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ASSESSMENT OF THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION ON MARRIAGE STABILITY OF EDUCATED WOMEN IN OGUN STATE

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ABSTRACT

Social media has transformed how people communicate, share information and engage with the world around us. The widespread and easy access to social media platforms has made it popular among different sections and sectors of society. Social media usage has both negative and positive implications on each sector of society, of which the marriage institution is part. This study therefore assesses the influence of social media addiction on marriage stability of educated women in Ogun state; investigate the prevalence of social media addiction among educated women; identify the social media platform married women are addicted to; identify the factors contributing to social media addiction among educated women and find out the influence of social media addiction on marriage stability among the educated women. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. All the educated fifty-six thousand six hundred and nine five women in the Ijebu-Ode local government area of Ogun state form the population of the study. 400 educated married women were selected through a simple random sampling technique. A questionnaire tagged: Social Media Addiction Questionnaire (SMAQ) (r = 0.81) was used for data collection. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used for data analysis. The result showed that the prevalence of social media addiction among educated women is high. Facebook

is the most widely used social media platform among educated women are addicted to Lack of attention and loneliness are the main factors that make married women addicted to social media, and social media addiction negatively affects educated married women marital stability. Based on the findings, it is recommended that educated married women should find other hobbies to relieve their addiction to social media. Also, they should find a way of improving their intimacy with their husbands and not look for a solution to loneliness on social media

Keywords: social media, social media addiction, marriage stability, women, educated women.

Introduction

The advent of social media has transformed the lives of people in several areas around the world, and social media has become an integral part of modern life. Access to social media platforms is now popular among different sectors and people of the Nigerian society. Social media sites like Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and so on have helped to facilitate the creation, sharing, and exchange of user-generated content. Social media is one of the most used digital platforms by old and young, married and single (Abdulrahman, 2015; Mahadir *et al.*, 2021). Social media platforms allow people to engage and connect with others in real-time, fostering communities and influencing societal trends. Social media is a digital technology that allows users to share ideas, opinions, and information through online networks and communities. These platforms are characterised by user-generated content, which fosters engagement through various means such as likes, shares, comments, and discussions. Andreassen *et al.* (2021) describe social media as platforms that enable users to engage in interactive communication and content-sharing, allowing individuals, groups, and organisations to create, co-create, and modify content in real-time. Dhir *et al.* (2023) emphasise the role of social media in fostering online social interactions, information dissemination, and community building through user-generated content and real-time communication. Through content production, social networking sites (SNS) have established a stream where people may stay in touch with their spouses and enjoy romantic communication.

Despite the benefits of social media in strengthening family relationships and helping to bridge the communication gap between couples, social media addiction by the couple can also lead to a threat to the marriage stability of the couple. Excessive social media use can lead to addiction, depriving couples of quality time and causing tension between partners. This tension can escalate into conflicts, negatively impacting the overall well-being of the relationship. Social media addiction has become a significant threat to marital relationships, leading to decreased communication, increased conflict, and emotional distancing (Kumar *et al.*, 2022). Sharma and Sharma (2021) stated that excessive social media use can lead to addiction, which can negatively impact marriage stability, causing jealousy, mistrust, and decreased intimacy. Furthermore, several studies have shown that social media negatively affects their marriages (Christensen, 2018; Yacoub *et al.,* 2018; Gull *et al.*, 2019; Abbasi, 2021; Konlan, Abdulai & Hadi, 2022; Sevilmiş & Ersanli, 2022; Tuzmen, Duran & Doner, 2023). Also, Scholars such as Al-Shammari *et al.* (2020), Chauhan *et al.* (2023), Gull *et al.* (2019) and Singh *et al.* (2024) have established the negative impact of social media addiction on marriage stability.

In recent times, social media plays an important role of fostering online social interactions, information dissemination, and community building through user-generated content and real-time communication. Through content

production, social networking sites (SNS) have established a stream where people may stay in touch with their spouses and enjoy romantic communication. Despite the benefits of social media in strengthening and bridging the communication gap between couples, social media addiction by the couple can also lead to a threat to marriage stability. Constant usage of social media can lead to addiction, depriving couples of quality time and causing tension between partners. This tension can escalate into conflicts, negatively impacting the overall well-being of the relationship. Social media addiction has become a significant threat to marital relationships, leading to decreased communication, increased conflict, and emotional distancing. It is therefore essential to investigate the prevalence of social media addiction among couples to highlight the level of addiction, the causes of the addiction and its impact on marital stability. Also, there is a dearth of this type of study investigated in Ogun state, especially on educated married women located in the Ijedu Ode Local Government Area of Ogun state.

Literature Review

Technological innovation and advancement in all spectrums have changed and reconfigured, factually, all aspects of human life. Technological devices have become a pervasive phenomenon (Christensen, 2018). In recent times, social networking sites (SNSs) are more prominent in redirecting human social life and communication. With this new development, human communication and interactions are no longer limited by time and space but can occur instantaneously across regional and national boundaries (Giddens, 1991). Dialogue between people has become more comforting with rising intimacy and people's willingness to share details in conversations (Gull *et al.*, 2019). One of the innovations in the area of technological advancement is the introduction of social media which facilitates communication among individuals and communities of the world.

Social media helps to facilitate the creation, sharing, and exchange of user-generated content and interactions within virtual communities and networks. Social media is web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describe social media as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Global Web Index (2022) characterises social media as digital channels that facilitate the creation, sharing, and exchange of user-generated content, fostering connections and interactions among individuals and communities globally.

Social media has bridged the communication gap in romantic relationships, particularly between married couples (Leighton *et al.*, 2021). Couples can now stay in touch when working or when distance is an obstacle. It allows couples to give each other the necessary emotional support via exchanging texts, videos, and pictures. Couples feel closer because they can share conversation and resolve arguments that will be difficult to address in person. Joo and Teng (2017) found that social media, Facebook in particular, has strengthened family and relationships, since more people feel a sense of family through the platform.

Social media helps to give couples a sense of support and encouragement within virtual communities. In the course of interacting online with online friends, couple can meet their social, psychological, and emotional requirements, which can disrupt the quality of their offline relationships (Aydin *et al.*, 2018).

Some spouses often feel ignored and are bothered by the time their partners spend online or worry about what they are doing online (Gull *et al.*, 2019). However, time spent online by couples has been one of the causes of tension within the family, which has been threatening marriage stability (Chauhan and Chauhan, 2023; Singh and Singh, 2024). Al-Shammari and Al-Shammari (2020) concluded that social media addiction can harm marital relationships, causing spouses to spend more time online than interacting with each other, leading to feelings of neglect and isolation. Chauhan et al. (2023) stress that social media addiction can lead to a decline in marriage stability, as excessive online engagement can create unrealistic expectations, promote infidelity, and foster a sense of disconnection. Also, Singh et al. (2024) suggested that social media addiction can have devastating effects on marriage stability, including decreased communication, increased conflict, and decreased emotional intimacy, ultimately leading to marital distress.

Social media addiction in recent times has become an issue of concern impacting various aspects of individuals' lives, including marriage stability, particularly among educated women. This phenomenon warrants exploration due to its potential implications for relationships and family dynamics. Educated women, who often balance careers and familial responsibilities, may find themselves increasingly immersed in social media platforms. While these platforms offer connectivity and information sharing, they can also become addictive, consuming substantial amounts of time and attention. This shift can potentially detract from interpersonal interactions crucial for marital stability. It has been observed that excessive social media use correlates with decreased relationship satisfaction and increased marital conflicts. Educated women, despite their achievements and independence, may inadvertently experience heightened dissatisfaction or conflict within their marriages due to neglect or distraction caused by social media. Furthermore, addiction caused by social media can lead to emotional disconnection, where individuals prioritise online interactions over face-to-face communication with their partners. This imbalance may erode trust and intimacy, further straining marital bonds among educated women who are already navigating multiple roles and responsibilities. Addressing social media addiction requires awareness and proactive steps, such as setting boundaries on usage, prioritising real-life interactions, and seeking professional support if necessary. By fostering healthier digital habits, educated women can potentially mitigate the negative impact of social media on their marital stability and overall well-being.

The studies around how social media addiction impacts marriages have been investigated in the past by researchers who are interested in that area and have generated opinions on this area. Yacoub *et al.* (2018) investigated the impact of social media on romantic relationships. Findings show a negative relationship between social network site intrusion (SNSI) and relationship satisfaction. Peerzade and Shaikh (2022) examined the relationship between social media addiction and marital satisfaction. The results showed no negative relationship between marital satisfaction and social media addiction.

Satici, Kayis and Griffiths (2023) examined the mediating role of psychological distress in the relationship between social media addiction (SMA) and romantic relationship satisfaction (RS). The results also indicated that depression, anxiety, and stress partially mediated the impact of social media addiction on romantic relationship satisfaction. Moreover, utilising the bootstrapping procedure, the study found significant associations between social media addiction and romantic relationship satisfaction via psychological distress. Finally, Tuzmen, Duran and Doner (2023) conducted a study to determine the social platform usage status of

married individuals and the impact of social media on their marital relationships and expectations. Results showed that social media negatively affects people's marital role expectancy; it is aimed that receiving criticism from one's spouse regarding social media use does not increase traditional role expectancy.

Theoretical Framework

The study is situated in the Media System Dependency (MSD) of Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976). The theory is based on a conceptual frame to analyse individual interactions with media and its influence on human beings. The theory based it is assumption on the believe that the mass media audience rests on the medium for information and socialisation. People within the society use information gained from mass media to interact with one another in society, connect and assimilate customs, norms, values and culture through the media, news and entertainment. The link between the theory and the study is that married women used social media platforms to connect, interact and associate with people from diverse backgrounds. Both mass media and social media give people a platform for interacting and entertainment.

Statement of the Problem

Social media, over time, has played an important role in fostering online social interactions, information dissemination, and community building through user-generated content and real-time communication. Through content production, social networking sites (SNS) have established a stream where people may stay in touch with their spouses and enjoy romantic communication. Couples have built strong communication and relationship using social media irrespective of their distance from time to time. Despite the benefits of social media in helping the family to stay connected, social media addiction by the couple has sometimes threatened marriage stability. What could have served as a means of bridging the gap between the couples can also divert the attention of the couples from one another. Overconcentration of couples on social media usage can lead to depriving couples of quality time and causing tension between partners. This tension can escalate into conflicts, negatively impacting the overall well-being of the relationship. Social media addiction has become a significant threat to marital relationships, leading to decreased communication, increased conflict, and emotional distancing. There is a need to investigate the factors that contribute to social media addiction and the influence of social media addiction on marriage stability among educated married women in Ogun State. In most cases, couples that are addicted to social media are prone to suspicion of infidelity, jealousy, mistrust, and decreased intimacy. Several factors have been attributed to influencing the marriage stability of married women in Ogun State. Factors such as education, influence, wealth generation, social media addiction and so on have been observed to influence the rate of marriage stability of educated married women. However, social media addiction seems to be a new trend among the factors that influence marriage stability among educated married women. Despite the need to study the new trends of the factors that lead to marriage instability among educated married women, not much has been done on the influence of social media addiction on the marriage stability of educated women in Ogun State. This study, therefore, investigated the influence of social media on the marriage stability of educated women in Ogun State.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to achieve the following:

1. Examine the prevalence of social media addiction among educated women
2. Determine the factors contributing to social media addiction among educated married women.

3. Investigate the influence of social media addiction on marriage stability among educated women.

Research Questions

1. What is the prevalence of social media addiction among educated women in Ogun State?
2. What are the factors that contribute to social media addiction among educated women?
3. How does social media addiction impact the marriage stability of educated women in Ogun State?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study involved all fifty-six thousand six hundred and nine five educated married women situated in Ogun East senatorial districts, Ogun state. Four hundred (400) educated married women were selected for the study using purposive sampling. The main instrument used for collecting data in this study was a questionnaire tagged "Social Media Addiction Questionnaire (SMAQ). SMAQ is a forty (40) questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale design and divided into four sections. Section A contains fifteen (15) items eliciting information on the prevalence of social media addiction among educated married women. Section B contain seven (7) items eliciting information on the factors contributing to social media addiction among educated married women, while Section C contains eight (8) items eliciting information on the influence of social media addiction on the marriage stability of educated married women. SMAQ was validated through a pilot study activity, which involved administering the instrument to thirty (30) educated married women. Afterwards, Cronbach's alpha reliability method was used to determine the reliability of SMAQ, which yielded a reliability index of 0.81 for prevalence of social media, 7.82 for factors that contribute to social media addiction and 0.89 for influence of social media addiction on marriage stability. For data analysis, descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the data collected.

Results

Research question one: What is the prevalence of social media addiction among educated women in Ogun State?

Table 1: Prevalence of social media addiction among educated women in Ogun State

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	I think about how I could free more time to spend on SM.	*3.73	.447	HIGH
2.	I feel bad if I, for different reasons, cannot log on to my SM account for some time	*3.58	.495	HIGH
3.	I become irritable if I have been prohibited from using SM	3.43	.495	HIGH
4.	I have ignored my partner, family member or friends because of SM	3.21	.541	HIGH
5.	I think about what happened on social media	3.29	.453	HIGH
6.	I give less priority to hobbies, leisure activities, and exercise because of SM	2.46	.822	LOW
7.	I become restless or troubled if you have been prohibited from using SM	2.10	.984	LOW
8.	I feel that I have to use SM more and more to get the same pleasure out of it	3.44	.497	HIGH
9.	I spend a lot of time thinking about SM or the planned use of SM.	3.14	.519	HIGH
10.	I feel an urge to use SM more and more	2.84	.750	HIGH
11.	I use SM to forget about my personal problems	2.91	.711	HIGH

12. I spend more time on SM than initially intended	2.91	.575	HIGH
13. I use SM to reduce restlessness	2.54	.725	HIGH
14. I have tried to cut down the use of SM without success	2.46	.612	LOW
15. I experience that others have told me to reduce my use of SM but did not listen to them	3.34	.473	HIGH
GRAND MEAN	3.02		

Criterion mean = 2.5

The table presents the analysis of the prevalence of social media addiction among educated women in Ogun State. The result from the table shows the prevalence of social media addiction among the educated women to be high in all the items except in three areas. Item one on I think about how I could free more time to spend on social media, recorded the highest mean score of 3.73 (SD = 0.447). This is followed by item 2, which stated that I feel bad if, for different reasons, I cannot log on to my social media account for some time, with a mean score of 3.58 (SD = 495). The least mean of 2.10 (SD = 0.984) in the distribution is item 7, which stated that I will become restless if I am prohibited from using SM. The mean total of 3.02 showed an average prevalence of social media addiction among the educated women among the respondents.

Research question two: What are the factors that contribute to social media addiction among educated women?

Table 2 Factors that contribute to social media addiction among educated women

	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Depression	2.44	.899	LOW
2. Loneliness	2.92	.797	HIGH
3. Dissatisfaction	2.72	.961	HIGH
4. Lack of affection	2.76	.815	HIGH
5. Lack of attention	3.10	.756	HIGH
6. Hyperactivity	2.52	.609	HIGH
7. Promotion & business	2.94	.811	HIGH
GRAND TOTAL	2.77		HIGH

Criterion mean = 2.5

The table presents the analysis of factors that contribute to social media addiction among educated women. From the table, they revealed that the factors that highly contribute to their social media addition are Lack of attention (mean = 3.10, SD = 0.756), followed by loneliness (mean = 2.92, SD = 0.797); while the least factor contributing to social media addiction is depression (mean = 2.44, SD = 0.899).

Research question three: How does social media addiction impact the marriage stability of educated women in Ogun State?

Table 3: Social media addiction influence on the marriage stability of educated women

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1.	I don't always feel comfortable with whatever my spouse is doing on social media.	2.88	.476
2.	There is emotional distance in my marriage due to		

	the use of social media	1.88	.766
3.	There is a feeling of loneliness due to spouse's use of social media	3.16	.925
4.	Generally, the use of social media is straining our Marriage	2.86	.664
5.	I feel uneasy or suspicious because of spouse social media usage	3.24	.651
6.	I feel when my spouse stay too long with opposite sex on social media	3.20	.601
7.	The use of social media creates uneasy feeling and suspicious in my marriage	3.06	.733
8.	Social media usage has decreased the time I spend with my spouse or family.	3.06	.646
	Grand Mean	2.92	

The table presents the analysis of perceived impact of social media addiction on the marriage stability of educated women. From the table, the result shows that social media addiction negatively impact the marriage stability of educated women in Ogun state except in one area. Item 5 on the feeling uneasy or suspicious because of spouse social media usage recorded the highest mean (Mean = 3.24, SD = 0.651). Also, item 6 on feeling jealous as a result of spouse social media activities with opposite sex recorded the next highest mean (mean = 3.20, SD = 0.601). However, Item 2 on it does not create emotional distance in my marriage recorded the lowest mean (mean = 1.88, SD = .766). The mean total of 2.92 showed high and negative impact of social media addiction on marriage stability of educated women.

Discussion of Findings

The finding showed that all the items on the table revealed high prevalence of social addiction among the married educated women in Ogun state. The results further indicated that many married women are struggling to create more time to be on social media, married educated women feeling bad for not been able to log into their social media account, social media have made married women to ignored partners and family members and married educated women spend a lot of time thinking about social media usage. The findings support the report of Mayimuna (2019), Konlan *et al.*, (2022), and Shahanaz and Ashwini (2022) who also found high women addiction on social media. The finding shows an unexpected result in the women being disagreed to been restless if prohibited from using social media and not using social media to reduce restlessness despite high level of addiction. This finding might be due to attraction of communicating with friends, make new friends, follow celebrities, watch movies and read news which social media provides.

Moreover, lack of attention, loneliness, lack of affection, dissatisfaction, hyperactivity and promotion and business are the factors responsible for social media addiction in women. The study supports the report of Gull (2019) because he opined that lack of trust, loneliness and inappropriate posts are factors leading to addiction. Furthermore, the findings support the report of Mayimuna (2019) because it leads to feelings of suspicion, jealousy, feelings of loneliness and emotional distance. This means that women seek attention and if they don't get on, they turn to social media for attention or to keep them from boredom, to get affection and attention. This is not good for marriages especially when the intimacy between couples is reduced by social media. Social media cannot serve as a substitute for couples' intimacy in marriages.

Finally, the findings of the third research question revealed that educated married women highly perceived that social media negatively affects their marriages. The findings

corroborate the report of Christensen (2018), Yacoub *et al.* (2018), Gull (2019), Abbasi (2021), Konlan, Abdulai and Hadi (2022), Sevilmiş and Ersanli (2022), Tuzmen, Duran and Doner (2023) because they revealed that social media negatively affects their marriages. However, the findings contradict the report of Mayimuna (2019) where it was revealed that women addicted to social media are happy in their marriages. Women with addiction to social media platform will experience problems in their marriages because it will arouse jealousy and lack of trust if the husband is the jealous type. It could also give room for immorality if women are exposing to negative behaviour and content on social media platform, which could lead to marital problems.

This study did not focus on all women but limited to only educate women who because of their level of education found social media interesting and easy to manipulate. Future study may exploit the implication of social media addiction on non-educated women within the urban area. In most significant term, this study found prevalence of social media addiction among the married educated women, Facebook and Whatsapp are the mostly used social media platform by the educated married women, factors such as loneliness, lack of attention, promotion and business contributes to social media addiction among educated women and social media addiction negatively affect marriage stability among educated married women in Ogun state. The implication of this is finding is that women in the quest of finding social media for its numerous roles might be addicted to social media which may have affect their marriage stability

Conclusion

The study investigated the influence of social media addiction on marriage stability of educated women in Ogun State with specific reference to the prevalence of social media addiction, the mostly social media platform, factors contributing to social media addiction and the influence of social media addiction on marriage stability among the educated women. Drawing from the results, the prevalence of social media addiction among educated women is high. Facebook is most widely used social media platform educated women are addicted to; Lack of attention is the main factor why married women got addicted to social media and they perceived that social media negatively affects their marriage.

Recommendations

a. Educated married women should find other hobbies to relief their addiction on social media
b. Educated married women should a way of improving their intimacy with their husbands and not look for solution to loneliness on the social media.
c. Married men should give their husband attention to reduced their addiction on social media.

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