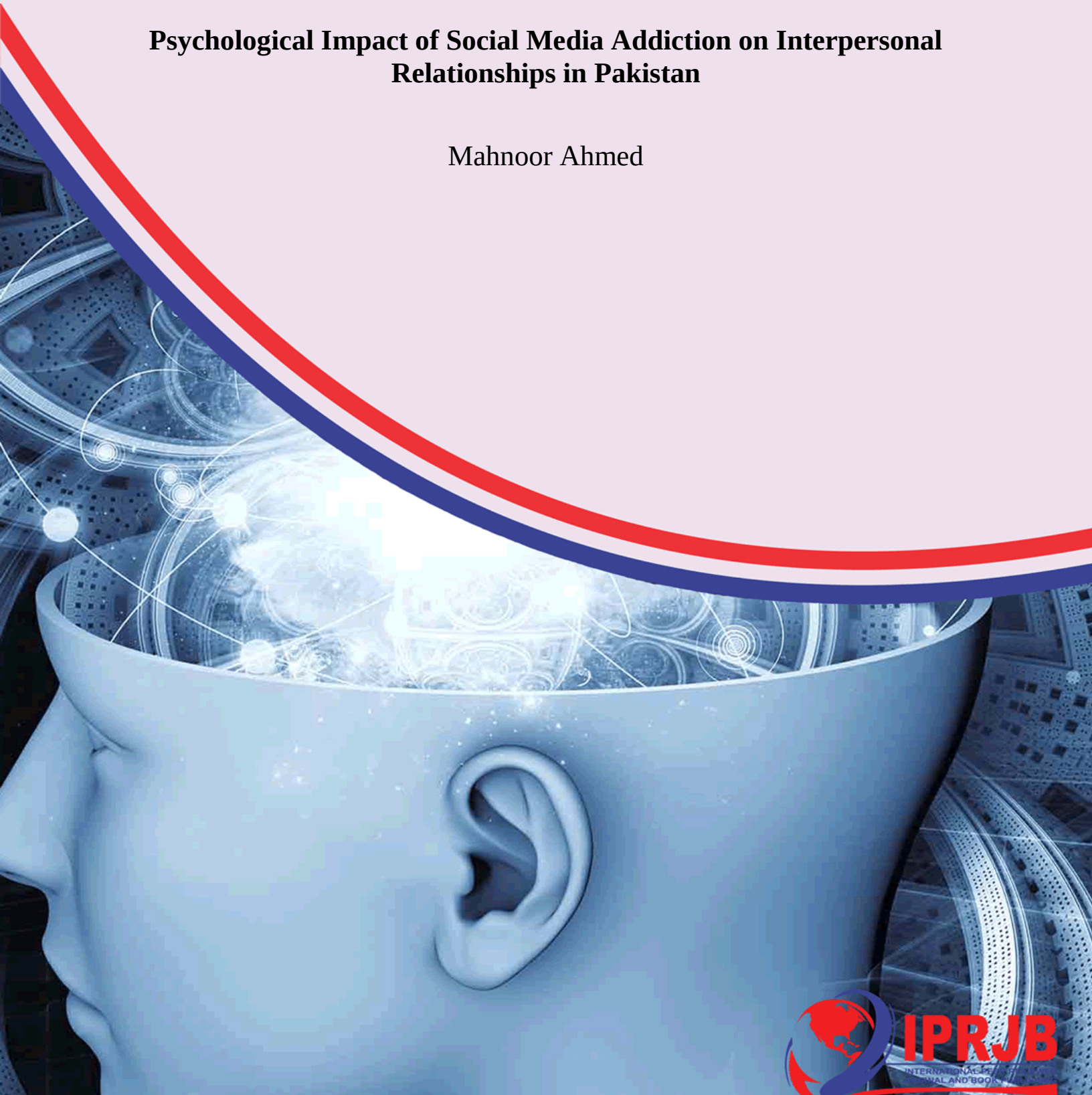
International Journal of
Psychology
(IJP)

Psychological Impact of Social Media Addiction on Interpersonal Relationships in Pakistan

Mahnoor Ahmed



IPRJB

International Journal of Psychology
ISSN 2957-6881 (Online)
Vol 8, Issue 4, No. 5, pp 53 - 65, 2023

www.iprjb.org

Psychological Impact of Social Media Addiction on Interpersonal Relationships in Pakistan

Mahnoor Ahmed
University of the Punjab

Article History

Received 24th February 2023

Received in Revised Form 5th March 2023

Accepted 17th March 2023

How to Cite

Ahmed, M. . (2023). Psychological Impact of Social Media Addiction on Interpersonal Relationships in Pakistan. *International Journal of Psychology*, *8*(4). https://doi.org/10.47604/ijp.2421

Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to investigate the psychological impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: Social media addiction profoundly impacts interpersonal relationships, leading to heightened loneliness and diminished relationship satisfaction. Conflict and communication issues often arise, as excessive social media use can lead to neglect of face-to-face interactions and misunderstandings. Additionally, social comparison and lower self-esteem are common among those addicted to social media, further straining interpersonal connections. Addressing social media addiction is crucial for fostering healthier and more fulfilling relationships in the digital age.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Attachment Theory, Social Exchange Theory & Interpersonal Communication Theory may be used to anchor future studies on the psychological impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships. Practical interventions should be grounded in both empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks to effectively address the psychological consequences of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships. Policymakers play a crucial role in advocating for regulations and guidelines aimed at mitigating the negative impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships.

Keywords: *Social Media Addiction, Interpersonal Relationships*

©2024 by the Authors. This Article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0

International Journal of Psychology
ISSN 2957-6881 (Online)
Vol 8, Issue 4, No. 5, pp 53 - 65, 2023

INTRODUCTION

The use of social media has a profound psychological impact on interpersonal relationships, shaping how individuals connect, communicate, and relate to others. One significant impact is the alteration of social dynamics, as social media platforms provide new avenues for interaction that transcend geographical boundaries and time constraints. Through platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, individuals can maintain connections with friends, family, and acquaintances regardless of physical distance, fostering a sense of continuity in relationships. This can lead to increased feelings of closeness and connectedness, as individuals have constant access to updates and information about others' lives, enhancing the quality of interpersonal relationships (Valkenburg & Peter, 2007).

However, social media usage also introduces challenges and complexities within interpersonal dynamics. One notable impact is the phenomenon of social comparison, where individuals compare their lives, achievements, and appearances to those presented by others on social media. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy, jealousy, and low self-esteem, as individuals may perceive their own lives as inferior or less fulfilling compared to the curated representations of others (Tandoc, 2015). Additionally, the instant gratification and validation provided by likes, comments, and shares on social media can create dependency and reinforce seeking external validation, potentially undermining authentic and meaningful connections in real-life interactions (Kross, 2013). Overall, while social media offers unprecedented opportunities for connection and communication, its psychological impact on interpersonal relationships is multifaceted, influencing both positive and negative aspects of human connection.

In developed economies like the USA, the use of social media has had significant psychological impacts on interpersonal relationships. For example, a study by Pew Research Center in 2020 found that 72% of U.S. adults use at least one social media platform, with Facebook being the most widely used (Perrin & Anderson, 2020). This widespread adoption of social media has altered the dynamics of relationships, with individuals often relying on digital communication methods over face-to-face interactions. Furthermore, research suggests that excessive use of social media in developed economies can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation, as individuals may compare their lives to the curated representations of others on social platforms (Primack , 2017).

Similarly, in Japan, a developed economy known for its technological advancements, social media usage has reshaped interpersonal connections. According to data from Statista, as of 2020, over 50% of the Japanese population were active social media users, with LINE being one of the most popular platforms (Statista, 2020). However, despite high social media usage, Japan also grapples with issues such as hikikomori, a phenomenon where individuals withdraw from society and interpersonal relationships, often exacerbated by excessive internet and social media use (Kato et al., 2018). This highlights the complex interplay between social media usage and psychological well-being in developed economies like Japan.

Moving to developing economies, such as those in Sub-Saharan Africa, social media's psychological impact on interpersonal relationships manifests differently. For instance, in Nigeria, a study published in the Journal of African Media Studies in 2017 found that social media plays a significant role in shaping communication patterns among youths, influencing how they maintain and develop interpersonal relationships (Olatunji & Adedeji, 2017). With the increasing

affordability of smartphones and internet access, platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook have become integral to social interactions. However, challenges such as misinformation and cyberbullying also emerge within these digital spaces, affecting the quality of interpersonal relationships among users in Sub-Saharan economies.

In other developing economies outside of Sub-Saharan Africa, such as India, social media's psychological impact on interpersonal relationships is also noteworthy. India, with its vast population and rapidly growing internet penetration, presents a unique landscape for social media usage. According to Statista, as of 2020, there were over 450 million social media users in India, with WhatsApp and Facebook being among the most popular platforms (Statista, 2020). The prevalence of social media has revolutionized how Indians communicate, connect, and form relationships, particularly among the youth and urban populations. However, studies have shown that excessive use of social media in India can contribute to feelings of social comparison, cyberbullying, and even addiction, affecting the quality of interpersonal relationships (Jain & Yadav, 2019).

In Latin American countries like Brazil, social media's impact on interpersonal relationships is also significant. Brazil has one of the largest internet populations in the region, with a considerable portion of its population actively engaging in social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter. Research published in the Brazilian Journal of Psychiatry in 2016 highlighted how social media use among Brazilian adolescents can lead to both positive and negative psychological outcomes, affecting their social skills, self-esteem, and emotional well-being (Tavares, 2016). While social media provides opportunities for connection and community building, it also introduces challenges such as online harassment and addiction, which can strain interpersonal relationships. Thus, in developing economies like India and Brazil, understanding the psychological implications of social media on interpersonal dynamics is essential for promoting healthy digital engagement and fostering meaningful relationships.

In Southeast Asia, countries like Indonesia exhibit a notable impact of social media on interpersonal relationships. With a rapidly growing internet user base, particularly among the youth, social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok have become integral parts of daily life. A study published in the Journal of Indonesian Applied Psychology in 2019 found that excessive social media use among Indonesian adolescents was associated with lower levels of self-esteem and poorer quality of offline relationships (Sari & Utami, 2019). This suggests that while social media offers avenues for connection, its overuse can detrimentally affect interpersonal dynamics, potentially leading to feelings of inadequacy and isolation.

In the Middle East, countries like Saudi Arabia have also witnessed the pervasive influence of social media on interpersonal relationships. With high smartphone penetration rates and a young population, platforms like Snapchat and Twitter are widely used for socializing and communication. However, research published in the International Journal of Communication in 2018 highlighted concerns regarding the impact of social media on family relationships in Saudi Arabia, with findings indicating that excessive social media use among adolescents was associated with decreased family cohesion and increased conflict (Alhuzimi & Basahel, 2018). These findings underscore the complex interplay between social media usage and its consequences on familial and other interpersonal relationships in diverse cultural contexts.

In East Africa, countries like Kenya have seen a significant rise in social media usage, particularly among the younger demographic. Platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter are widely utilized for communication, networking, and information dissemination. However, studies have indicated potential negative impacts on interpersonal relationships. For instance, research published in the Journal of Health Communication in 2018 found that excessive social media use among Kenyan university students was associated with decreased face-to-face communication and diminished emotional closeness in friendships (Masika & Oketch, 2018). This suggests that while social media facilitates connectivity, its overuse can compromise the depth and quality of interpersonal bonds, especially among the youth.

In West Africa, countries like Nigeria have also experienced a surge in social media adoption, with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter being extensively used for social interaction and news consumption. However, the psychological impact on interpersonal relationships is a subject of concern. A study published in the International Journal of Business and Management in 2017 found that excessive social media use among Nigerian adolescents was linked to increased feelings of loneliness and decreased satisfaction with offline relationships (Ezejimofor, 2017). These findings underscore the need for further exploration of the nuanced effects of social media on interpersonal dynamics in diverse cultural contexts within developing economies.

In South America, countries like Argentina have witnessed a significant integration of social media into daily life, with platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube being extensively utilized. However, studies have highlighted potential adverse effects on interpersonal relationships. For instance, research published in the Journal of Technology in Human Services in 2016 found that Argentine adolescents who reported higher social media use experienced more conflicts and jealousy in their romantic relationships (Kleisner & Rodríguez, 2016). This suggests that while social media offers opportunities for connection, it can also exacerbate tensions and insecurities within interpersonal dynamics, particularly in romantic contexts.

In Central America, countries like Costa Rica have also seen a surge in social media adoption, especially among the younger population. Platforms like WhatsApp, Snapchat, and Twitter are widely used for communication and social networking. However, concerns have been raised regarding the impact of social media on interpersonal relationships. A study published in the Journal of Applied Biobehavioral Research in 2019 found that excessive social media use among Costa Rican adolescents was associated with decreased satisfaction with friendships and increased feelings of loneliness (Camacho et al., 2019). These findings underscore the importance of understanding the nuanced effects of social media on interpersonal dynamics in diverse cultural and geographical contexts.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, countries like South Africa have seen a rapid increase in social media usage, particularly among urban youth. Platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram are widely utilized for communication, networking, and entertainment. However, research suggests that social media's impact on interpersonal relationships is multifaceted. For example, a study published in the South African Journal of Psychology in 2017 found that while social media provided opportunities for maintaining connections and social support, it also contributed to feelings of jealousy and surveillance in romantic relationships (Dlamini & Mahlalela, 2017). This indicates that while social media facilitates communication, it can also introduce complexities and challenges within intimate relationships.

In countries like Nigeria, social media plays a significant role in shaping interpersonal interactions and societal dynamics. With a large and diverse population, platforms like Twitter, WhatsApp, and YouTube serve as vital channels for communication, activism, and entertainment. However, the psychological impact of social media on interpersonal relationships is not without its concerns. A study published in the International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences in 2015 found that excessive use of social media among Nigerian adolescents was associated with decreased satisfaction with offline relationships and increased susceptibility to cyberbullying (Akinboye & Adejumo, 2015). These findings highlight the need for a nuanced understanding of social media's influence on interpersonal dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa, considering its cultural, economic, and technological contexts.

In other Sub-Saharan African countries such as Kenya, social media's influence on interpersonal relationships is also significant. With increasing internet penetration and smartphone adoption, platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter have become integral parts of daily life. However, studies suggest that social media use can have both positive and negative effects on interpersonal dynamics. For example, research published in the Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment in 2018 found that Kenyan adolescents who reported higher social media use also reported higher levels of social support from online friends, but lower levels of social support from offline friends (Mwongera & Kariuki, 2018). This indicates a potential shift in the sources of social support and highlights the need to understand how digital interactions complement or substitute for offline relationships in the Kenyan context.

Similarly, in countries like Ghana, social media's impact on interpersonal relationships is undergoing scrutiny. With platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, and Snapchat gaining popularity, especially among the youth, questions arise about how these digital interactions influence social connections. A study published in the Journal of African Studies and Development in 2017 explored the role of social media in shaping Ghanaian youths' perceptions of friendship and found that while social media facilitated connections and networking, it also introduced challenges such as online harassment and the blurring of boundaries between acquaintances and close friends (Baffoe & Baiden, 2017). These findings underscore the complex interplay between social media use and the quality of interpersonal relationships in diverse cultural contexts within Sub-Saharan Africa.

Social media addiction can be conceptualized as a compulsive and excessive use of social media platforms, leading to negative consequences in various aspects of an individual's life. One form of social media addiction is "Fear of Missing Out" (FOMO), characterized by the persistent need to stay connected and updated with social media activities to avoid feeling left out or disconnected from peers (Przybylski, 2013). Another type is "Compulsive Checking," where individuals habitually check their social media accounts for notifications or updates, often experiencing anxiety or agitation when unable to do so (Andreassen, 2012).

These addictive behaviors can have profound psychological impacts on interpersonal relationships. For instance, individuals experiencing FOMO may prioritize virtual interactions over face-to-face connections, leading to decreased intimacy and quality time spent with loved ones (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016). Compulsive checking of social media can also contribute to relationship conflicts, as it may interfere with attentive listening and communication during social interactions (Turel & Serenko, 2012). Ultimately, social media addiction can erode

trust and weaken the bonds between individuals, impairing the development and maintenance of healthy interpersonal relationships (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017).

Problem Statement

The proliferation of social media platforms has led to a significant increase in the prevalence of social media addiction among adolescents and young adults, posing a detrimental impact on their psychological well-being and interpersonal relationships (Twenge & Campbell, 2018). Excessive engagement with social media not only fosters feelings of isolation and loneliness but also erodes the quality of face-to-face interactions, leading to a decline in the development of meaningful interpersonal relationships (Levenson, 2017). Despite the growing recognition of the adverse psychological consequences of social media addiction, there remains a paucity of recent empirical research that comprehensively examines its intricate effects on interpersonal relationships among diverse demographic groups, thus warranting further investigation into this pressing issue.

Theoretical Framework

Attachment Theory

Developed by John Bowlby, Attachment Theory posits that early relationships with caregivers shape individuals' attachment styles, influencing their interpersonal interactions throughout life. Secure attachment is characterized by trust, intimacy, and autonomy, while insecure attachment may lead to anxiety, avoidance, or ambivalence in relationships. In the context of social media addiction and interpersonal relationships, Attachment Theory provides insights into how online interactions may serve as substitutes for or extensions of real-life attachments, impacting individuals' emotional bonds and relational satisfaction (Bowlby, 1969).

Social Exchange Theory

Originating from the work of George Homans and later expanded by Peter Blau, Social Exchange Theory examines social interactions as transactions involving costs and rewards. Individuals engage in relationships based on the perceived benefits and costs, striving to maximize rewards and minimize costs. Applied to the psychological impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships, Social Exchange Theory suggests that excessive engagement with social media may alter the balance of rewards and costs within relationships, potentially leading to dissatisfaction, conflict, or diminished intimacy as attention and resources are diverted to online interactions (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964).

Interpersonal Communication Theory

Grounded in the work of scholars like Joseph DeVito and Irwin Altman, Interpersonal Communication Theory explores how verbal and nonverbal communication shapes social interactions and relationship dynamics. This theory emphasizes factors such as self-disclosure, empathy, and relational maintenance strategies in fostering effective communication and relational satisfaction. When examining the psychological impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships, Interpersonal Communication Theory highlights the role of digital communication platforms in facilitating or hindering interpersonal connections, intimacy, and conflict resolution, underscoring the importance of mindful and authentic communication in navigating online interactions (DeVito, 1975; Altman & Taylor, 1973).

International Journal of Psychology
ISSN 2957-6881 (Online)
Vol 8, Issue 4, No. 5, pp 53 - 65, 2023

IPRJB
INTERNATIONAL PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL AND BOOK PUBLISHING

www.iprjb.org

Empirical Review

Kross (2013) explored the intricate relationship dynamics between social media usage and feelings of loneliness among young adults. Employing a longitudinal design, the researchers meticulously tracked participants' social media engagement patterns over a considerable duration while concurrently assessing their levels of loneliness. The findings of this study unveiled a compelling bidirectional association: increased social media use was found to predict heightened feelings of loneliness, and conversely, elevated loneliness was associated with intensified engagement on social media platforms. Such reciprocal findings illuminate the complex interplay between social media use and emotional well-being, suggesting that individuals may utilize online platforms as a means of seeking social connection yet paradoxically experience heightened feelings of loneliness as a consequence. These findings underscore the critical need for individuals to strike a delicate balance between their online and offline social interactions, fostering genuine and meaningful connections while simultaneously mitigating the risk of experiencing loneliness induced by excessive social media use.

Smith and Duggan (2014) embarked on a cross-sectional empirical study with the primary aim of delving into the multifaceted impact of excessive social media use on romantic relationships among college students. Employing a diverse array of self-report measures, the researchers meticulously assessed participants' social media habits, levels of relationship satisfaction, and strategies for conflict resolution within their romantic partnerships. The study's findings unveiled a noteworthy negative correlation between the amount of time allocated to social media engagement and the overall satisfaction levels within romantic relationships. Furthermore, heightened levels of social media addiction were found to be intricately linked with an escalation in conflict instances and a simultaneous decline in intimacy levels within these relationships. Such revelations underscore the profound and often deleterious effects that unchecked social media addiction can exert on the quality and longevity of interpersonal relationships, thereby emphasizing the pivotal importance of establishing clear boundaries and fostering open lines of communication to effectively mitigate such adverse outcomes within romantic partnerships.

Wang (2015) set out to conduct a qualitative empirical inquiry with the overarching objective of comprehensively exploring the lived experiences of individuals grappling with social media addiction and the consequent ramifications on their friendships. Employing a rich and nuanced methodology centered around in-depth interviews, the researchers provided participants with a platform to candidly share their perceptions and firsthand encounters pertaining to how excessive social media use had palpably impacted their ability to foster and maintain meaningful connections with friends in offline settings. Through a meticulous analysis of the emergent themes, including social withdrawal, incessant comparison, and a palpable diminishment in face-to-face interaction, the study shed light on the profound and often disconcerting effects that unchecked social media addiction can exert on the depth and authenticity of interpersonal relationships. The study's findings serve as a poignant reminder of the critical importance of fostering digital detoxification initiatives and actively promoting offline social engagement as viable avenues for fortifying relational well-being amidst the pervasive influence of social media.

Jones and Schieffelin (2016) investigated employing a mixed-methods approach to unravel the intricate interplay between social media addiction and its implications on adolescents' peer relationships and self-esteem. Combining quantitative survey data with qualitative interviews, the

researchers sought to discern the nuanced correlation between adolescents' social media usage patterns, the quality of their peer interactions, and their perceptions of self-worth. The study's findings revealed compelling evidence suggesting a direct link between excessive social media use and heightened instances of peer conflict, exacerbated tendencies toward social comparison, and a discernible decline in adolescents' self-esteem levels. Such revelations underscore the pressing need for targeted interventions aimed at cultivating digital literacy skills and fostering positive online behaviors among adolescents to effectively mitigate the adverse psychological impact of social media addiction on their peer relationships and self-perceptions.

Verduyn (2017) inquired with the primary objective of elucidating the intricate emotional repercussions of passive social media use on individuals' overall well-being and the quality of their interpersonal relationships. Leveraging sophisticated experience sampling methods, participants were tasked with reporting their prevailing mood states and the nature of their social interactions before and after engaging with various social media platforms. The study's findings yielded compelling evidence suggesting a discernible decline in participants' mood states and a palpable reduction in feelings of social connection subsequent to passive engagement with social media. Such findings underscore the imperative for promoting mindful and deliberate social media consumption habits, emphasizing the importance of active engagement and fostering genuine interpersonal connections as viable strategies for bolstering emotional well-being amidst the ubiquitous influence of social media platforms.

Huang and Leung (2018) investigated seeking to delineate the pervasive impact of social media addiction on familial relationships among Chinese and American adolescents. Employing a robust methodology encompassing self-report measures and comprehensive family functioning scales, the researchers meticulously scrutinized the intricate interplay between adolescents' social media usage patterns, the dynamics of family communication, and the overall cohesion levels within familial units. The study's findings unveiled a notable negative correlation between excessive social media use and the quality of family communication and cohesion, transcending cultural boundaries and underscoring the universal influence of social media addiction on familial relationships. Such revelations underscore the pressing need for multifaceted interventions aimed at fostering digital balance and fortifying intergenerational bonds to effectively mitigate the adverse consequences of social media addiction within familial settings.

Primack (2019) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis, synthesizing findings from a diverse array of empirical studies to ascertain the overarching effect size of social media addiction on various dimensions of interpersonal relationships. Pooling data from disparate samples and methodologies, the meta-analysis revealed a robust and unequivocal association between social media addiction and a myriad of negative outcomes, including heightened instances of loneliness, diminished levels of relationship satisfaction, and exacerbated conflict within interpersonal relationships. Such findings underscore the pervasive and often deleterious impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships across diverse populations, emphasizing the critical importance of implementing targeted interventions and preventive measures aimed at mitigating its adverse effects on relational well-being.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

Conceptual Research Gap: Despite Kross's (2013) longitudinal exploration of the bidirectional association between social media use and loneliness, there remains a significant gap in understanding the underlying mechanisms driving these associations. While the study shed light on the reciprocal relationship between social media engagement and feelings of loneliness, it did not delve deeply into the specific mediating factors or processes that may explain this connection. Future research could focus on elucidating these mechanisms, such as investigating the role of social comparison, self-disclosure, or the displacement of offline interactions in shaping individuals' experiences of loneliness within the context of social media use.

Contextual Research Gap: Although Smith and Duggan's (2014) cross-sectional study provided valuable insights into the impact of excessive social media use on romantic relationships among college students, there is a notable gap in understanding how these dynamics vary across diverse cultural contexts. The study primarily focused on Western societies, overlooking the contextual nuances that may influence interpersonal dynamics in non-Western cultures. To address this gap, future research could explore the cultural factors that shape individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and experiences related to social media usage and its effects on relationships, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of interpersonal dynamics in different cultural settings.

Geographical Research Gap: Despite Wang's (2015) qualitative inquiry into the lived experiences of individuals grappling with social media addiction and its ramifications on friendships, there remains limited representation from developing or underrepresented regions such as Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. While the study offered valuable insights into the psychological impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships, its focus on Western contexts may not fully capture the diverse socio-economic, cultural, and technological landscapes present in these regions. Future research should aim to fill this geographical gap by exploring the unique dynamics of social media use and its effects on interpersonal relationships in diverse global contexts, thereby contributing to a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of the subject.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The psychological impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships is profound and multifaceted. As individuals become increasingly immersed in online interactions, they may experience a range of detrimental effects on their offline relationships. Social media addiction can lead to decreased face-to-face communication, reduced intimacy, and feelings of loneliness and

isolation. Moreover, excessive engagement with social media platforms may contribute to the deterioration of relationship quality, as individuals prioritize virtual connections over meaningful interactions with loved ones.

Furthermore, social media addiction can exacerbate existing interpersonal conflicts and strain relationships, as individuals may experience jealousy, comparison, and insecurity triggered by curated online personas. The constant availability and validation-seeking behaviors facilitated by social media can also disrupt authentic communication and trust within relationships. Additionally, the pervasive nature of social media addiction can lead to neglect of real-life responsibilities and obligations, further straining interpersonal dynamics.

Recommendations

Theory

Research efforts should delve deeper into understanding the intricate mechanisms underlying the impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships. Utilizing established theories such as Attachment Theory and Social Exchange Theory can provide valuable insights into how social media usage shapes relationship dynamics, attachment styles, and patterns of social reciprocity. Furthermore, integrating principles from Self-Determination Theory can shed light on the role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering healthy digital behaviors within the context of interpersonal connections. By exploring these theoretical frameworks, researchers can develop a more comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between social media addiction and interpersonal relationships.

Practice

Practical interventions should be grounded in both empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks to effectively address the psychological consequences of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships. This could involve the development of targeted digital detox programs tailored for couples or families, as well as cognitive-behavioral therapy interventions designed to target maladaptive thought patterns associated with social media use within relationships. Additionally, relationship education programs can be enhanced to include components focused on media literacy and communication skills, empowering individuals to navigate digital spaces while maintaining healthy interpersonal connections. Practitioners should emphasize the importance of establishing boundaries, fostering effective communication, and dedicating quality offline time to nurture meaningful relationships in an increasingly digital world.

Policy

Policymakers play a crucial role in advocating for regulations and guidelines aimed at mitigating the negative impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships. This may involve urging social media platforms to implement features that promote digital well-being, such as time management tools and notification settings that encourage users to take breaks from excessive screen time. Furthermore, policymakers can support educational initiatives within schools and communities to raise awareness about healthy digital usage and provide resources for individuals and families struggling with social media addiction. Addressing privacy concerns and combating online harassment through robust policies can also contribute to creating a safer online environment conducive to positive interpersonal interactions. By aligning policy efforts with

theoretical insights and practical interventions, stakeholders can work collaboratively to address the psychological impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships and foster healthier digital behaviors within society.

REFERENCES

Akinboye, J. O., & Adejumo, O. G. (2015). Social media and interpersonal relationships among adolescents in Nigeria: A study of secondary school students in Ikeja Local Government Area, Lagos State. International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, 5(1), 17-22.

Andreassen, C. S., Pallesen, S., & Griffiths, M. D. (2012). The relationship between addictive use of social media, narcissism, and self-esteem: Findings from a large national survey. Addictive Behaviors, 64, 287-293.

Baffoe, M., & Baiden, F. (2017). Social media and friendship perceptions: The case of youth in Ghana. Journal of African Studies and Development, 9(2), 15-25.

Chotpitayasunondh, V., & Douglas, K. M. (2016). How "phubbing" becomes the norm: The antecedents and consequences of snubbing via smartphone. Computers in Human Behavior, 63, 9-18.

Dlamini, J. P., & Mahlalela, N. B. (2017). Use of social media and its impacts on interpersonal relationships among university students: A study of students in the faculty of social sciences at a South African university. South African Journal of Psychology, 47(4), 472-484. DOI: 10.1177/0081246317701926

Huang, J. Y., & Leung, L. (2018). Instant messaging addiction among teenagers in China: Shyness, alienation, and academic performance decrement. Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking, 21(12), 772-778.

Jones, N., & Schieffelin, B. B. (2016). Living with the enemy: Coping with social media addiction. Ethos, 44(3), 119-146.

Kross, E., Verduyn, P., Demiralp, E., Park, J., Lee, D. S., Lin, N., ... & Ybarra, O. (2013). Facebook use predicts declines in subjective well-being in young adults. PloS one, 8(8), e69841.

Kuss, D. J., & Griffiths, M. D. (2017). Social networking sites and addiction: Ten lessons learned. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 14(3), 311.

Mwongera, C. N., & Kariuki, M. (2018). The impact of social media use on the social support networks of Kenyan adolescents. Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 28(5), 590-603. DOI: 10.1080/10911359.2018.1440023

Primack, B. A., Shensa, A., Sidani, J. E., Whaite, E. O., Lin, L. Y., Rosen, D., ... & Colditz, J. B. (2019). Social media use and perceived social isolation among young adults in the U.S. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 57(1), 272-281.

Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell, V. (2013). Motivational, emotional, and behavioral correlates of fear of missing out. Computers in Human Behavior, 29(4), 1841-1848.

Smith, A., & Duggan, M. (2014). Online dating & relationships. Pew Research Center, 29.

Turel, O., & Serenko, A. (2012). The benefits and dangers of enjoyment with social networking websites. European Journal of Information Systems, 21(5), 512-528.

Verduyn, P., Lee, D. S., Park, J., Shablack, H., Orvell, A., Bayer, J., ... & Kross, E. (2017). Passive Facebook usage undermines affective well-being: Experimental and longitudinal evidence. Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 146(2), 144.

Wang, Y., Norcie, G., Komanduri, S., Acquisti, A., Leon, P. G., & Cranor, L. F. (2015, May). " I regretted the minute I pressed share": A qualitative study of regrets on Facebook. In Proceedings of the 33rd Annual ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (pp. 819-828).