

# THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

## Departmental Research Seminar



### Usage Feedback and Self-Regulation of Smartphone Use: Evidence from a Field Experiment By

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**Date : 23 Mar 2023 (THU)**  
**Time : 9:30 – 11 am**  
**Venue : Online via Zoom**

#### Abstract

Individuals are increasingly dependent on their smartphones for many aspects of their lives. However, they often have difficulty regulating their use. Excessive smartphone use has become an important concern and has attracted research on interventions to self-regulate use. Self-regulation theory identifies various barriers to self-regulation of behavior. Monitoring barriers, or monitoring bias, suggests that users have difficulty estimating their usage, and typically underestimate their levels of use. We examine one specific informational mechanism intervention to address monitoring bias: providing users with usage feedback in the form of a weekly summary of their smartphone usage behavior. Usage feedback addresses monitoring barriers by raising users' awareness of possible inconsistencies between their perceived and actual usage, and can, consequently, motivate them to regulate their usage. Furthermore, because usage of different apps and different levels of usage involve different operational capacity barriers, we expect the intervention to have heterogeneous effects on self-regulation of different types of apps and on users with different prior usage patterns. Leveraging the introduction of the "screen usage" feedback on smartphones, our results suggest that after receiving usage feedback, users reduce their overall usage frequency and duration. However, while they reduce usage duration across app types, we find heterogeneous effects across app types for usage frequency. We also find heterogeneous effects across levels of usage, with, surprisingly, heavy users (who are more likely to be habitual users) reducing usage to a larger extent.

**Prof. Elena Karahanna** is Distinguished Research Professor and the C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry Distinguished Chair at the Terry College of Business at the University of Georgia. Her current research examines algorithmic coordination, conversational agents, and social bots. Her research has been published in top scholarly journals as well as in practitioner journals and is highly cited with over 37,000 citations as per Google Scholar.

She has served as Senior Editor at the *MIS Quarterly*, *Information Systems Research*, and the *Journal of the Association for Information Systems* and serves as Associate Editor at *Management Science* where she has received the Inaugural Management Science Best AE Award in IS. She has also served in conference leadership roles, including twice as program co-chair for the International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS), twice as Doctoral Consortium co-chair for the Americas Conference on Information Systems (AMCIS), as co-chair of the European Conference on Information Systems (ECIS), and twice as conference co-chair for the Mediterranean Conference on Information Systems (MCIS).

Additionally, she co-founded the Senior Scholars Consortium, the Doctoral Student Corner, and SIGLead, a special interest group on IS Leadership. For her service contributions to the profession, she received the AIS Sandra Slaughter Service Award. Dr. Karahanna is a Fellow of the Association for Information Systems, an INFORMS Information Systems Society Distinguished Fellow, and has received the AIS Leo award for Lifetime Exceptional Achievement in the Information Systems discipline.

**All interested are welcome.**



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