

A Study on Social Networking Addiction among the Married Individuals

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Abstract: *The study aimed to assess the level of social networking addiction among married individuals, examine its association with selected socio-demographic and marital variables, and explore strategies adopted to manage social media use and maintain quality family time. A descriptive research design with purposive sampling was used among 50 married individuals. Data were collected through an online questionnaire using the 21-item Social Networking Addiction Scale (SNAS) developed by Shahnawaz and Rehman (2020), along with two open-ended questions. Descriptive and nonparametric statistical tests were conducted using JAMOV1, and thematic analysis was used for qualitative responses. The mean SNAS score was 58.90 (SD = 23.20), with 86% of respondents classified under non-addiction and 14% under addiction. The SNAS demonstrated excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .922$). No significant differences in social networking addiction were found by gender, family type, or educational level, and years of marriage was not significantly associated with addiction scores. Thematic analysis identified strategies involving productive activities, family engagement, alternative leisure activities, direct screen regulation, communication, shared activities, family outings, and distraction-free family time. Social networking addiction was not widespread, while participants demonstrated various strategies for maintaining balanced digital use and meaningful family interactions.*

Keywords: social networking addiction, married individuals, social media use, screen time, quality family time, thematic analysis

1. Introduction

The rapid growth of digital technology has made social networking an integral part of everyday communication, education, entertainment, and social connection (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). However, excessive and poorly controlled use may develop into social networking addiction, characterised by problematic engagement and negative consequences. Griffiths (2005) identified six components of addictive behaviour: salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse. Excessive technology use may also affect marital interactions, with technofence and partner phubbing associated with technology-related conflict and relationship satisfaction (McDaniel & Coyne, 2016; McDaniel et al., 2018; Roberts & David, 2016). Despite extensive research, comparatively less attention has focused on married individuals. Therefore, this study examines social networking addiction, selected socio-demographic and marital characteristics, and strategies for reducing screen time and maintaining quality family time.

2. Objectives

This study aimed to assess the level of social networking addiction among the married individuals, to examine the association between the selected socio-demographic variables and social networking addiction among the married individuals and to explore the strategies adopted by married individuals to manage their social media usage and maintain quality family time

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Samples

A descriptive research design with purposive sampling was used. The sample comprised 50 married individuals. Quantitative analysis was conducted to assess social networking addiction and examine its association with selected socio-demographic characteristics. Qualitative thematic analysis explored participants' experiences and strategies for reducing screen time and improving quality family time.

3.2 Tools

The **Social Networking Addiction Scale (SNAS)** developed by Shahnawaz and Rehman (2020), a self-report 21-item, seven-point Likert scale, was used to assess the level of social networking addiction among married individuals, with due acknowledgement of the original authors. Two qualitative questions explored participants' strategies for reducing screen time and improving quality family time. Socio-demographic information was also collected.

3.3 Data-Collection and Ethics

Data were collected through a Google Form distributed via WhatsApp. Informed consent explained the study purpose, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw. Only complete responses were included for analysis. The collected responses were handled responsibly and used solely for the purposes of the study.

3.4 Statistical Analysis

Data were analysed using JAMOV. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise participant characteristics and SNAS scores. The Shapiro–Wilk test ($p = .027$) indicated non-normality; therefore, the Mann–Whitney U test was used to examine differences in SNAS TOTAL scores for gender and family type, the Kruskal–Wallis test to examine differences across educational groups, and Spearman’s rank-order correlation to examine the relationship between years of marriage and SNAS TOTAL scores. Statistical significance was set at $p < .05$. Qualitative responses were analysed thematically and findings were presented using appropriate tables.

4. Results

4.1 Results of Descriptive and Inferential statistics

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Social Networking Addiction Scores

Descriptives	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
SNAS TOTAL	50	58.9	56.0	23.2	24.0	122

The mean SNAS_TOTAL score was 58.90 ($SD = 23.20$), while the median score of 56.00 and the scores ranged from minimum of 24.00 to maximum of 122.00, indicating considerable variation in Social Networking Addiction among the respondents.

Table 2: Frequency distribution of Social Networking Addiction Categories

SNAS CATEGORY	<i>n</i>	Percentage (%)
Addiction	7	14%
Non-Addiction	43	86%

Among the 50 respondents, 43 (86%) were classified as non-addicted, while 7 (14%) were classified as having social networking addiction. Thus, the sample predominantly comprised respondents in the non-addiction category.

Table 3: Reliability Analysis of the Social Networking Addiction Scale Among 50 Respondents

Scale	Cronbach's α
Social Networking Addiction Scale	0.922

The Social Networking Addiction Scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency among the 50 respondents, with a Cronbach’s alpha of $\alpha = .922$, indicating that the scale items consistently measured social networking addiction.

Table 4: Test of Normality for Social Networking Addiction Scale Scores

Variable	<i>n</i>	Shapiro–Wilk <i>W</i>	Shapiro–Wilk <i>p</i>
SNAS Total Score	50	.948	.027

The Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that **SNAS total scores were not normally distributed**, $W(50) = .948$, $p = .027$. Therefore, **non-parametric tests** were used for subsequent inferential analyses.

Table 5: Comparison of Social Networking Addiction Scores by Gender

Gender	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r_{rb}</i>
Female	40	58.60	52.00	23.50	183	.689	.085
Male	10	60.40	58.50	23.50			

The Mann–Whitney U test showed no statistically significant difference in SNAS scores between female ($Mdn = 52.00$) and male ($Mdn = 58.50$) respondents, $U = 183$, $p = .689$. The rank-biserial correlation ($r_{rb} = .085$) indicated a very small effect size.

Table 6: Comparison of Social Networking Addiction Scores by Family Type

Family Type	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r_{rb}</i>
Joint family	16	64.5	63.5	26.7	220	0.284	-.191
Nuclear family	34	56.3	52	21.3			

The Mann–Whitney U test showed no statistically significant difference in SNAS scores between respondents from joint families ($Mdn = 63.50$) and nuclear families ($Mdn = 52.00$), $U = 220$, $p = .284$. The rank-biserial correlation ($r_{rb} = -.191$) indicated a small effect size.

Table 7: Comparison of Social Networking Addiction Scores Across Educational Levels

Test	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Kruskal–Wallis	4.87	4	.300	.100

The Kruskal–Wallis test showed no statistically significant difference in SNAS scores across educational levels, $\chi^2(4) = 4.87$, $p = .300$, $\epsilon^2 = .100$. The epsilon-squared effect size indicated a small effect.

Table 8: Relationship Between Years of Marriage and Social Networking Addiction Scores

Variables	Spearman's ρ	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Years of marriage and SNAS total score	-.160	48	0.266

Spearman’s rank-order correlation showed a weak negative, non-significant relationship between years of marriage and SNAS total scores, $\rho = -.160$, $p = .266$, indicating that years of marriage were not significantly associated with social networking addiction scores.

4.2 Results of Thematic Analysis

Strategies for Managing Social Media Use and Enhancing Family Time: Thematic analysis identified eight themes across the two areas explored. For reducing screen time, participants reported productive engagement, family involvement, alternative leisure and health activities, and intentional control of digital use. For improving quality family time, themes included communication and emotional connection, shared recreational activities, family outings and social participation, and dedicated distraction-free time. Overall, participants described practical approaches that involved redirecting attention from digital media, strengthening interpersonal engagement, and creating intentional opportunities for family interaction.

5. Discussion

The present study examined social networking addiction among married individuals, its association with selected socio-demographic and marital variables, and participants' strategies for managing screen time and maintaining quality family time. The findings showed that social networking addiction was not predominant, as most respondents were classified under the non-addiction category, while a smaller proportion met the addiction criterion. The Social Networking Addiction Scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency, supporting the reliability of the obtained scores.

No statistically significant differences in social networking addiction scores were observed according to gender, family type, or educational level. Similarly, years of marriage were not significantly associated with social networking addiction scores. These findings indicate that, within this sample, social networking addiction did not vary significantly across the selected socio-demographic and marital characteristics.

The qualitative findings provided further insight into participants' approaches to managing digital engagement and family interaction. Participants identified productive activities, family involvement, alternative leisure and health-promoting activities, and direct regulation of social-media use as strategies for reducing screen time. To enhance family time, participants described communication and emotional connection, shared activities, family outings and social activities, and dedicated distraction-free family time. These findings suggest that participants recognised multiple practical ways of balancing digital engagement with interpersonal and family interaction.

6. Implications

The findings support a preventive and individualized approach to digital well-being. Counselling may focus on self-regulation and screen management, while family interventions can promote communication, emotional connection, shared activities, and distraction-free family time. Preventive programmes may encourage healthy social networking habits through screen-time regulation, productive engagement, alternative leisure activities, and family interaction. As no significant differences were found across selected demographic characteristics, these approaches may be applicable broadly among married individuals.

7. Limitations

The study was limited by its small sample size, purposive sampling, online data collection, and self-reported responses, which may restrict generalizability and introduce bias. The descriptive design prevents causal conclusions. Limited variables were examined, and the effectiveness of strategies identified through thematic analysis was not empirically evaluated.

8. Future Research

Future studies should examine additional factors such as daily screen time, purpose of social networking, marital

satisfaction, family functioning, psychological well-being, stress, and sleep. Larger, diverse samples and longitudinal or intervention-based designs are recommended to evaluate the effectiveness and sustained impact of screen-management and family-engagement strategies.

9. Conclusion

The study found that social networking addiction was not predominant among married individuals, with no significant associations across selected socio-demographic or marital variables. Participants reported practical strategies involving self-regulation, productive engagement, family interaction, and screen management. Maintaining healthy digital habits, targeted counselling, family-based practices, and further evaluation through larger longitudinal studies are recommended.

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