



Predicting Cyberspace Addiction Based on Marital Intimacy and Self-worth and Life Quality in Married Women

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Abstract

Aim: Prevention is better than treatment in any field, therefore numerous pathologists believed that the root of many abnormal behaviors and effective factors on them must be identified specially internet addiction which is a new phenomenon. The aim of present research was to predict cyberspace addiction based on marital intimacy, self-worth and life quality of married women living in Isfahan City. **Methods:** The present study was a descriptive correlational study. Research population were including 270 married women leaving in Isfahan city based on convenient sampling method. They were selected and participated into the research in fall of 2022. Data collection instrument were consisted of marital intimacy questionnaire of Thompson and Walker (1983), the self-worth questionnaire of Doosti and Hoseininia (2021), the life quality questionnaire of World Health Organization, Cyberspace addiction's questionnaire of Young (1998). They were implemented online via virtual environment. The achieved data were analyzed by stepwise regression statistical method using SPSS software version 24. **Results:** The results showed that Self-worth ($B = -0.549$), quality of life ($B = -0.446$) and marital intimacy ($B = -0.107$) were able to predict 16.7% of cyberspace addiction. **Conclusion:** As a result of the findings of the present study, it can be inferred that self-worth, quality life quality and marital intimacy play an important role in preventing cyberspace addiction. In other word, the higher self-worth, quality of life and marital intimacy, resulted in the lower cyberspace addiction.

Keywords: *Cyberspace addiction, Self-worth, Marital intimacy, Life quality.*

Introduction

At the same time as people's increasing access to the Internet, especially virtual space, we see a kind of dependence in people (Baghernejad & Ebadi, 2013). Virtual space is entertaining, informative, and useful, but for many people who are addicted to it, this type of use is becoming psychological and behavioral injuries and abnormalities. In this case, if they have not learned the skill of selection, they will be attracted to what is more attractive and not necessarily more useful, and sometimes depend on its use, and this dependence sometimes goes so far that it leads to addiction to the Internet and virtual space (Forghani & Khodamoradi, 2018). Cyberspace addiction is defined as an uncontrollable desire to use cyberspace excessively, which disrupts a person's daily life and is becoming a serious problem worldwide (Noorbakhsh Dolagh, 2019). In the meantime, Iran's society, like many value societies, is facing new challenges and social harms during the transition from tradition to modernity, facing the process of globalization and entering the age of information and communication. Part of these challenges and damages are directly and indirectly related to the emergence and development of new media, among which women have started using virtual space more in the last few years. This opportunity is sometimes associated with increasing awareness in different emotional, economic, social, and family fields and creating positive developments and sometimes with negative consequences in couple relationships. The negative consequences ultimately affect the way of communication in the family environment and how to communicate with the spouse and lead to a decrease in the quality of the couple's communication and intimacy between them, and possibly to extramarital relations (Lopez-Fernandez & Kass, 2020). Intimacy includes spending time together, listening to each other, being open, honest, and trusting each other (Noorhayati, Faturochman, & Fadila-Helmi, 2019). Intimacy is a developmental process in a relationship that begins before marriage and continues after it. Intimacy is a relationship in which there is care, mutual trust and acceptance (Sadeghi Fard, Samavi, & Mohebi, 2015).

Another factor that seems to be related to Internet addiction is the individual's sense of self-worth. Self-worth is considered one of the indicators of psychological adjustment and social function and is one of the results of examining and analyzing the interaction between mind, self, and personality. The theoretical model of possible conditions of self-worth explains how self-esteem is formed and how a person values himself. Self-worth is based on the fact that people, according to their personal and social experiences, understand how life situations provide conditions for their success or failure. According to their life experiences, the more people know their dignity and value, the more their self-confidence will increase, and ultimately, they will benefit from higher self-worth (Arabnejad, Mafakheri, and Ranjbar, 2018).

Virtual media sought to change the lifestyle in recent decades, and new lifestyles influenced by virtual space have become an essential and inseparable part of human life. One of the spheres of influence of social networks is influence among women and changing their lifestyle and marital relations.

Therefore, to determine the prediction of cyberspace addiction based on marital intimacy, self-worth, and quality of life in married women, this research has examined this research hypothesis:

Marital intimacy, self-worth, and quality of life can predict the cyberspace addiction of married women.

Method

The present study was a descriptive correlational study. Research population were including 270 married women leaving in Isfahan city based on convenient sampling method. They were selected and participated into the research in fall of 2022. Data collection instrument were consisted of marital intimacy questionnaire of Thompson and Walker (1983), the self-worth questionnaire of Doosti and Hoseinia (2021), the life quality questionnaire of World Health Organization, Cyberspace addiction's questionnaire of Young (1998). They were implemented online via virtual environment. The achieved data were analyzed by stepwise regression statistical method using SPSS software version 24.

Results

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to check the normality of the main research variables. The results showed that the level of significance in the variables of cyberspace addiction (0.58), self-worth (0.87) and quality of life (0.62) was higher than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis in these variables is confirmed at the 95% confidence level. Also, the Pearson correlation coefficient results showed that there is an inverse and significant relationship between the variables of marital intimacy ($r=0.124$), self-worth ($r=0.211$) and quality of life ($r=0.171$) with cyberspace addiction. ($p \leq 0.05$).

The regression results showed that self-esteem, quality of life and marital intimacy could predict cyberspace addiction, so the regression model is a meaningful model. In addition, self-worth, quality of life and marital intimacy in the third step have 16.7% ability to predict cyberspace addiction.

In the third step of stepwise regression, marital intimacy with $p=0.010$, self-esteem with $p=0.000$, quality of life with $p=0.000$, at the confidence level of 95% can significantly predict the variable of cyberspace addiction.

Conclusion

This research aimed to predict cyberspace addiction based on marital intimacy, self-worth, and quality of life of married women. As seen, marital intimacy can predict the variable of cyberspace addiction.

When interpersonal relationships are damaged, a person feels lonely and inevitably turns to the Internet to compensate and receive love and affection. In these virtual spaces, due to the existence of various types of relationships and the absence of certain privacy and anonymity, relationships are sometimes formed (Chattopadhyay et al., 2020), which satisfies the intimacy that women need and cannot provide in their lives with their husbands. For this reason, they constantly use these social networks and the Internet, which causes addiction to virtual space. People tending to social networks fulfill their needs to some extent. By exploring the technical dimensions of virtual social networks, people express their mental potential or get to know different aspects of their personality that were hidden before, express their opinions and artistic needs, and gain access to the information they need. On the other hand, social networks provide a platform to escape from reality and a means to satisfy psychological needs, including gaining approval from others and gaining self-esteem, which is one of the most essential needs of people in life. Married women with self-knowledge problems do not have good coping strategies in marital and family conflicts. Instead of using problem-oriented strategies to solve these problems in life with the help of their husbands, they look for the wrong alternatives. One of these strategies can be the trend toward virtual spaces and their addiction. Some married women do not give much importance to themselves and have a low quality of life due to their various roles and conditions. For this reason, most of the time, they are at home or have little time for sports and social activities, which has become more apparent in the last two years when the Corona epidemic has spread. Due to

the availability of virtual space and receiving all the information in these spaces, women have more desire and motivation to use this virtual space and spend more hours on the Internet day by day due to the habit of this lifestyle. Since people with a high quality of life use a problem-oriented strategy, they ultimately have a greater ability to control the stresses of everyday life. On the contrary, people who use incompatible emotion-oriented coping strategies experience a vicious and increasing cycle of anxiety and restlessness, which leads to a decrease in self-esteem, and the occurrence of physical and psychological diseases, one of the consequences of which is cyberspace addiction. This research was conducted during the corona epidemic, in which married women (working and housewives) spent more time at home with their children and husbands due to the imposed restrictions and home quarantine.

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