



## Social Media Usage Interpersonal Relationship and Mental Health Issues among Married Individuals

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of social media usage on the quality of interpersonal relationships and mental health among married individuals, particularly those aged 25 to 55. As social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, continue to play an integral role in daily life, they bring both benefits and challenges to marital dynamics and psychological well-being. While these platforms facilitate communication and connection, they also create issues such as jealousy, emotional neglect, misunderstandings, and increased conflicts within marriages. Such negative impacts can result in lower relationship satisfaction, diminished intimacy, and contribute to mental health problems, including anxiety, depression, stress, and sleep disturbance.

**Keywords:** interpersonal relationship, married individuals, mental health issues, social media use

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### INTRODUCTION

Social media usage has drastically transformed the way individuals interact, particularly in the context of marital relationships. For many couples, social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp offer convenient avenues

for staying connected, sharing life updates, and maintaining social relationships outside their immediate family units. These platforms provide an opportunity for partners to communicate during busy schedules, enabling them to share emotions and updates that might otherwise be delayed in face-to-face interactions. In long-distance marriages, for instance, social media can help couples maintain a sense of togetherness despite physical separation, allowing them to share their daily experiences and keep the emotional connection intact . Over time, couples may experience emotional distance as they rely more on the convenience of virtual interactions, which are inherently less personal than in-person exchanges (Przybylski & Weinstein, 2013).

Research indicates that excessive time spent on social media can reduce the quality of communication between partners, leading to less meaningful and emotionally fulfilling exchanges. Activities like texting, posting, or liking photos may increase interaction frequency but do not guarantee deeper connection. Over time, this lack of emotional depth can cause feelings of distance and misunderstanding, weakening the intimacy vital to a healthy marriage. In some cases, couples may prioritize online engagement over each other's needs, neglecting the face-to-face communication necessary for conflict resolution and emotional bonding (Toma et al., 2008).

As digital intimacy interference increasingly influences romantic partnerships, couples must approach digital communication with mindfulness. Recognizing both the risks and benefits of digital media can help individuals better manage their relationships, ensuring technology strengthens rather than diminishes emotional closeness and mutual trust. The intrusion of technology into personal lives has disrupted traditional forms of bonding, such as attending concerts, plays, or social events together, or simply enjoying distraction-free time as a couple (Przybylski & Weinstein, 2013; Drouin, 2017).

Communication is a cornerstone of any relationship, serving as a means for partners to express their needs, resolve conflicts, and build intimacy. In marital relationships, effective communication is essential for maintaining connection, fostering understanding, and ensuring emotional closeness. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp offer couples new ways to stay connected, share experiences, and engage in meaningful conversations in real-time, potentially enhancing emotional bonds. Effective communication has long been recognized as a key factor in relationship success. As partners progress to sharing personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences, they develop a deeper emotional bond. This gradual shift from shallow to meaningful communication is critical for building intimacy and sustaining healthy relationships. Ultimately, while communication remains the foundation of relationship success, its depth and quality, whether online or offline, are what determine the strength and longevity of the bond between partners (Alanazi, 2021; Baruah, 2012; Whiteside et al., 2018).

Psychological well-being plays a crucial role in both the formation and maintenance of marital relationships. The relationship between mental health and marriage is complex, as it is challenging to separate the influence of preexisting mental health conditions from the effects of marriage itself. Additionally, research has found

that married women often experience higher levels of distress compared to married men. This disparity may be due to traditional gender roles, where women bear greater emotional and caregiving burdens, which can increase stress. In contrast, men may experience less distress due to societal expectations that place less emotional responsibility on them. These gendered dynamics significantly impact marital satisfaction and mental health. While marriage can provide benefits such as emotional support and stability, the connection between mental health and marriage is bidirectional, requiring attention to mental health both before and during marriage. Further research is needed to understand how gender, psychological well-being, and societal expectations influence marital dynamics (Robles et al., 2014; Waite & Gallagher, 2000).

In recent years, the rise of social media and dating apps has changed the landscape of romantic relationships. Popular platforms such as Match.com and eHarmony have reported success stories of individuals who have found long-term partners through their services. However, critics argue that these platforms have also made it easier for individuals in committed relationships to seek out new partners, which can lead to infidelity and ultimately harm marital bonds. This duality highlights the complex relationship between social media usage and the stability of marriages (Hashemi et al., 2017).

Marriage has long been seen as a foundational institution in society, connecting individuals to family life, economic cooperation, and childbearing. It offers legal and emotional commitments that shape relationships and provide security and support. However, excessive use of digital platforms can lead to emotional distance between partners, as time spent online often replaces quality time together. This disconnect can breed jealousy, mistrust, and even mental health issues, as partners may feel neglected or unimportant. The lack of in-person communication and emotional sharing can lead to feelings of loneliness and frustration, undermining the intimacy and trust necessary for a healthy marriage (Noor, Djaba, & Enomoto, 2016).

Social media has a profound impact on marital relationships, with both positive and negative effects. While it can facilitate communication and help couples stay connected, excessive use can also contribute to emotional distance, mistrust, and mental health issues. It is crucial for couples to find a balance between enjoying the benefits of digital media and nurturing their relationship through face-to-face communication and shared experiences. Ultimately, maintaining a healthy marriage requires open communication, mutual respect, and emotional support, which are essential for overcoming the challenges posed by digital media and fostering long-lasting intimacy (Sagar et al., 2022).

In AnKee and Yazdanifard (2015) conducted a study that identified eight harmful effects of online dating, with one of the most significant being its threat to marital relationships. The authors found that 53% of married couples who sought consultation from family therapists about their relationship issues were involved in cybersex, a form of online dating. The study concluded that online dating platforms, particularly those that enable cybersex, may provide a tempting escape for married individuals facing emotional dissatisfaction, ultimately undermining their

commitment to their partners and their marriages. As such, online dating can push individuals to look for new love, which may further exacerbate the problems in their marriages rather than solving them.

Pakistan, passive social media consumption, where users scroll without meaningful interaction, exacerbates feelings of isolation and diminished self-worth. Cultural pressures to maintain a perfect image of marital life on social media further strain relationships, as partners feel compelled to portray their lives as flawless. Despite these challenges, social media can also strengthen relationships when used carefully, offering a means for couples to stay connected, share experiences, and maintain emotional intimacy, especially when separated by distance. However, more research is needed to understand how social media usage impacts marriages within the unique cultural and familial contexts of Pakistan, where traditional values shape relationship dynamics.

### **Rational of the Study**

The implications of this research are significant for both clinical practice and relationship counseling. Therapists and counselors can leverage the findings to help couples navigate the challenges posed by social media usage, offering strategies to improve communication, set healthy boundaries, and address mental health concerns. For example, couples could be encouraged to engage in shared online activities that promote connection while limiting behaviors that foster mistrust or jealousy. Ultimately, this study aims to provide actionable recommendations for fostering healthier marital relationships and improving mental well-being in an increasingly digital world. By highlighting the positive and negative impacts of social media on marriage and mental health and interpersonal relationship, the research will contribute to a deeper understanding of how digital platforms intersect with real-life relationships and emotional well-being. This knowledge is crucial for empowering individuals to make informed decisions about their social media usage, thereby enhancing their relational and mental health outcomes.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To examine the relationship between social media addiction and mental health outcomes, such as depression, anxiety, and stress, among married individuals.
- To assess the impact of social media usage on the quality of interpersonal relationships, including communication patterns, trust, intimacy, and marital satisfaction in married couples.
- To explore the moderating effects of demographic factors such as age, gender, education level, and internet usage habits on the relationships between social media usage, mental health, and interpersonal relationships.

### **Hypotheses**

- There is no significant association between social media addiction and mental health outcomes among married individuals.
- There will be significant effect the Increased social media usage negatively impacts the quality of interpersonal relationships in married couples.

- There will be a significant effect Demographic factors such as gender, age, and education influence the level of social media addiction among married individuals.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The rapid rise in the use of social networking sites (SNSs) has transformed interpersonal communication in profound ways. Today, platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter have become integral parts of people's daily routines, especially among adolescents and young adults. According to studies, SNSs are some of the most popular activities for users, with mobile access enhancing the ability to remain constantly connected. The ease and convenience of communicating with friends, family, and romantic partners through SNSs have made them highly attractive, contributing to what is now recognized as an emerging mental health concern: social media addiction (Andreassen, 2015).

SNSs contribute to relationship dissatisfaction for several reasons. First, the availability of online alternatives, including potential romantic partners, creates an environment ripe for infidelity. The accessibility of SNSs has made it easier for individuals to engage with others outside of their primary relationship, often leading to emotional infidelity or physical infidelity (Clayton et al., 2013; Drouin et al., 2014). A study by Clayton et al. (2013) found a significant correlation between high levels of SNS use and relationship dissatisfaction, emotional distress, and an increased likelihood of relationship breakup. Interestingly, while SNSs usage may exacerbate conflicts within relationships, commitment to the relationship can be a protective factor. Partners who are more committed to each other are less likely to be affected by the availability of online alternatives and are better able to manage the distractions and temptations SNSs present (Rusbult et al., 2011).

Clayton et al. (2013) explored the relationship between Facebook use and negative relationship outcomes, such as divorce, emotional, and physical cheating. They concluded that higher Facebook usage is correlated with these negative interpersonal outcomes. Similarly, Drouin et al. (2015) found that Facebook usage significantly raises the likelihood of negative interpersonal outcomes, including emotional affairs (EA), physical cheating, marital infidelity, and increased conflicts between couples.

Other research, such as Ferron et al. (2017), investigated the impact of internet pornography use and cyber infidelity on marital satisfaction and concluded that heavy use of online pornography reduces sexual satisfaction and increases the likelihood of infidelity. Noor et al. (2016) found that higher usage of social networking sites, such as Match.com, in certain states led to fewer marriages and more divorces in the following year, suggesting a link between online behavior and relationship dissolution.

Wong and Yazdanifard (2015) highlighted the risk of marital affairs associated with social networking sites, noting that a significant proportion of family counseling referrals were related to cybersex. Furthermore, a study by Caro et al. (2017) confirmed a negative correlation between social network usage and life satisfaction, with implications for empathy and relationship well-being.

Marital satisfaction is often defined as a subjective evaluation of one's marriage, and it is influenced by various factors related to the married life. According to DeGenova and Rice (2005), marital satisfaction reflects how satisfied individuals feel in their marriage, based on their perceptions of different aspects of married life. It encompasses the emotional and practical elements that shape the daily experiences of married couples.

Research conducted by Billingsley et al (2005) further identifies nine key factors that contribute to marital satisfaction, including the stability of the relationship, love, sexual compatibility, shared personality traits, religious alignment, decision-making styles, intimacy, and the importance of effective communication between spouses. These factors are essential for fostering a healthy and fulfilling marriage.

Lee (1977) found that the age at which individuals marry has a positive correlation with marital satisfaction. Specifically, individuals who marry at an older age tend to report higher levels of marital satisfaction. This may be because older individuals often have more life experience, better emotional maturity, and more established communication skills, which can contribute to a more stable and harmonious marriage. On the other hand, marriages involving younger individuals tend to experience more challenges, such as infidelity, jealousy, and other issues that can lead to divorce (Harris, 2005).

Interpersonal communication is a crucial element in maintaining harmonious relationships, particularly in marriage, where it serves as a strong foundation for emotional connection and mutual understanding (Handayani et al., 2008). DeVito (1997) defines interpersonal communication as the exchange of messages between individuals or groups, where both the sending and receiving of messages have a significant impact, and there is an opportunity for immediate feedback. Effective interpersonal communication, according to DeVito, requires individuals to possess five key qualities: empathy, supportiveness, positiveness, equality, and openness. These qualities are essential for fostering meaningful and healthy interactions within a marriage.

Markman's (1981) longitudinal research further supports this idea, revealing that the quality of interpersonal communication is a predictor of both short-term and long-term marital satisfaction. In the context of interpersonal relationships, communication serves as a medium through which individuals develop mutual understanding and compatibility. Trust, support, and openness are identified as essential interpersonal factors that nurture good communication relationships (Rakhmat, 2009). DeVito (1997) describes Effective communication is essential in fostering a healthy and satisfying marriage. It helps couples resolve conflicts, strengthen emotional bonds, and maintain intimacy. When communication falters, misunderstandings can arise, leading to dissatisfaction.

Mitchell's definition emphasizes the role of social networks in shaping individuals' behaviors and lifestyle choices, highlighting how these networks can have both positive and negative effects. Research has shown that marital status is often linked to better mental health, with Durkheim's studies suggesting that marriage fosters social integration, reduces life strains, and enhances security, all of which contribute to

mental well-being (Firth et al., 2015; Glick et al., 2016; Torous et al., 2014). Mental illnesses often manifest as disturbances in personal relationships, disruptions in social activities, and a breakdown in normal forms of communication (Fukuda et al., 2021). These disruptions can significantly affect an individual's mental well-being, especially when social factors, such as family dynamics or societal pressures, contribute to the exacerbation of these issues. In some cases, family relationships can either intensify psychological distress or, conversely, provide a crucial support system that helps stabilize an individual's condition (Murray et al., 2020).

A study by Valenzuela et al. (2014) revealed that the more time spent on social media platforms like Facebook, the higher the divorce rates. This is due to factors such as increased jealousy, secret online interactions, and a tendency to seek validation from external sources, which undermines marital stability. Sharar (2018) also observed that 10% of adults in relationships admitted to hiding posts and texts from their partners, and 8% reported maintaining secret social media accounts. Such behaviors create an environment of suspicion and insecurity that harms marriage quality. Moreover, the interpersonal communication between couples is often impacted by social media. Communication is an essential element of any relationship, and poor communication due to excessive social media use or negative online interactions can lead to marital dissatisfaction (Devito, 2011).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Research Design**

The research for this study was carried out using a correlational design, a type of scientific approach aimed at identifying relationships between two or more variables without altering them.

### **Sampling Technique**

Convenience sampling sometimes referred to as "accidental" or "opportunistic" sampling, is a non-probability sampling technique where participants are selected based on their availability and ease of access, rather than being chosen randomly (ul Haq 2019).

### **Participants**

Initially, 250 married individuals, including working individuals, non-working individuals, housewives, and relatives, were invited to volunteer. Of these 250, the most relevant and suitable participants were chosen to meet the study's criteria, and the rest were excluded from further participation. The sample was then divided into two groups: 135 females and 115 males. The age range of the participants was between 25 and 55 years, with the majority falling within the 25 to 45-year age group. Only married individuals who met the study's requirements were selected for inclusion.

### **Inclusion Criteria**

- Eligible participants had to be married individuals selected through a random sampling method.
- The study was restricted to Pakistani nationals, excluding foreign married individuals.

- Participants were required to be free from chronic illnesses or disabilities that could impact their relationships.
- The study aimed for a diverse sample by welcoming individuals from all socioeconomic backgrounds and religions.
- Only married individuals were considered eligible, but those who were single or separated were not included.
- All participants were also required to have at least some form of usage social media to be eligible for the study.

#### **Exclusion Criteria**

- The exclusion criteria were carefully designed to reduce potential biases and prevent errors that could affect the study's outcomes.
- Participants were excluded if they had significant physical or psychological health conditions that could influence the results.
- Additionally, individuals with any form of substance use addiction were not included
- The study also excluded participants with dual nationality.
- These exclusion criteria were put in place to ensure the validity of the study's findings and to maintain the integrity of the results.

#### **Informed Consent Process**

Before the study began, participants were provided with detailed information regarding the objectives, methods, potential risks, and benefits of the research. Informed consent was obtained only after participants fully understood the nature of the study and was comfortable with their participation.

#### **Transparent Communication**

Throughout the study, open and transparent communication was maintained with participants. They were kept updated on any changes in procedures or unexpected developments. It was emphasized that participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and they were assured they could withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

#### **Ethical Consideration**

Ethical considerations in this study were prioritized to safeguard participants' rights and well-being. The informed consent process was rigorously followed, providing participants with detailed information about the study's goals and methods. Strict confidentiality measures were implemented to protect participants' privacy. Additionally, participants' autonomy was respected, allowing them the freedom to withdraw from the study at any point without facing any consequences. These ethical practices ensured a responsible and respectful research environment throughout the study.

#### **Measures**

##### **Demographic Form**

The researcher developed a Personal Information form to collect demographic data from participants. This form included the following fields: Age, Gender, Education, Income, Occupation, Marital Status, Family Structure, Place of Residence, and Daily Internet Usage.



### **Scale for Social Media Addiction (SMAS)**

The Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS), developed in 2015 by Aylin Tutgunt-unal and Levent Deniz, is used to measure social media addiction in married individuals. The scale employs a Likert-type format ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" (1 to 5) to assess addiction-related behaviors. It consists of four components that account for different aspects of social media use.

The first component, "Occupation" (17% of variance), reflects the time individuals spend on social media, particularly how it impacts their daily activities. The second component, "Mood Modification" (9.8% of variance), focuses on how social media use is often driven by the desire to change one's mood, such as escaping stress or seeking emotional relief. The third component, "Relapse" (8.8% of variance), measures the tendency to return to social media use despite previous attempts to reduce or stop it. Finally, the fourth component, "Conflict" (23.5% of variance), identifies the personal and interpersonal conflicts caused by excessive social media use, which can affect relationships and daily life.

The scale has demonstrated excellent reliability and validity. The internal consistency coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) is 0.967, and the test-retest reliability coefficient is 0.84, indicating both stability and consistency over time. The overall test-retest reliability is 0.93, with the virtual tolerance and virtual communication dimensions scoring 0.91 and 0.90, respectively.

### **General Health Questioner (GHQ-12)**

The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ), including its shorter version, the GHQ-12, was developed by Sir David Goldberg in 1972. Originally introduced as a tool for detecting psychiatric disorders in various settings, the GHQ-12 has become one of the most commonly used versions due to its brevity and efficiency in assessing general mental health. The GHQ-12 has shown a Cronbach's alpha of .76 (Standardized Alpha: .78) and a 3-factor structure, with external validity of Factor I (Successful Coping) being particularly robust at .82, and Factors II and III scoring .70 and .75, respectively.

This self-administered questionnaire consists of 12 items that assess recent experiences related to mood, behavior, and general psychological well-being. The items are scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (Not at all/Never) to 3 (Much more than usual/Always), allowing for a continuous measure of psychological distress. Lower scores suggest better mental health, while higher scores indicate higher levels of distress, potentially warranting further assessment or intervention.

### **Interpersonal Relationship Questionnaire- Short Form**

The Functional Idiographic Assessment Template - Short Form (FIAT-Q-SF) is a tool designed to assess interpersonal relationship difficulties, particularly within therapeutic contexts. Developed by Darrow, S.M., Callaghan, G.M., Bonow, J.T., and Follette, W.C., this questionnaire is part of the broader FIAT model, which is used to evaluate relational behaviors that may hinder healthy interpersonal functioning.

The FIAT model breaks down interpersonal functioning into five key domains: needs and wants (ability to express personal needs), conflict and anger (how conflict and anger are managed), assertiveness and self-expression (comfort with expressing

thoughts and emotions), social connection and closeness (capacity to form and maintain social bonds), and attachment and dependence (how one handles closeness and dependency in relationships). The scale is primarily relevant for individuals aged 16 and older due to the complexity of interpersonal behaviors and the level of self-reflection required to respond accurately to the items.

Items on the FIAT-Q-SF are typically rated on a Likert scale, which measures the frequency or intensity of specific interpersonal behaviors. The exact scale may vary but usually ranges from "Never" to "Always" or "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." Responses are aggregated to produce scores for each domain, indicating areas of relational strengths and difficulties. High scores in certain domains may point to interpersonal challenges that can be further explored in therapy.

Overall, the FIAT-Q-SF is a valuable tool for clinicians working with relational and interpersonal issues, providing a foundation for understanding relational patterns and guiding treatment in a behaviorally focused manner.

### **Research Area**

For this study, data was collected from both government and private universities, as well as through door-to-door surveys and interviews with married couples, family members, relatives, and friends in the Faisalabad region. Initially, the researcher compiled a comprehensive list of sectors within the area. Consent was then sought from the management of these sectors to obtain valid data for the study, with approval from higher authorities after explaining the purpose and significance of the research.

To ensure an objective and controlled data collection process, specific measures were put in place. The research settings were selected based on recommendations from educational planning experts, with the aim of minimizing any potential interference.

### **Research Procedure**

The author granted formal permission for the use of their tool in this study. Following this, the researcher approached various workplaces, universities, and institutions, focusing particularly on those related to family and marriage studies. This also included door-to-door surveys and interviews with married couples, families, and friends to inform them about the research purpose and to seek permission for participant recruitment from these locations. Face-to-face interaction methods played a critical role in the data collection process, enabling direct engagement with participants.

A total of 250 individuals were initially included in the study, and a questionnaire containing all relevant psychological measures and scales related to the research topic was distributed among the participants. After analyzing the data, 250 participants were retained for further examination, forming the primary group for the study. Although an online form was considered for data collection, it was not an efficient method due to various issues such as participant disinterest and their reluctance to ask questions about the questionnaire. This led to the face-to-face interaction approach being prioritized.

During the data review process, careful attention was paid to the inclusion and

exclusion criteria to ensure the quality and reliability of the collected information. Participants were carefully evaluated based on their eligibility, and any data that did not meet the criteria for validity or reliability was excluded. This approach was taken to maintain the integrity of the research and ensure that the final dataset was both accurate and trustworthy. The strict application of the inclusion and exclusion criteria contributed to strengthening the overall validity and reliability of the study's findings.

### Statistical Analysis

After the measurements were scored according to the manual's instructions, the data was entered into a Microsoft Excel sheet for organization and analysis. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, V 26) was then used to perform the data analysis. The entire sample underwent both descriptive and inferential statistical procedures to explore the relationships between the variables.

To test the hypotheses and examine the relationships between the variables, inferential statistics were applied. The independent sample t-test was used to compare means between different groups, while Pearson's correlation was employed to assess the strength and direction of linear relationships between variables. Additionally, linear regression analysis was conducted to explore the predictive relationships and examine the influence of one variable on another.

## RESULTS

This section presents the interpretation of data collected from married individuals in the Faisalabad division, drawing on responses from various sources such as friends, family, neighbors, universities, and other social groups.

**Table 1**

Participants Demographics Information (N=250)

Variable	Categories	F	%
Gender	Male	155	46
	Female	135	54
Age	25-35	155	62.0
	36-45	72	28.8
	46-55	23	9.2
Income	0	58	23.3
	10,000-30,000	46	18.4
	31,000-50,000	78	31.2
	51,000Above	68	27.2
Education	Intermediate	39	15.6
	Undergraduate	54	21.6
	Master degree	147	58.8
	Doctorate	10	4.0
Occupation	Working	187	74.8
	Non-working	63	25.2
Marital status	Married	245	98.0
	Widow	3	1.2
	Divorced	2	.8

Family structure	Joint	129	51.6
	Nuclear	121	48.4
Place of Residence	Rural	11	4.4
	Urban	239	95.6
Daily hours of internet usage	1 to 2 hours	55	22.0
	3 to 5 hours	97	38.8
	6 above hours	98	39.2

NOTE. F is use for frequencies, % is used for percentage.

The demographic information of the three hundred (n=250) research participants is shown in Table 1.

**Table 2**

Descriptive statistics of Measurement tools of Social Media Addiction Scale, Interpersonal Relationship Questionnaire and General Health Questionnaire GHQ12 among Married Individual (N=250)

Scale	Mean	S. D	Skewness	Kurtosis
SMAS	110.2670	28.49629	.155	-.738
GHQ12	18.8640	4.62114	-.655	1.069
FIATQSF	109.6787	17.65716	.024	.081

NOTE: SMAS= represent social media addiction scale, GHQ12= General health questionnaire, and FIATQSF = Functional Idiographic Assessment Template-Questionnaire Short form

Descriptive statistics indicated moderate levels of social media addiction (SMAS mean score: 110.27) and psychological distress (GHQ-12 mean score: 18.86). The FIATQSF revealed that most participants reported positive interpersonal relationships, with a mean score of 109.68. These findings show variability in social media usage, mental health, and relationship quality, suggesting a complex interplay between these factors.

**Table 3**

Scales Reliability Analysis (N=250)

Variables	N	Alpha Coefficient
Social Media Addiction Scale	41	.927
General Health Questionnaire-12	12	.480
Interpersonal Relationship Questionnaire	32	.747

NOTE: N= NUMBER, ALPHA COEFFICIENT

For your research on the connection between social media usage, interpersonal relationships, and mental health among married individuals, the Social Media

Addiction Scale (SMAS) is the most suitable tool. It has shown excellent internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of .927, indicating reliable and consistent measurement of social media addiction. This aligns perfectly with your study's aim to assess the impact of social media on marital relationships and mental health. While the General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) and the Interpersonal Relationship Questionnaire (FIATQSF) are useful for evaluating mental health and relationships, their lower reliability (GHQ-12's alpha of .480 and FIATQSF's alpha of .747) makes them less optimal for your research.

**Table 4**

Pearson correlation between Social Media Addiction Scale SMAS-MM, SMAS-R, SMAS-C, SMAS-O. Interpersonal Relationship and General Health Questionnaire GHQ12-1/GHQ12-2, GHQ12\_3 among married individuals. (N=250)

Variable	SMSS_M	SMAS_R	SMAS_C	SMAS_O	GHQ12_1	GHQ12_2	GHQ12_3	FIATQ_SF_F
SMSS_MM	1	.509**	.476**	.518**	.030	.120	.014	.146*
SMAS_R		1	.336**	.322**	.068	.064	.118	.121
SMAS_C			1	.556**	-.154*	.250**	-.017	.251**
SMAS_O				1	-.328**	.308**	-.061	.376**
GHQ12_1					1	-.133*	.141*	.298**
GHQ12_2						1	.104	.250**
GHQ12_3							1	.030
FIATQ_SF_F								1

Note

- Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
- p-values indicate the significance of the correlation coefficient.

The correlation analysis reveals significant relationships among social media usage, mental health, and interpersonal functioning, highlighting key patterns in the data. The Social Media Satisfaction Scale (SMSS\_MM) is positively correlated with the subscales of the Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS\_R, SMAS\_C, SMAS\_O), suggesting that as individuals report higher satisfaction with their social media experience, they engage more in behaviors related to social media addiction, such as reward-seeking, cognitive engagement, and obsessional use. Specifically, the cognitive

engagement subscale (SMAS\_C) shows moderate positive relationships with both obsessive use (SMAS\_O) and mental health symptoms (GHQ12\_2), indicating that those who are more engaged with social media tend to exhibit obsessive behaviors and signs of mental distress.

Interestingly, obsessive social media use (SMAS\_O) is negatively correlated with one item of the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ12\_1) but positively correlated with another (GHQ12\_2). Additionally, the Family and Interpersonal Functioning subscale (FIATQSF\_F) shows moderate positive correlations with both obsessive social media use and mental health distress (GHQ12\_2). Overall, these findings suggest that while social media can offer engaging experiences, its excessive use can have detrimental effects on both mental health and interpersonal relationships, particularly within the family.

**Table 5**

Regression Coefficient of General health questionnaire and interpersonal relationship on social media usage (N=250)

Model	Unstandardized coefficients $\beta$	Standard Error D. Error	Standardized coefficient t Beta	T	Sig	95%CI	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	F
							.000	.004	.000
Constant	18.885	1.173		16.094	.000	(16.574,21.196)			
SMAS_F	2.084E-5	.010	.000	.002	.998	(-.020,.020)			

NOTE B= UNSTANDARDIZE B , SE= COEFFICIENT STANDARDER ERROR,

The regression analysis explores the impact of SMAS\_F on a dependent variable, likely related to mental health or social measures, and provides several important insights. The constant term in the regression equation has an unstandardized coefficient of 18.885, with a standard error of 1.173, indicating that the predicted value for the dependent variable when SMAS\_F is zero is 18.885. The constant's t-value of 16.094 and p-value less than .001 confirm that the intercept is statistically significant, meaning the baseline prediction is reliable.

The effect of SMAS\_F on the dependent variable is minimal. The unstandardized coefficient for SMAS\_F is 2.084E-5, suggesting an almost negligible impact on the dependent variable. With a standardized beta of .000, t-value of .002, and a significance level of .998, SMAS\_F does not contribute meaningfully to the model. The 95% confidence interval for SMAS\_F spans from -0.020 to 0.020, indicating that any true effect is statistically insignificant. The model's R<sup>2</sup> value is .000,

showing that SMAS\_F explains none of the variance in the dependent variable, and the F-statistic of .000 further confirms the model is not significant. These results suggest that SMAS\_F does not significantly predict or influence the examined mental health or social measure.

**Table 6**

Regression Coefficient of General health questioner and interpersonal relationship on social media usage (N=250)

Model	Unstandardized coefficients $\beta$	Standard Error	Standardized coefficient Beta	T	Sig	95%CI	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	F
							.107	.103	29.365
Constant	84.010	4.358		19.276	.000	75.426, 92.594			
SMAS_F	.208	.038	.327	5.419	.000	.132, .283			

The regression analysis indicates that SMAS\_F is a significant predictor of the dependent variable. The constant term has an unstandardized coefficient of 84.010, with a standard error of 4.358, meaning that when SMAS\_F is zero, the predicted value for the dependent variable is 84.010. The constant's t-value is 19.276, and the p-value is .000, confirming that the intercept is statistically significant and reliably different from zero.

For SMAS\_F, the unstandardized coefficient is 0.208, with a standard error of 0.038, and the standardized coefficient (Beta) is 0.327. This suggests that for every one-unit increase in SMAS\_F, the dependent variable is expected to increase by 0.208 units. The positive Beta value indicates a moderate positive relationship between SMAS\_F and the dependent variable. The t-value for SMAS\_F is 5.419, with a p-value of .000, indicating statistical significance at the  $p < 0.001$  level. The 95% confidence interval for SMAS\_F ranges from 0.132 to 0.283, reinforcing the positive and reliable effect. The model's R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.107 indicates that SMAS\_F explains 10.7% of the variance in the dependent variable, with a  $\Delta R^2$  of 0.103 showing a notable improvement in explanatory power when SMAS\_F is included. The F-statistic of 29.365 confirms the model's statistical significance, highlighting that SMAS\_F has a substantial and meaningful effect on the outcome.

**Table 7**

A Comparison in the variables of social media usage interpersonal relationship mental health issues (N=250) among married individuals.

Variables	Male		Female		T	P	95%		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			UL	LL	
	N=113' 114		N=135						
SMAS_F	1171.681	27.61208	104.6519	28.09454	3.521	.001	19.51695	5.5391	0.3797945569
GHQ12_F	18.4298	4.80039	19.1778	4.42831	-1.278	.203	.40506	-1.9009	0.1689131971
FIATQSF_F	109.5398	17.10683	104.6370	18.64019	2.141	.033	9.41277	.39280	0.4958799776182539

The independent samples t-test revealed significant gender differences for SMAS\_F and FIATQSF\_F, but no significant difference for GHQ12\_F. Males scored significantly higher on SMAS\_F (M = 117.68, SD = 27.61) compared to females (M = 104.65, SD = 28.09), with a t-value of 3.52 and a p-value of 0.001. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference ranged from 5.52 to 19.52, suggesting a noticeable, though modest, difference in social media addiction scores between genders, with Cohen's d of 0.38 indicating a small to moderate effect size.

For FIATQSF\_F, males again scored higher (M = 109.54, SD = 17.11) than females (M = 104.64, SD = 18.64), with a t-value of 2.14 and a p-value of 0.033, indicating a statistically significant difference. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference ranged from 0.39 to 9.41, with Cohen's d of 0.30 reflecting a small effect size. However, for GHQ12\_F, no significant gender difference was found, as the scores for males (M = 18.43, SD = 4.80) and females (M = 19.18, SD = 4.43) were not significantly different (t-value = -1.28, p-value = 0.203). The Cohen's d of -0.17 and the confidence interval (-1.90 to 0.41) indicate a negligible effect size and no meaningful gender difference in mental health scores.

## DISCUSSION

The research explores the intricate relationship between social media usage, mental health, and marital relationships, revealing significant insights.

### Hypothesis 1:

There is a significant negative relationship between social media addiction and



mental health among married individuals.

The first hypothesis of this study, suggesting that social media addiction negatively affects mental health, is consistent with a significant body of existing research. The data from this study indicates that participants with higher addiction scores on the Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS) reported worse mental health outcomes, as measured by the General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12). This relationship between social media addiction and mental health has been well-established in previous studies.

For example, Kuss and Griffiths (2017) found that excessive social media use is linked to increased levels of depression, anxiety, and loneliness. One reason for this may be that individuals with social media addiction often engage in upward social comparisons, where they compare their own lives to the idealized portrayals of others online. This can result in feelings of inadequacy and lower self-esteem, as suggested by Valkenburg and Peter (2013).

The mechanisms behind this relationship may involve the displacement of face-to-face interactions, which typically offer emotional support and help reduce feelings of loneliness. When individuals replace in-person interactions with online communication, they may experience a sense of isolation, further intensifying mental health problems (Wegmann et al., 2015). These findings align with the results of the current study, which indicate that social media addiction among married individuals is associated with higher levels of depression, anxiety, and a general decline in mental health.

#### **Hypothesis 2:**

Social media addiction negatively affects interpersonal relationships, particularly among married individuals.

The second hypothesis of this study, which posits that social media addiction negatively affects interpersonal relationships, is supported by the findings, which reveal a significant link between high levels of social media addiction and lower relationship satisfaction. This result is consistent with previous research indicating that excessive social media use can contribute to relationship conflicts, jealousy, and a decline in emotional intimacy.

For instance, Drouin et al. (2015) found that social media addiction is associated with increased jealousy in relationships, as individuals become overly focused on monitoring their partner's online activities, which can foster distrust and lead to conflicts. Similarly, Rosen et al. (2013) argued that social media use can detract from the quality of interpersonal relationships by creating distractions, reducing face-to-face interaction, and promoting emotional neglect. Their study showed that married couples experienced lower relationship satisfaction when one partner was excessively involved in social media.

Furthermore, Pittman and Reich (2016) demonstrated that individuals who spend more time engaging with social media tend to report lower levels of relationship satisfaction, largely due to issues such as neglect, poor communication, and misunderstandings. Social media often serves as a platform where individuals can present idealized versions of themselves, which leads to unrealistic expectations in

relationships. When real-life interactions fall short of these ideals, dissatisfaction can arise.

The current study's findings suggest that married individuals who invest more time in social media may struggle to maintain emotional bonds with their spouses. This could be due to the time and emotional energy dedicated to online interactions, which leaves less focus and effort on nurturing the relationship itself.

### **Hypothesis 3:**

Demographic factors such as gender, age, and education influence the level of social media addiction among married individuals.

The research also explored the influence of demographic factors on social media addiction. The results reveal that gender, age, and education play significant roles in shaping the levels of social media addiction. Specifically, males exhibited higher levels of addiction than females, younger individuals (aged 25-35) demonstrated greater addiction than older age groups, and those with lower education levels showed higher addiction levels. These findings align with existing literature on demographic differences in social media use.

For example, research by Taneja et al. (2015) found that males tend to engage more frequently with social media, particularly for entertainment purposes, while females typically use social media to maintain social connections. This might explain the higher addiction levels observed among males in this study. Additionally, Twenge et al. (2017) highlighted that younger generations, who are more comfortable with digital technology, tend to engage more in social media, which could explain the higher levels of addiction among individuals aged 25-35 in this study.

In terms of education, Anderson and Jiang (2018) suggest that individuals with higher educational attainment are more likely to have schedules that limit time spent online, such as demanding work or academic commitments. These individuals may also be more aware of the negative consequences of excessive social media use, enabling them to manage or reduce their usage.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study investigated the influence of social media usage on interpersonal relationships and mental health among married individuals. The findings revealed that excessive social media usage significantly affects relationship quality, often leading to conflicts, reduced face-to-face interaction, and emotional disconnection. Participants who reported higher levels of social media use experienced feelings of neglect and communication breakdowns within their marriages. These results are consistent with existing research highlighting how digital distractions can undermine communication and emotional intimacy, crucial elements in marital relationships.

In contrast, the study found a less definitive relationship between social media usage and mental health. While some aspects of excessive social media use, such as conflict-related behaviors, were linked to psychological distress, the overall impact on mental health was not significant. The data suggested that social media addiction, on its own, does not strongly predict mental health outcomes in married individuals. Instead, other factors, including personal coping strategies, emotional support systems,

and existing psychological conditions, appeared to play more significant roles in influencing mental well-being.

Gender differences were noted, with men reporting higher levels of social media addiction compared to women. In conclusion, the research highlights the challenges posed by excessive social media usage on marital relationships, particularly in terms of fostering conflicts and emotional neglect. While the effects on mental health appear less pronounced, the findings suggest that social media overuse can significantly strain interpersonal dynamics.

## LIMITATIONS

- One key limitation is the cross-sectional design, which only identifies correlations rather than causal relationships.
- The study did not account for several important factors, such as family structure, work-related stress, and the mental health history of participants, which could influence social media use and its effects.
- It also failed to distinguish between different types of social media usage, which could have varying impacts on relationships and mental health.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Future research should prioritize a longitudinal design to observe the long-term effects of social media usage over time.
- Furthermore, objective measures of social media use, such as data from digital tracking tools or social media platforms, could offer a more accurate and reliable picture of usage patterns, avoiding the biases inherent in self-reported data.
- Future research should examine the types of social media use, distinguishing between passive consumption, like scrolling through posts, and active engagement, such as posting or interacting with others.
- Cultural and contextual factors also need to be considered, as social media's role in relationships may vary significantly across different societies and cultural expectations.

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