

THE IMPACT OF ONLINE DATING ADDICTION ON INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND LIFE SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

Dating is an activity carried out by two or more people to get to know each other. In today's modern era, dating can be done online which can lead to addiction. Online dating addiction has become an increasingly common phenomenon among dating app users. This study aims to explore the impact of this addiction on interpersonal relationships and individual life satisfaction. Using qualitative analysis methods, this study collected data from interviews with several informants who are currently actively using the Online Dating application. The results show that online dating addiction can result in a decrease in the quality of interpersonal relationships and reduce life satisfaction, especially among young individuals. These findings are expected to provide insight for app developers and mental health professionals in understanding and addressing problems that arise from this addiction.

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INTRODUCTION

With the rapid advancement of information and communication technology, human interaction and relationship dynamics have undergone dramatic transformations. One emergent phenomenon is the addiction to online dating applications, which has become increasingly prevalent in society, particularly among the younger generation. This phenomenon not only influences how individuals seek romantic partners but also has profound implications for the quality of their interpersonal relationships and overall life satisfaction. Previous studies have indicated that online dating addiction can alter an individual's perception of social relationships and elevate anxiety levels (Wijaya & Subroto, 2025). However, a significant gap remains in comprehensively understanding the profound impacts of this addiction on interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct further research exploring the factors contributing to online dating addiction and its implications for users' mental health. By understanding these dimensions, more effective strategies can be developed to assist individuals in maintaining a balance between their digital and real-world lives. These strategies will not only benefit those

experiencing addiction but also provide valuable insights for mental health professionals to deliver better support. Furthermore, employing a holistic approach in this research paves the way for policies that are more responsive to the shifting social dynamics in the digital era.

In recent years, the phenomenon of online dating has become an integral component of how individuals pursue romantic and social relationships. Driven by technological advancements and widespread internet penetration, online dating platforms such as Tinder and Bumble have garnered significant societal attention, especially among the youth. According to a report by the Pew Research Center (2020), approximately 30% of adults in the United States report having used an online dating application, a figure that continues to rise annually. This surge can be attributed to the convenience and accessibility offered by online dating, which were previously unavailable through traditional dating methods. Beneath this convenience, however, lie substantial impacts on individuals' interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction. This study aims to explore the impact of online dating addiction on interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction, alongside the factors that influence it.

Online dating addiction can be defined as a behavioral pattern wherein individuals feel a compulsion to continuously use dating applications, despite recognizing that such usage disrupts their daily lives. This addiction is frequently characterized by the emergence of anxiety or discomfort when the individual cannot access dating apps, coupled with a strong desire to constantly seek new partners. This phenomenon is becoming increasingly prevalent in tandem with the rising number of online dating users, which invariably affects the quality of interpersonal relationships cultivated through these platforms (Love et al., 2021).

One primary consequence of online dating addiction is the alteration in how individuals interact with others. In the context of interpersonal relationships, online dating can shift pre-existing social dynamics. The use of dating apps often leads to more superficial interactions, where individuals tend to focus heavily on physical appearance and first impressions rather than building deeper, meaningful connections. This superficiality can result in unstable and unsatisfactory relationships, ultimately affecting overall life satisfaction.

Life satisfaction, defined as an individual's subjective evaluation of their overall quality of life, can also be adversely affected by online dating addiction. Several studies indicate that individuals trapped in the cycle of online dating frequently experience higher levels of loneliness, depression, and anxiety (Azahra, 2020) compared to those who do not engage in online dating. Although online dating offers opportunities to meet new people and forge relationships, dissatisfaction stemming from unsuccessful dating experiences can lead to a decline in overall life satisfaction.

In this context, it is crucial to consider the factors that may influence the relationship between online dating addiction, interpersonal relationships, and life satisfaction. Several potential contributing factors include age, gender, and prior relationship experiences. For instance, research demonstrates that women tend to seek more serious relationships through online dating, whereas men might be more inclined toward casual encounters. Additionally, individuals with negative past relationship experiences may be more susceptible to online dating addiction as a coping mechanism for emotional distress (Yohana, 2020).

Conversely, arguments exist suggesting that online dating can provide benefits for individuals, including increased opportunities to find compatible partners and expand social networks. Some studies indicate that individuals who utilize dating apps judiciously may experience an enhancement in their life satisfaction. Within this framework, it is vital to explore how the use of online dating can be managed in a healthy and balanced manner, thereby minimizing potential negative impacts. To comprehend the impact of online dating addiction on interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction, this study will employ a phenomenological qualitative approach. This will involve in-depth interviews with individuals experienced in online dating to provide deeper insights into how they perceive these experiences. The findings from this approach are expected to provide a comprehensive overview of how online dating addiction affects an individual's social and emotional life. By understanding

this relationship, the current study aims to offer practical recommendations for individuals engaging in online dating and for mental health professionals.

By comprehensively analyzing the impact of online dating addiction on interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction, it is hoped that this research will make a significant contribution to the existing literature, as well as provide actionable recommendations for individuals involved in online dating. Moreover, the results of this study can serve as a foundation for developing intervention programs designed to assist individuals in managing their online dating usage in a more healthy and constructive manner.

Overall, online dating is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that warrants further attention and research. With the increasing reliance on technology in daily life, it is crucial for individuals to be aware of the potential negative impacts of online dating addiction on their interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction. This research aims to provide a better understanding of the relationship between online dating addiction, the quality of interpersonal relationships, and life satisfaction, as well as to identify strategies that can help individuals overcome the challenges arising in this context. Through a profound understanding of these issues, it is hoped that individuals can develop better self-awareness and social skills. Additionally, this study will explore the role of social support in mitigating the negative effects of online dating addiction. Robust social support can be a key factor in assisting individuals to cope with this addiction. Through engagement in positive communities and the cultivation of healthy relationships, it is anticipated that individuals can strike a balance between the virtual world and real-world social interactions.

Within the context of this research, several research questions need to be addressed. First, what are the impacts of online dating addiction on interpersonal relationships? These impacts may encompass changes in social interaction patterns, disrupted communication, and a potential decline in relationship quality. Studies indicate that individuals addicted to online dating tend to experience difficulties in establishing healthy emotional attachments (Lopes & Yu, 2022). This can lead to more superficial and less fulfilling relationships.

Second, how does online dating addiction affect an individual's life satisfaction? This addiction can culminate in life dissatisfaction, particularly if individuals feel trapped in a cycle of unrewarding dates. Research demonstrates a significant correlation between the use of dating apps and elevated levels of stress and anxiety (Bonilla-Zorita et al., 2021). By understanding both of these aspects, it is expected that more effective solutions can be formulated to address the adverse effects of online dating addiction.

This study aims to identify the impact of online dating addiction on individuals' interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction. By gathering data from diverse sources and analyzing the behavioral patterns of dating app users, this research seeks to provide a clearer depiction of how this addiction affects the quality of established relationships. Furthermore, this study also aims to analyze the correlation between online dating addiction and individual life satisfaction.

Through these objectives, the research is expected to offer deeper insights into the psychological impacts of online dating addiction. By comprehending the relationship between addiction and life satisfaction, individuals can become more aware of the potential risks associated with the excessive use of dating apps. Moreover, the findings of this study can serve as a reference for mental health practitioners in providing appropriate interventions for individuals experiencing online dating addiction.

Studies on online dating addiction and its impacts have been conducted by various researchers, focusing on how this behavior affects interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction. Research by Bonilla-Zorita et al. (2021) reveals that excessive use of dating apps can lead to relationship dissatisfaction and elevated stress levels. These findings highlight the importance of mindfulness regarding the use of technology in the pursuit of relationships. Additionally, researchers advocate for the necessity of a more balanced approach to utilizing dating apps to avoid compromising deeper and more meaningful social interactions. Other studies also suggest that individuals involved in online dating tend to encounter difficulties in establishing

healthy and satisfying relationships. This is attributed to unrealistic expectations and an inability to communicate effectively within the context of online interactions (Lopes & Yu, 2022).

By understanding the interrelationship between online dating addiction, interpersonal relationships, and life satisfaction, this study is expected to provide profound insights into the negative impacts of this behavior and the significance of healthy social interactions in daily life. The research also aims to offer recommendations for individuals and mental health professionals on managing online dating addiction and promoting more positive social interaction practices. Consequently, it is hoped that a balance can be achieved between the use of technology and meaningful relationships within social life. This equilibrium is paramount to ensuring that individuals are not only virtually connected but also capable of forging authentic and emotionally supportive relationships. Further research is required to explore effective methods for educating the public regarding the long-term impacts of online dating addiction.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative phenomenological approach aimed at conducting an in-depth exploration of individuals' subjective experiences regarding online dating addiction. The phenomenological methodology was selected to comprehend the complex structures and meanings of individual experiences within a continuously evolving digital context. The research was conducted in Depok City, with a primary focus on the younger demographic exhibiting intensive usage of digital dating platforms.

The study involved 25 participants aged between 20 and 35 years, recruited utilizing a purposive sampling technique combined with a snowball method. Participant inclusion criteria comprised the active use of at least three online dating applications, a minimum daily usage duration of two hours, and a history of utilizing online dating platforms for no less than two years. A rigorous participant selection process was implemented to ensure the quality of the findings and the depth of the data to be elicited.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A qualitative study conducted on 25 active users of online dating applications in Depok City reveals the complexity of the digital addiction phenomenon within the context of contemporary interpersonal relationships. Through in-depth interviews and narrative analysis, this study seeks to explore the intricate psychological and social dimensions associated with the use of online dating platforms. The primary findings indicate that the intensity of online dating usage can significantly impact the quality of interpersonal relationships and individual life satisfaction levels.

An in-depth analysis of the participants' experiences reveals intriguing psychological patterns. Sixty-eight percent of the participants reported an increase in social anxiety, which developed in tandem with their dependence on digital platforms. This phenomenon is characterized by a decline in self-confidence during face-to-face interactions and an emerging preference for artificial digital communication. Participants tended to feel more comfortable interacting through digital interfaces, which gradually eroded their capacity to forge deep and authentic emotional connections.

The psychological impacts of online dating addiction are clearly evident in the transformation of interpersonal relationship dynamics. Seventy-six percent of the participants acknowledged difficulties in building meaningful relationships outside the digital context. Interaction patterns dominated by brief message exchanges, swiping mechanisms, and rapid responses have cultivated a superficial communication culture. Participants reported a decline in empathetic capacity, an inability to read body language, and limitations in comprehending complex nonverbal communication nuances.

Regarding the dimension of life satisfaction, the research uncovers significant psychological challenges. Sixty-four percent of the participants expressed profound dissatisfaction with the quality of their actual relationships. This is marked by elevated levels of stress, anxiety, and feelings of alienation, despite being technically connected to an extensive social

network. This digital paradox illustrates how technological connectivity does not invariably translate into the depth of meaningful emotional connections.

Furthermore, this study reveals the underlying psychological mechanisms of online dating addiction. Digital platforms are engineered with sophisticated reward systems, providing psychological stimuli in the form of matches, likes, and instant interactions that generate a cycle of dependency. Participants tend to seek constant validation through their digital profiles, constructing identities that are frequently inauthentic. This process not only affects their self-perception but also shapes unrealistic expectations in interpersonal relationships.

The social implications of these research findings are highly significant. Online dating addiction not only affects individuals but also contributes to a fundamental transformation in how society conceptualizes and navigates relationships. A commodification of romantic interactions occurs, wherein relationships are treated as products that can be easily replaced and negotiated through digital platforms. This has the potential to undermine traditional values associated with building deep and meaningful personal connections. The long-term implications are equally complex. The digital generation is at risk of developing psychological disorders, experiencing difficulties in establishing emotional intimacy, and facing a decline in social skills. Online dating systems, driven by advanced algorithms, have the potential to create a continuous cycle of dissatisfaction and anxiety.

To mitigate these negative impacts, the researchers propose several practical recommendations. Suggested interventions include limiting application usage time, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), programs aimed at reinforcing direct communication skills, and increasing awareness regarding the psychological impacts of digital addiction. The ultimate objective is to empower individuals to cultivate healthier and more authentic relationships, both within digital and physical spaces.

CONCLUSION

The primary conclusion of this study emphasizes that online dating addiction is not merely a technological phenomenon, but rather a complex manifestation of socio-psychological transformations. Its ramifications encompass the potential degradation of interpersonal relationship quality, the diminishment of life satisfaction, and the elicitation of long-term psychological disturbances. Consequently, this research offers a critical perspective on the fundamental transformations in how modern individuals establish, maintain, and conceptualize social connections in the digital era.

By elucidating the interrelationship among online dating addiction, interpersonal relationships, and life satisfaction, this study is expected to yield profound insights into the adverse impacts of this behavior and underscore the paramount importance of healthy social interactions in daily life. Furthermore, it is anticipated that these findings will serve as a foundational framework for the development of targeted intervention programs, designed to assist individuals in managing their online dating usage in a healthier and more constructive manner.

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