Facebook Addiction as Predictor of Work Engagement and Social Relationship among Organizational Employees

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Abstract

The primary objective of this paper is to explore the role of Facebook addiction as a predictor of work engagement and social relationships, including its sub-components, namely family relationships and peer relationships. The sample comprised 400 organizational employees, 200 male and 200 female, aged 20 to 50 years (M = 37.5, SD = 13.32). Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003), the Bergen Facebook Addiction Scale (BFAS) (Andreessen, 2012), and the Provisions of Social Relation Scale (PSRS) (Ayub, 2004) were employed to measure the indicators of the study. Results revealed that Facebook addiction leads to less work engagement, weak family relationships, and strong peer relationships. It is also indicated that younger adults have more Facebook addiction, less work engagement, weak family relations, and strong peer relationships than older adults. Furthermore, no significant differences were observed in Facebook addiction between male and female individuals upon their work engagement, family relationship, and peer relationship. Non-significant differences were found between graduates and post-graduate individuals regarding study variables.

Keywords: Facebook Addiction; Work Engagement; Social Networking; Utrecht Work Engagement Scale; Peer Relationship

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1. INTRODUCTION

Facebook has seamlessly woven into our daily routines due to its immense popularity (The Irish Times, 2012). The widespread utilization of social media platforms, like Facebook, has the potential to diminish in-person interactions among people. Numerous studies suggest that the correlation between Facebook addiction and diminished social interaction accounts for the decline in interpersonal communication among family members who live together. Younger individuals prioritize spending time on social media over conversations with their loved ones. Additionally, research has revealed that

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youngsters often forgo attending family gatherings and events (Karamat *et al.*, 2019).

Boundary Theory

This theory explores the boundaries between work and non-work domains and how they influence individuals' experiences and behaviour. Facebook blurs these boundaries by providing a platform for work-related and non-work-related interactions. While excessive Facebook use during work hours may harm productivity, moderate use facilitating social interaction and relationship building among colleagues can enhance work engagement by fostering a positive work environment and sense of community (Ashforth *et al.*, 2000).

Kujath (2011) has contended that online communication should not be regarded as a substitute for face-to-face interaction but rather as an extension of in-person communication among individuals and family members. According to Bergh and Kenna (2004), it was discovered that rather than fostering new relationships, Facebook use was primarily motivated by the desire to maintain existing social connections.

In their meta-analysis study, Coyle and Vaughan (2008) found no significant relationship between Facebook users and their social relationships. The apparent lack of communication or reduced communication between Facebook users and their offline social connections can be attributed to the existing gap in their relationships. Furthermore, Facebook is primarily utilized to maintain connections rather than as a significant platform for socializing.

Further, Shklovski et al. (2006) reported that Facebook offers features that help users prioritize friendships, which is crucial for fostering those relationships. However, this platform is less suitable for maintaining family relationships due to its transient nature. Furthermore, Cole (2000) found that Facebook users tend to spend less time engaging in face-to-face conversations with their family and prefer spending more time online with their peers.

According to empirical research, the use of social networking sites differs among men and women. As Raacke and Raacke (2008) reported, men typically tend to have more friends on social networking sites (SNS) than women. However, Pfeil, Arjun, and Zaphiris (2009) found the results vice versa. Similarly, Wilkinson and Thelwall (2010) found that female users use social networking sites more than males for socializing purposes. The risk factor is also involved when sharing personal information on social networking sites (Jelicic *et al.*, 2004; Fogel & Nehmad, 2009).

Pfeil et al. (2009) discovered that social networking site users exhibit differences based on their age groups. The research revealed that teenagers tend to have a larger social circle on social media platforms, with their friends being predominantly of a similar age in contrast to older users.

Furthermore, this study also investigated the impact of excessive Facebook usage on users' work engagement and workplace behaviour. Work engagement is a positive, fulfilling state of mind related to work, characterized by vigor, dedication, and immersion (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002).

A detrimental link has been established between work engagement and the utilization of Facebook and other social networking platforms. Sulasula (2023) has asserted that the excessive use of social media directly impacts employees' overall job performance, affecting their ability to concentrate on tasks and their overall productivity. Furthermore, another study has indicated that excessive social media usage not only diminishes employee productivity but also leads to increased absenteeism and a higher incidence of errors in their work (Santos & Rivera, 2021). Secondly, a negative correlation has been identified between the use of Facebook and face-to-face interactions (Hogg & Vaughan, 2004; Jacobsen & Forste, 2011).

A study involving multitasking individuals revealed that those who used Facebook during work took more time to complete tasks than those who remained focused on their tasks without using Facebook (Levine *et al.*, 2007; Bowman *et al.*, 2010).

However, in recent years, there has been a significant surge in the use of social networks, which has led to changes in people's relationship priorities (Rousseau *et al.*, 2019). Consequently, this study aims to investigate whether Facebook is diminishing face-to-face social interactions among users with friends and family and to uncover the underlying factors contributing to this decrease in face-to-face interaction. Additionally, the research delves into the use of Facebook within Pakistan and its influence on face-to-face communication. While prior studies have investigated gender disparities in social networking site (SNS) usage, there remains a notable gap in research regarding Facebook specifically.

The primary aim of this study is to investigate how Facebook addiction influences work engagement and social relationships, including family and peer connections. Additionally, it analyses the effects of demographic factors such as gender, education, and age.

To achieve these objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested.

Hypothesis 1: Facebook addiction leads to weak work engagement among organizational employees.

Hypothesis 2: Facebook addiction predicts low-income family relationships among organizational employees.

Hypothesis 3: Facebook addiction leads to strong peer relationships among organizational employees.

Hypothesis 4: Younger adults have more Facebook addiction, less work engagement, weak family relations, and strong peer relationships than older adults.

Hypothesis 5: Male individuals have more Facebook addiction, less work engagement, and low-income family and peer relationships than female individuals.

Hypothesis 6: Graduate individuals have more Facebook addiction, less work engagement, and weak family and peer relationships than post-graduate individuals.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Sample

A purposive convenience sample (N = 400; men = 200, women = 200) was selected from various organizations in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The age range of participants was 20 to 50 years (M = 37.5, SD = 13.32). Among them, 58% were undergraduates and 42% were postgraduates. The minimum qualification was 14 years of education and regular Facebook users as an inclusion criterion for the sample.

2.2. Measures

Bergen Facebook addiction scale (BFAS). The Bergen Facebook Addiction Scale (BFAS) (Andreessen, 2012) was used to measure Facebook addiction. This scale comprised 18 items, three for each of the six core features of addiction: salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse. Higher scores indicated more significant Facebook addiction. Cronbach alpha was .83.

Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES; Schaufeli& Bakker, 2003) was developed to measure work engagement and its underlying dimensions, including vigour, dedication, and absorption (Salanova *et al.*, 2001). The reliability of UWES is 0.78.

Provisions of Social Relations (PSR). The Provisions of Social Relations (Ayub, 2004) was designed to have 15 items. The family relations factor contains six items assessing family support (items 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 14), and the peer relations factor comprises nine items that address support from friends (items 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 12, 13, 15). Items 7 and 15 are negatively worded. The scale's reliability was 0.97. Scores above the median indicated more social support, and below the median indicated less social support.

2.3. Procedure

The study obtained permission for data collection from the relevant administrative authorities within representative organizations. To assess Facebook addiction, work engagement, and provisions of social relations, the researchers administered the Bergen Facebook Addiction Scale (BFAS), the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), and the Provisions of Social Relations (PSR) questionnaire. Before participation, informed consent was obtained from all participants individually. The assessments were conducted in group settings, with participants agreeing to participate voluntarily. Furthermore, all respondents were assured that their data would be treated with utmost confidentiality and privacy.

2.4. Ethical Consideration

Ethical approval to conduct the study has been taken from the IIUI research ethical committee.

3. RESULTS

We conducted empirical analyses using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS—version 25) to meet the study's objectives and test the formulated hypotheses.

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Variables	N	α	M (SD)	Min-Max	Skew	Kurt			
Work Engagement	17	.87	54.88(8.10)	0-102	.15	.02			
Face book addiction	18	.79	59.6(8.20)	18-90	.15	.06			
Family relationship	06	.89	20.33(3.98)	1-30	.03	.72			
Peer relationship	09	.86	25.02(5.10)	1-45	04	64			

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables (N=400)

Table 1 shows reasonable reliability estimates, which indicate that all the instruments are internally consistent. Results also specify that skewness and kurtosis values fall within the acceptable range, i.e., -1 to +1.

Table 2 shows that Facebook addiction negatively predicts work engagement (β = -.77, p<.05). The R^2 value indicates that Facebook addiction contributed a 25 % variance in work engagement F = 22.46 (p<.001). Results also revealed that Facebook addiction negatively predicts family relationships (β = -.79, p<.001). The R^2 value explains 29 % variance in family relationships due to Facebook addiction with F = 27.32 (p<.001).

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Predictor	Facebook Addiction							
Outcome variables	В	SE	В	t	P			
Constant	34.60	2.25		15.39	.000			
Work Engagement	.24	.25	77	.941	.03			
$R^2 = .25$								
Constant	32.73	2.15		17.22	.00			
Family relationship	.37	.29	79	.98	.00			
$R^2 = .29$								
Constant	27.39	3.12		16.29	.00			
Peer relationship	.47	.39	.73	.83	.00			
$R^2 = 31$								

Table 2. Linear Regression Analysis shows Facebook addiction as the predictor of work engagement, Family relationships, and

Peer relationship (N=400)

Moreover, Facebook addiction positively predicts peer relationships (β =.73, p<.001). The R^2 value explains 31 % variance in peer relationships accounted by Facebook addiction with F = 23.46 (p<.001).

Table 3. Mean differences among younger and older adults on Facebook addiction, work engagement, family relations, and peer relations (N=400)

	Young	Older Adults			95% CI		
	Adults						
	M(SD)	M(SD)	T	P	LL	UL	Cohen's d
Facebook	19.58(3.61)	18.99(3.91)	1.01	0.03	.57	1.77	.14
Addiction							
Work	23.99(5.60)	24.40(5.58)	.47	0.04	-	-1.33	.07
Engagement					2.16		
Family	95.01 (13.99)	98.49 (17.84)	1.37	0.01	1.53	8.48	.22
Relations							
Peer	93.74(17.33)	89.45(14.77)	1.76	0.01	1.43	7.98	.08
Relations							

df=398, LL= Lower Limit, UL= Upper Limit, CI= Confidence Interval, LL= Lower Limit.

Table 3 shows the significant differences between young and older adults in Facebook addiction, work engagement, family relationships, and peer relationships. The mean column indicates that young adults are more Facebook addicted (M=19.58, SD= 3.61), less engaged in work (M=23.99, SD=5.60), weak family relationships (M=95.01, SD=13.99), and have strong peer relationships (M=93.74, SD=17.33) than older adults.

	Male	Female			95% CI		
	M(SD)	M(SD)	t	P	LL	UL	Cohen's d
Face book	17.58(4.21)	18.29(4.91)	1.31	0.30	97	1.37	.18
Addiction							
Work	23.99(15.30)	23.40(15.53)	.67	0.74	-6.16	2.33	.06
Engagement							
Family	95.01 (13.29)	95.49 (14.84)	1.73	0.98	-1.93	6.48	.21
Relations							
Peer	87.74(16.37)	87.45(16.77)	1.83	.75	-3.43	9.39	.20
Relations		·					

Table 4. Mean differences among male and female individuals on Facebook addiction, work engagement, family relations, and peer relations (N=400)

df=398, LL= Lower Limit, UL= Upper Limit, CI= Confidence Interval, LL= Lower Limit

Table 4 shows the non-significant differences between male and female individuals on Facebook addiction, work engagement, family relationships, and peer relationships.

Table 5. Mean differences among graduate and post-graduate individuals on Facebook addiction, work engagement, family relations, and peer relations(N=400)

	Graduate	Post-			95% CI		
		Graduate					
	M(SD)	M(SD)	t	P	LL	UL	Cohen's d
Facebook	17.56(4.32)	18.10(4.71)	1.98	0.60	87	1.37	.80
Addiction							
Work	23.36(15.21)	23.60(15.33)	.89	0.78	-3.15	3.64	.70
Engagement							
Family	93.05 (13.29)	93.94 (14.04)	1.69	0.87	-2.03	7.45	.69
Relations							
Peer	88.44(14.87)	87.98(15.88)	1.90	.74	-3.75	9.63	.82
Relations							

df=398, LL= Lower Limit, UL= Upper Limit, CI= Confidence Interval.

Table 5 shows the non-significant differences between graduate and post-graduate individuals on Facebook addiction, work engagement, family relationships, and peer relationships.

4. DISCUSSION

A primary focus of this study was the use of Facebook, a social networking site in the context of Pakistan, to determine the negative impacts of Facebook users on face-to-face communication. The study also bridges the gaps by providing knowledge about social networking sites for social interaction. It answers the question by determining the use of Facebook between the different genders, how their social relationships are changed, and their job performance

and productivity. The current study also answers how the use of Facebook affects its user's education, social interaction, and work engagement.

Facebook addiction negatively predicts work engagement in adults (Table 2). Facebook addiction interferes with the performance of an individual during work timings. As individuals continuously chat, update their status, and do other things, they must pay proper attention to their work. This may lead to less work engagement. These results can be reinforced by the study done by Bargh and Vaughan (2004). They found that Facebook is distracting, so it can easily distract the user from his/her work. According to May, Gilson, and Harter (2004), employees seek fulfilment through self-expression at work. These authors believe that for employees to thrive, they should engage themselves cognitively, physically, and emotionally in their work. However, when they are not involved cognitively and physically, as when they are engaged in using Facebook, they will not complete their tasks and responsibilities on time.

Family relationships are negatively associated with Facebook addiction (Table 2). It is indicated that Facebook addiction is associated with weak family relationships. Due to vast exposure to the internet and social networking sites like Facebook, social relationships have changed. People avoid face-to-face interaction. Instead, they rely more on making conversations through Facebook. Similarly, Gjylbegaj and Abdi (2019) reported that families' excessive internet or social media engagement is the common reason for the lack of appropriate communication among family members. Noticeably, people at family gatherings spend more time on their devices than face-to-face communication.

Additionally, it was found that frequent internet use reduces one's social circle. Another study reported that extensive use of social media increases the chances of low-quality family relations. Moreover, individuals who spend more time on social networking sites have poor relationships with their parents (Sultana, 2017).

As far as peer relationships are concerned, it was found that Facebook addiction positively predicts peer relationships (Table 2). However, the main goal of using Facebook is to keep in touch with friends and family and to keep one's relationships. Besides that, Facebook is also used for insignificant conversations with close and distant friends, but it is not considered the primary form of socialization (Coyle & Vaughan, 2008). Facebook-addicted people reported less talking time spent with their families while they spent more time with their peers online (Cole, 2000). Facebook helps maintain peer relationships, but family relations get disturbed and distorted due to the heavy use of Facebook.

While comparing young and older adults, significant differences were found in Facebook addiction, work engagement, family relationships, and peer relationships (Table 3). It was found that young adults are more addicted to Facebook than older adults (Pfeil *et al.*, 2009). Young adults are free of

responsibilities and are not committed to some responsible and significant roles in the family, which is why they are more involved in activities like social networking sites. They have few responsibilities, so they have nonserious attitudes toward their work. They do not consider their job a commitment, are involved in other activities during work, and pay less attention to their work (Sotero *et al.*, 2019).

Moreover, young adults spend much less time with their family members and try to avoid meeting with relatives. They have less communication with family members, but most of the time, they remain busy using Facebook and communicating with their peers, as peers have more influence on an individual than adults (Dhir & Tsai, 2017). Older adults are more committed to their family and work. They have a sense of responsibility, so they try to focus on their responsibilities and commitments rather than leisure activities like Facebook. Their family is much more critical for them than their peers and friends. They get the required satisfaction through spending time with family and having strong family relationships (Pfeil *et al.*, 2009).

Insignificant differences were found between men and women in the use of Facebook addiction, work engagement, family relationships, and peer relationships (Table 4). The insignificant differences indicate that gender does not affect Facebook use. Men and women are equally addicted to Facebook, and its effects are similar for both genders (Khattak *et al.*, 2017). Most individuals, both men and women, agreed that they spend more time on Facebook conversation than in person, and they agreed that the extensive amount of time they spend on Facebook reduces their face-to-face communication with their families and relatives. Furthermore, their work engagement is also affected similarly (Kujath, 2011).

It was also discovered that there is a non-significant difference between graduate and post-graduate individuals on Facebook addiction, work engagement, family relationships, and peer relationships. Education is not directly associated with Facebook addiction (Jafarkarimi *et al.*, 2016). If individuals have exposure and facilities, they can get addicted to Facebook no matter how educated they are. Some illiterates can also have Facebook addiction, so education is not any criterion in determining the use of Facebook and its effects on one's social and occupational life.

5. CONCLUSION

The primary focus of this study was to examine the use of Facebook as a social networking site and whether the use of Facebook has negative effects on its user's social relationships. It also focuses on how Facebook addiction predicts work engagement. It is concluded from the results of the study that Facebook addiction is more common in young adults, and it negatively predicts work engagement and family relationships, but peer relationships are enhanced

through it. In older adults, Facebook addiction is not very common. As far as gender and qualification are concerned, no differences are found in Facebook addiction and its association with social relations and work engagement.

6. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In the light of this study, possible limitations should be considered.

- 1. Data was collected only from educated working people in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, so we cannot generalize the results to the whole population. Hence, further research with a larger and more demographically diverse sample would strengthen the study's findings.
- Second, considering the study's results, it is suggested that
 future studies can be proposed on other variables, such as social
 site usage other than Facebook, and demographics, such as
 marital status and monthly income, can be investigated along
 with work engagement and social relationships.
- 3. The respondents' attitude towards research was quite nonserious. That could be one reason that some results were not desirable.

7. IMPLICATIONS

The future implications of a study are multifaceted and can impact various aspects of organizational management and employee well-being.

- 1. Policy Development: Organizations may use the findings to develop policies and guidelines regarding the appropriate use of social media platforms like Facebook during work hours.
- 2. Employee Training and Development: Employers can implement training programs to raise awareness about the potential risks of excessive Facebook use and provide employees with strategies to manage their online behaviour effectively.
- 3. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs): Organizations may consider integrating support services, such as counselling and mental health resources, into their employee assistance programs to address issues related to social media addiction and its impact on 3work engagement and social relationships. Providing employees access to professional support can help them manage stress, improve coping mechanisms, and maintain healthy work habits.
- **4. Technology Integration:** Companies may explore integrating technology solutions, such as productivity tools or software applications, that help employees manage their digital habits and focus

on work-related tasks while minimizing distractions from social media platforms.

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