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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTERNET ADDICTION AND THE USE OF FACEBOOK WITH MARITAL SATISFACTION AND EMOTIONAL DIVORCE AMONG MARRIED UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study investigates the relationship between the Internet addiction and the use of Facebook with marital satisfaction and emotional divorce among married students. **Method:** This study involved all married students in universities of Hamedan in education year 93-92 that had Facebook accounts and were Internet users. 220 of these participants were selected by purposive sampling method. Data were collected by using Young's questionnaires (1996), Ellison's Facebook (2007), Enrich's marital satisfaction (1994) and John Gutman's emotional divorce (2004). Due to the presence of outliers, the number of the questionnaires was reduced to 175. In order to analyze the data, path analysis, simultaneous multiple regression analysis, Pearson correlation and independent sample t-test were used. **Results:** The results indicated that there was a significant negative correlation ($p < 0.01$) between Internet addiction or the use of Facebook and marital satisfaction. Also a significant positive correlation ($p < 0.01$) was found between the Internet addiction or the use of Facebook and emotional divorce; and Internet addiction and using Facebook are able to predict emotional divorce and marital satisfaction. **Conclusion:** Internet addiction and the use of Facebook decreased marital satisfaction and increased emotional divorce.

Keywords: Internet Addiction, Facebook, Emotional Divorce, Marital Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Family is considered the basic stem of society, the constructive cell which makes human life, the cornerstone of the community, and the main center for protecting the traditions, norms and social values, which is the solid foundation of social ties, kinship relations, and a center of expressing and revealing human emotions and a place for social training (Ellis *et al.*, 2008). It's a unit that arises from marriage and since the beginning of its emergence, involves human life like a safe place and creates a new wave within the kinship network (Taniguchi *et al.*, 2006). What is important in marital-life, is the marital compatibility and satisfaction. Marital relationship is described as the most important and the most fundamental human relationship, since it is the basic structure for building a family and training the next generation (Larson and Holman, 1994) and marital satisfaction is a very important and complex aspect of marital relationship (Sternberg and Hojjat, 1997).

In other words, one of the critical aspects of a marital system is the satisfaction that partners experience in their relationships, and the other side of the marital satisfaction is the dissatisfaction between the couples driven by serious and repeated disagreements, which, if not resolved, seriously threatens marital stability (Tallman and Hsiao, 2004). The lack of resolution of these conflicts is regarded as an important damage to family which leads to divorce.

Although the rate of divorce is rising every day, official statistics seldom show the entire failure of spouses in marriage, because besides such statistics, a larger part is devoted to emotional divorce, i.e. dull and tedious lives in which men and women have a cold relationship (Honarparvaran *et al.*, 2010) but they don't divorce for many reasons.

Several factors play roles in emotional divorce, including the use of Internet websites such as Facebook, Line, Viber, Tango and the What's App, on which people spend lots of their leisure time surfing them.

Couples who divorce emotionally are physically living together; however, with the use of the Internet with high awareness the gap between them increases and they end up with divorce.

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In other words, access to the Internet is a growing phenomenon. Every day more people are getting among Internet users and become addicted to the Internet. The Internet is everywhere.

The number of Internet users is growing surprisingly, and by March 2011, the number of users has been reported more than 2 billion people (Brier, 2012). The new phenomenon that has been formed from the merger of communication technology is a virtual social network Facebook. This network could be able to play a major role in various mainstreaming by giving free membership to users (Fenichel, 2003).

In the present era, the Internet technology and social networking are growingly rising and they are getting involved in people's lives every day more than before. They became parts of people's lives and seriously affected socialization, marriage, and marital satisfaction and have brought many concerns. That's because any kind of instability and laxity in marital satisfaction, or lack of success in a marriage not only hampers the mental relaxation of couples, but also put the viability of the family at risk (Lin *et al.*, 2011).

In general, we can't ignore the role of the family because without the existence of family, at any form, the meaning of life and human life will not make any sense. The everyday increasing rate of divorce in the world today, although in less scale, has unfortunately involved our current society as well. Couple's dissatisfaction with each other, the disruption of many of the families, and the objectionable effects of the separation on family members, has propounded the need to consider and solve this problem (Antle *et al.*, 2010). Accordingly, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between the Internet addiction and the use of Facebook with marital satisfaction and emotional divorce of married students, and seeks to answer the following questions: Is there a correlation between the addiction to the Internet and the use of Facebook, and marital satisfaction and emotional divorce of married students?

Are Internet addiction and the use of Facebook able to predict marital satisfaction and emotional divorce?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Method

The research design of the present study is descriptive which used correlation. The population of the study involved all married students in universities of Hamedan in education year 93-92 that had Facebook accounts and were Internet users. 220 of these participants were selected by purposive sampling method from Hamedan Universities, which is higher than the sample size of James Stevens. In the final stage of sampling, due to the presence of outliers, the sample size was reduced to 175 participants.

In order to collect the data the following instruments were used:

Kimberly Young's questionnaire of Internet addiction (1996): This questionnaire consists of 20 items and each item has a five Likert-type scale. The questionnaire's interpretation method is as follows: a score within 20-49 indicates normal condition; a score within 50-79 indicates mild addiction condition, and a score within 80-100 indicates severe addiction to the Internet (Yung, 1996).

In order to determine the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, the test – retest method and correlation are used. The questionnaire was used in the present study for the first time in Iran. Accordingly, after the translation of the items into Farsi, it was piloted and administered to 50 married students of Islamic Azad University (men and women aged 15-39 years old). The reliability of Young's internet addiction questionnaire was estimated 0.88.

Ellison's questionnaire of using Facebook (2007): This instrument was designed by Allison *et al.*, (2001) in order to test the intensity and the way of using Facebook, and it is a combination of the number of friends on Facebook, the amount of using Facebook on a typical day, the emotional dependence on Facebook, and how much it is considered as part of their daily life. This questionnaire consists of 10 items. The reliability and Validity of the questionnaire was estimated by Ellison *et al.* as 0.97. However, to ensure the correctness of it, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire were calculated again. In order to check the validity of the test, we asked some of the experts in social sciences and psychology; and in order to estimate the reliability of the questionnaire, the Cronbach's alpha reliability estimation method was used and the reliability was equal to 0.926.

Enrich's marital satisfaction questionnaire (1994): The improvement and strengthening of the relationship, communication and satisfaction of Enrich questionnaire was done by Olson, Fournier and Drakman

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(1992). This questionnaire is used for the evaluation of potential problematic areas or for the identification of areas of strength and richness in marital relationships. Furthermore, this questionnaire is used to identify spouses who need advice on their marital life. It is also used as a valid instrument in examining the marital satisfaction in several studies. The questionnaire consisted of 12 sub-scales. The questionnaire has both a total score and independent scores in its subscales. The Subscales of this questionnaire include idealistic distortion, satisfaction, personality issues, communication, conflict resolution, financial management, leisure activities, sexual relationship, children and parenting, family and friends, egalitarian roles and religious orientation (Anderson, 2001). Olson *et al.*, estimated the reliability of the factors in this questionnaire In the range between 0.48 and 0.9.

Soleimanian (1373), using factor analysis, provided a short form of this questionnaire which included 11 factors and 47 items. All factors except the egalitarian roles have been preserved in the short form. In the present study, the 47-form questionnaire has been used which investigates 10 following factors: marital satisfaction, personality issues, communication, conflict resolution, financial management, leisure activities, sexual relationship, children and parenting, family and friends, egalitarian roles and religious orientation (Soleymanian, 1373).

John Gutman's questionnaire of emotional divorce (2004): The questionnaire was designed by John Gutman and was translated into Farsi by Arghaman (1385). The questionnaire consists of 24 items. Answer to each item is either yes or no. The test scores of above 8 in this questionnaire indicate that married life is in danger and prone to separation (Guttman, translation of Jazayeri, 1385). The reliability and validity of the questionnaire have already been calculated by Guttman (Garcia, 1999). However to ensure its correctness, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire were obtained again. In order to check the validity of the test, we asked some of the experts in social sciences and psychology, and to estimate its reliability the Cronbach's alpha test was used which estimated the reliability as 0.89.

Ethical considerations included in this study are as follows:

1. Participation in the study was voluntary for all participants;
2. To present the necessary information on the process of the research study.
3. Confidentiality of participants' data and also obtaining the verbal consent in the beginning.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, frequency, percentage, diagrams, mean scores, standard deviation and inferential statistics, simultaneous multiple regression, Pearson correlation coefficient, path analysis, and SPSS v.19.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The participants of the study involved 175 married students in universities of Hamedan in education year 93-92 that had Facebook accounts and were Internet users. 42% of the participants were female and 58 % were male. The age range of most of the participants of the study, 91 participants, was between 20 to 30 years old. Most married couples participated in the study, about 83%, were married for 1 to 10 years. The university degrees of most of the married participants, i.e. 49%, were bachelor's degree.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Education			Length of marriage			Age			Sex		Variable	
Ph.D	M.A	B.A	Unduer - graduate	20-30 year	10-20 year	1-10 year	42-52	31-41	20-30	Mal e		Femal e
2	59	85	29	3	26	146	4	80	91	101	74	Frequency
1/1	33/7	48/6	16/6	1/7	14/9	83/4	2/3	45/7	52	57/7	42/3	Percentage

To investigate the relationship between Internet addiction and the use of Facebook, with marital satisfaction and emotional divorce of students Pearson correlation coefficient and path analysis were used.

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Table 2: Pearson Correlation Coefficient for the Relationship between Internet Addiction and the Use of Facebook and Marital Satisfaction and Emotional Divorce

The use of Facebook	Internet addiction	Emotional Divorce	Marital Satisfaction	Variables
-0/443**	-0/474**	-0/769**	1	Marital Satisfaction
0/295**	0/424**	1	-0/769**	Emotional Divorce
0/444**	1	0/424**	-0/474**	Internet addiction
1	0/444**	0/295**	-0/443**	The use of Facebook

* $p < 0/05$, ** $p < 0/01$ $n=175$

According to Table 2 it is shown that the Pearson correlation coefficient indicates a significant negative correlation of about - 0.47 between Internet addiction and marital satisfaction ($r = -0.443$, $n = 175$, $p < 0.01$) and a significant negative correlation of about -.44 between the use of Facebook and marital satisfaction ($r = -0.444$, $n = 175$, $p < 0.01$). Due to the obtained results, it can be stated with 95% confidence that the higher the rate of Internet addiction and the use of Facebook among married students, the less marital satisfaction they have. Furthermore, the Pearson correlation coefficient found a significant positive correlation of about 0.44 between the use of Facebook and Internet addiction ($r = 0.444$, $n = 175$, $p < 0.01$). So it can be said that the more married students are addicted to Internet, the more they use Facebook. The Pearson correlation coefficient, also found a significant positive correlation of about 0.42 between Internet addiction and emotional divorce ($r = 0.424$, $n = 175$, $p < 0.01$), and a significant positive correlation of about 0.30 between the amount of using Facebook and emotional divorce ($r = 0.295$, $n = 175$, $p < 0.01$). Due to the obtained results, it can be stated with 95% confidence that the more the rate of Internet addiction and the use of Facebook in married students, the more is the rate of emotional divorce among them.

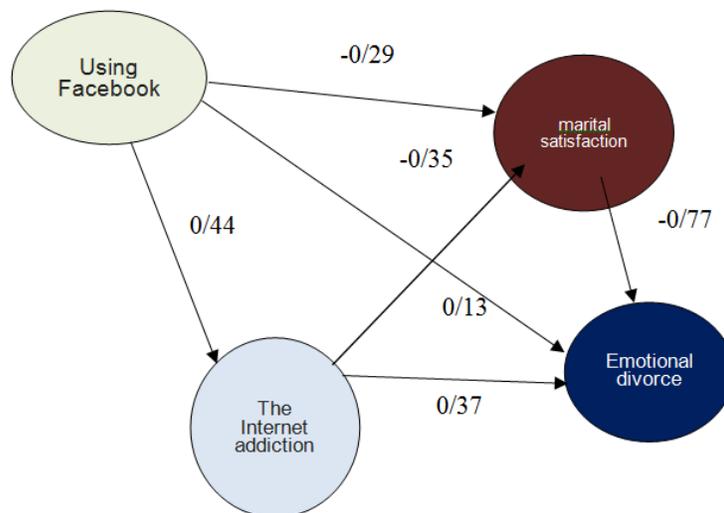


Figure 1: Path analysis of the effects of using Facebook and the Internet addiction on marital satisfaction and emotional divorce

There is a significant negative correlation of about -0.77 between marital satisfaction and emotional divorce, ($r = -0.769$, $n = 175$, $p < 0.01$). So we can say with 95% confidence that the more the rate of marital satisfaction among couples, the less the rate of emotional divorce is.

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In order to examine the direct and indirect effects of the use of Facebook and Internet addiction on marital satisfaction and emotional divorce in married students, path analysis is used. We already had a certain structure of theory in the present study, and to test the goodness of fit of the mentioned structure, the LISREL software was used for path analysis.

Path analysis, is a powerful multiple multivariate analysis which is a part of multivariate regression that in spite of indicating the effects and relationships more accurately, enable the researcher to examine a set of regression equations simultaneously. In the path analysis, the direct and indirect effects of independent variables on the dependent variables are specified. Therefore, in this part of the research the results of path analysis are presented.

Table 3: Goodness of Fit Indices

Statistical indices	χ^2	GFI	AGFI	RMR	RMSEA
The accepted range	P-Value<0/05	≥0/9	≥0/9	<0/05	<0/1
Obtained value	0/001	0/964	0/902	0/041	0/043

The results displayed in this table represent goodness for fit indices for emotional divorce. Index of chi square is doubled and equals 56/53, the significant level of which is lower than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$).

RMR Criterion: this criterion is to measure the average remainders and is changeable only in connection with variance and covariance. In The model of goodness for fit these remainders are very small (Ghazi, 1381). So in short, the smaller this criterion is (closer to zero) the better goodness of fit will be. In this study, RMR = 0/04 which indicates goodness for fit of the model.

GFI and AGFI Criteria: LISREL calculates other goodness for fit indices, which is the ratio of the sum of squares elaborated by the model on the total sum of squares of the matrix in the population. These ratios are similar to the correlation coefficient in terms of their suitability. Both variables are between zero and one. Unlike RMR standard, the closer these standards to one, the more goodness for fit for the observed data is calculated. In this study the GFI index is above 0.90 and AGFI index is equal to 0.90, which indicates the goodness for fit of the research model.

RMSEA criterion: this criterion is defined as the difference for each degree of freedom. In other words, it is the deviation test of each degree of freedom. This index is lower than 0.05 for models that have a suitable goodness. Higher values of up to 0.08 indicate a reasonable error of approximation in the population. Models whose RMSEA is 0.1 and higher, have a poor goodness of fit. Thus, since the RMSEA index is equal to 0.04 in this study, the model used in the present study enjoys a suitable goodness of fit.

Internet addiction and the use of Facebook predict marital satisfaction of married students.

To investigate the above hypothesis, simultaneous multiple regression analysis were used. The results are displayed in the table below.

Table 4: The Results of Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis

giS.	T	Beta	dradnats rorre	B	Variables
0/001	30/612	-	6/991	1/490	Constant
0/001	4/838	-0/346	0/147	-0/713	Internet Addiction
0/001	4/047	-0/290	0/322	-1/305	The use Facebook

Predictor variables: Addiction to the Internet, the use of Facebook

Criterion Variable: Marital Satisfaction

The results of the regression analysis presented in Table 4 show that a significant level F is obtained, i.e. the amount of 35/53 with the degree of freedom 2 and 172 is lower than 0.01 ($F(2, 172) = 35/526, p = 0.001$). Hence, the regression is statistically significant.

Due to the value of R², addiction to the Internet and the use of Facebook, explains approximately 28% of the variance in marital satisfaction scores of married students.

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Internet addiction and the use of Facebook predict emotional divorce in married students. To investigate the above hypothesis, simultaneous multiple regression analysis were used. The results are displayed in the table below:

Table 5: Results of Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis

Adjusted R ²	R ²	R	giS.	F level	Mean square	degrees of freedom	Total square	Source Variance
0/185	0/194	0/441	0/001	20/726	750/83	2	15066/76	Regression
					36/23	172	6230/82	Remainder
					-	174	732/48	Total

Predictor variables: Addiction to the Internet, the use of Facebook

Variable Criterion: Emotional Divorce

The results of the regression analysis presented in Table 5 shows that a significant level F was obtained i.e. the amount of F which is 20.73 with the 2 and 172 degree of freedom is below 0.05 (F (2,172)=20.726, p=0.001). Hence, the regression analysis results are statistically significant.

Due to the value of adjusted R², addiction to the Internet and the use of Facebook, explain approximately 19% of the variance of emotional divorce scores of married students.

The result of the regression analysis indicated that the Internet addiction and the use of Facebook have a negative significant effect on marital satisfaction. Furthermore, they can predict the marital satisfaction of married students.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between the Internet addiction and the use of Facebook and marital satisfaction and emotional divorce of married students. The results show that there is a significant negative relationship between the Internet addiction and the use of Facebook and marital satisfaction and there is a significant positive relationship between the Internet addiction and the use of Facebook and emotional divorce. These findings suggest that there is a significant negative relationship between the Internet addiction and the use of Facebook and the overall marital satisfaction and also marital satisfaction components, conflict resolution, leisure-time activities, sexual relationships and religious orientation. Furthermore, the result of the regression analysis showed that the Internet addiction and the use of Facebook have a significant positive effect on the rate of emotional divorce and a significant negative effect on the rate of marital satisfaction. Moreover, they are able to predict emotional divorce and marital satisfaction of married students.

Among the marital satisfaction components under investigation, marital satisfaction and religious orientation were the most effective components with the mean of 3.37, and marital relationship was the least effective component with the mean of 3.09 in the participants of the study. The level of marital satisfaction in most of the cases of the study, about 53 percent, was above the average. The rate of emotional divorce in most of the married students, about 66 percent, was below the average. The rate of the Internet addiction in most of the married students, about 62 percent, was low. The level of using Facebook in most of the married students, about 44 percent, was below to average. The average scores of having contacts with friends on Facebook was more than the average scores of other forms of communication. The level of non-intimate relationships with friends was less than other types of communication in Facebook.

The results obtained in the study supports the results of Azarakhsh's (1391) study entitled "The Effect of Media on marital satisfaction of married women living in Takestan," in which the results showed a significant relationship between the use of the media and marital satisfaction. So that with an increase in using media marital satisfaction decreases.

According to Rahimi et al., (1391) entitled "Cyberspace and family pathology: threats and challenges " the most important damages caused by the influence of cyberspace are family dissatisfaction, Internet

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addiction, sexual abuse and social isolation. The study conducted by Keravat (Kevin *et al.*, 2010) also showed that using the Internet reduces communication between an individual and his/her family and increases feelings of depression.

The results of this study are in line with the results of Dastjerdi and Sayadi (1391). In their study entitled "An investigation of the relationship between the use of social networks and the Internet addiction among university students in Isfahan University of Payame Nour" "They indicated that there is significant relationship between the use of social networks and Internet addiction.

Fang *et al.*, (Kevin *et al.*, 2010) noted in their study that the Internet addiction in students causes cold interpersonal, family, social and friendly relationships.

In explaining the obtained results, it can be said that, according to Slevin (1998) Overusing the Internet and Facebook leads to a decrease in family communications as its consequence. One of the threats that some researchers have pointed out is that overusing would gradually replace real human relationships in everyday life. From their perspectives, the Internet is a tool that can connect people with each other which will obviate the need of facing others and being in the real world. Therefore, one of the aspects of marital satisfaction, which is the satisfaction of marital relationship, will decrease by the Internet addiction. According to Rydyg (2000), the Internet addiction will firstly affect the career, family and marital life (Stevens, 1996).

Using Facebook reduces communicative social values, which itself can decrease marital satisfaction after a marital relationship. Furthermore, a decrease in marital satisfaction can exacerbate Internet addiction.. According to Jung, one of the causes of Internet addiction is marital dissatisfaction and family disputes (Moayedpur *et al.*, 1384).

Internet addiction has negative effects on individuals such as problems in passing of life and marital relationship (Block, 2008), changing the style of life, spending more time on the Internet, lack of attention to family members and ignorance of family and friends, these are among the consequences of the Internet addiction which can affect the reduction of marital satisfaction (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).

With regards to the decline in marital satisfaction after sexual relationship, it can be said that, according to Griffield and Bartholomew, 1994), marriage and sexual relationships are the issues mostly affected by Internet addiction. Marriage and marital relationships will decrease apparently due to the use of pornography, cybersex and online friend makings. According to Griffield, 62 percent of the respondents stated that they visit porn websites 4 hours a week on average for their sexual needs.

Excessive use of the Internet is often associated with the loss of time and important tasks. Since marital life creates various tasks in different dimensions for the couples such as spending time, economic activities, etc., the Internet addiction cause individuals to neglect these important tasks. This issue creates a situation in which the couples' expectations of married life are not met, consequently their marital satisfaction decreases. According to Davis and Andlar (2001), overuse of the Internet, interferes with everyday tasks and activities, and makes terrible feelings in the addict's wife. Addiction; furthermore, interferes with other daily chores such as shopping, physical health, child care, etc. In order to devote more time to use the Internet, these people change their life style which can cause problems for them. Addicted people have low levels of commitments to society, family, job, friends, marital life, etc. and the lower their commitments; the more likely it is to commit deviant behavior. People who have no interest in others, are not committed to themselves and others; consequently, their level of marital satisfaction decreases.

According Bluk (2008), negative feedback such as family members' conflicts, lies and social isolation are among the properties of individuals addicted to the Internet, all of which play an important role in reducing the level of marital satisfaction. The Internet addiction has plenty of negative effects on people's lives, such as problems in the process of life, changing lifestyles, spending more time on the Internet, lack of attention to their health as a result of using the Internet, reduced physical activity, avoiding important life activities to spend more time on the Internet, reduced social relationships, financial problems and ignoring family and friends. In addition, by losing necessary opportunities in career advancement and economic responsibilities, the financial power individuals will diminish, and this problem leads to a

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decrease in marital satisfaction in the financial dimension. Furthermore, according to Soler (2005), telling lies to friends and family members about the duration of using the Internet, and using the internet as a means of escaping the problems are among the issues that reduce marital satisfaction in marriage.

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