaker 1: So, looking back at Corona, do you feel it has influenced the way you eat your dinner?**

Speaker 2: I mean, I would say that I used these ICT devices more often before... when I would have my dinner, I would probably be coming from the office and then go to eat somewhere on the way home. So, I had more of a regularity. Now it really depends. It depends a bit. And now I feel that I am also feeling that I

am eating later. Yeah, I am eating later in Corona times and I have to force myself to eat earlier.

**Speaker 1: Why do you think that is?**

Speaker 2: I feel I am losing a bit the track of time when I am working at home. And I also feel that I am moving less in general because before I rode the bike to get to work and you would be much more... I would be moving more outside.

**Speaker 1: So, these were the main meals. And now I have some additional questions about like context and timing that influence the use of ICT devices. So, in general how do you feel when I eat alone?**

Speaker 2: You mean mentally?

**Speaker 1: Yes, or is there even a possible or negative experience to eating attached to it?**

Speaker 2: I do enjoy much more to eat in company... so I really often. If someone visits me and I prepare something then I also put much more energy in the preparation and I make it a nice meal but if I just do it for myself, I do... let's say... I don't invest so much time and energy to make it a nice meal. That is for sure. That is mainly on the weekend... no usually I feel, when I am alone, I don't feel like... you know a bit bored and I don't have so much energy for it.

**Speaker 1: And do you feel there are any specific places where you tend to use your ICT device while eating alone?**

Speaker 2: Say again.

**Speaker 1: Do you feel there are any specific places where you tend to use ICT devices while eating so for example in a restaurant when you are waiting for your food or at home eating breakfast alone. So, do you feel there are certain locations where you are more likely to be using the ICT device?**

Speaker 2: Yes, at home for sure. There I use it more. And when I am waiting for food somewhere, I also use it.

**Speaker 1: Why do you think that is?**

Speaker 2: Because then I am alone and then waiting is always a bit of a strange thing, you know. Because you want to do something and yeah...

**Speaker 1: So now on a more temporal perspective. Do you feel there are certain times when you tend to use the ICT device while eating alone?**

Speaker 2: That I cannot say clearly.

**Speaker 1: Then next question, could you explain what your motivation is to use the ICT device while eating alone?**

Speaker 2: Maybe it is a bit boredom. Boredom and also…. Maybe boredom and a bit of loneliness also probably. And maybe also general stress when you are working on the computer and you are a bit. It is difficult to slow down the brain… so you stay in the action like behaviour.

**Speaker 1: Do you feel like certain situations influence your motivation to use the ICT device while eating alone? So, does it depend highly on the situation or is it for example that whenever you are bored you would use the ICT device?**

Speaker 2: It depends a bit if I am really… the type… on a scheduled thing… then I would use it differently. Then I would even eat in front of the computer actually.

**Speaker 1: So, more time pressure would increase your motivation to use the device while eating lunch or dinner?**

Speaker 2: Yeah, I would say so. Can you say the question one more time?

**Speaker 1: Do you feel your motivation to use a specific ICT device depends on the situation?**

Speaker 2: I think yes. I think it really depends on the level of frustration that depends very much on the level of stress and the emotional state of how your day is going. Do you feel balanced? Or do you feel stressed and frustrated? [inaudible] or did you have enough movement? So, it actually always depends I would say.

**Speaker 1: Do you feel the more stressed you are the more prone you are to use the device?**

Speaker 2: Yes.

**Speaker 1: Are there any specific devices? So, for example is it when it is more work stress you would be more likely to use your computer?**

Speaker 2: I mean if I am really in work stress then I am… I mean the computer I don't use very often. It is

really rare that I eat in front of the computer. That is really rare. But it is mainly that I have work stress that I would be reading through more emails and also reprocess certain things that are already rolled out or... or trying to figure out "okay what do I need to do?". Or I read some documents that I still need to read on the tablet.

**Speaker 1: So, you would basically you use your leisure time like eating to complete work tasks?**

Speaker 2: I wouldn't call it the effective completing but I would stay in the mind process or the thought process somehow not really relaxing.

**Speaker 1: And when you think about people who eat in public alone, for example, in a restaurant and use an ICT device: What is your opinion about those people?**

Speaker 2: It is very normal. But I also find it very strange. So, I have some opinions about that because the head is always down, people look down and [inaudible]... it is like everybody is hiding. That is actually my opinion everyone is hiding.

**Speaker 1: And why do you think it is strange?**

Speaker 2: I think it is not very... I think everyone has a usually strong longing for connection but it doesn't appear naturally so you don't talk to other people probably so you use the device to distract yourself and to stuff your longing for connection by feeding yourself information. And that is the strange thing... for me it feels like it is a substitute for what people actually long for. That is my opinion. At least that is what I notice from myself.

**Speaker 1: And do you feel your perception of these people has changed because you have reflected on your own behaviour?**

Speaker 2: I don't have strong judgements about these people because it has become so normal. It is like the normal picture you see... yeah it has become very normal.

**Speaker 1: And why do you think it has become so normal?**

Speaker 2: I think because it is so available and it is the easiest way to distracting yourself and like avoiding real contact of hiding and staying in your own safe bubble somehow. And that is why I think it has become very normal and also because there is... because of the availability. And the technical development of course.

**Speaker 1: When you think about people who eat in their private space alone, for example, their home**

**and use an ICT device: What is your opinion about those people?**

Speaker 2: That they are probably also lonely and cannot really handle to just enjoy the food at its fullness or so. Yeah...

**Speaker 1: Do you think there are certain situations in which the devices impact on the eating experience?**

Speaker 2: I think it totally influences the eating experiences. I don't think that if your eyes are so active that your senses of taste and chewing are really working as its best.

**Speaker 1: Okay last two questions. In a future scenario, imagine there are no limitations in terms of money and technology, do you think that digital devices could actually contribute to a healthy eating experience?**

Speaker 2: Uh. Maybe for... not really. Maybe if you develop an eating app which guides you through the process of food consumption... like an awareness meditation or something. But not really. I think that is really something which is quite far apart.

**Speaker 1: So in this future scenario, the app would make you more aware of what you are eating?**

Speaker 2: Yes, maybe. I don't know if music would be something but music is also quite a distraction while you are eating so probably something... you know like we have this... these reminders, these app reminders that ring at a certain time or so. Something like that. But they are not really. I think it is just too far apart because this digital stuff I don't find it very natural and food is something very, very natural. But since we have also apps for workout or, you know, training, it might be that it will come. That it will support people who are so far away from eating naturally that they might use an app to control their food... how we take food or so. Because people use apps for sports, for meditation for all types of things... yeah. Maybe that will... maybe that could, that could help them.

**Speaker 1: But you feel it is more for a specific population of people?**

Speaker 2: Yeah, who are not so aware... so really young people who really grow up with a digital, with a digital device because I still know a time when it wasn't available, so I still come from that time and I still have this maybe... nostalgic idea of it. Food or natural things are natural but I also realise that it has so changed and of course you cannot push back the time or so and now that I think about how they can actually contribute to a healthy living these devices. Because it isn't really done. I mean they can contribute to the way people do sports, the way people structure their day and set reminders so maybe in that way for people who grew up... young people who really grew up with these devices, they will probably

use it also in the way that they find regularity in their eating habits or so. Yeah, I never thought of it but for myself I would just like to have the discipline or let's say the... yeah, discipline to just put it away and then just focus on one thing and not...

**Speaker 1: And you mentioned the food consumption process. Do you feel they could contribute as well to the food preparation process?**

Speaker 2: That of course. I think for the food preparation process it is very nice to check recipes although I don't do it very often - just if I want to do something special. But it is very nice to look at. I mean it contributes because you can look up restaurants, what is on the menu, what is available. That is nice. You can also... also to check out recipes so people get more an idea of cooking. Maybe also how to eat healthy if you feel like... I don't know if you feel less energetic what kind of food would you prefer to eat. And in this way, it could really help.

**Speaker 1: And you mentioned looking up restaurants and menus. Is that something you would do before you leave the house?**

Speaker 2: I usually check if it is open, the restaurant. And to check the menu is actually quite rare. Just if I am somewhere travelling or so and in new cities and I want to find a special restaurant or vegan place or so or a veg restaurant then I would look for it. Or an Indian place... then I .... What I often do is to check ratings on google, so how many ratings are there is for me like the best criteria. So, if you have like a high number of voters but otherwise yeah... and then I often check the pictures so if the food looks aesthetically prepared... that is what I do a lot. So, in this way I find the devices really helpful, you know. So you know where you can go.

**Speaker 1: And with the aspect of like healthy eating. Is that something that you really take into account or does it come naturally to you and you don't even think about it? Do you choose all your food according to it?**

Speaker 2: No, I do think about it. I mean I am... I wouldn't say I am a healthy eater, because I don't eat meat, I don't eat cheap food. I mean that is quite... that comes to me quite naturally because I just buy in certain places but I also know that for example around mid-day when I eat too heavy, it is just not... it doesn't work well for me. So, there it requires some discipline. It doesn't come naturally to me because of course heavy stuff always tastes better and cheese, toppings and pizza... but it doesn't necessarily help you.

**Speaker 1: Then the last question what do you think are the current issues when it comes to using a digital device while eating alone? So, you already mentioned boredom and distraction as well as being in your own bubble. Do you feel there are any additional issues in the context?**

Speaker 2: I mean, I think that people eat much faster. That is what I noticed. That I actually eat faster. So, I don't... maybe I don't even chew properly while doing something and eating. I think another issue is really that the level of concentration is very much influenced because then it is on the break and that is not like really a break. So, it will also influence your capacity to concentrate afterwards because it is not... usually we would have very regular days. 9 am to 5 pm working days with very fixed breaks and then, you know, with a break. But overall, the use of digital devices in the free time... I think that will very much influence the capacity of concentration and memory also. And for food... yeah... I think people will use it... or at least that is what I noticed; I lose a bit the sense of food sometimes. You know, I didn't enjoy the time when I actually ate the food so if you do it over a long time then you suddenly feel like ... I don't even feel like eating, you know. I don't want to prepare something because it is not as sensational as looking at a video. Yeah, so really the experience of the sensation of eating or the sensation like... it is a bodily sensation when you eat and if you are not aware of it you don't couple any enjoyment with it anymore or any satisfaction to it and then it becomes a bit... I think you just stuff more and more. That would be I think quite a big side issue.

**Speaker 1: So, these were all the questions that I had. Thanks for your time.**