

EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIP QUALITY: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract

The emergence and popularity of social media may lead to changes in family communication and have many impacts on family relationships. The purpose of this paper is to systematically review the literature on the effects of social media use on family relationship quality. This paper searched five databases for English-written papers published in academic journals between 2012 and 2022. A total of 44 papers were included. The review results showed that social media had significant benefits for family relationships but also exacerbated some of the challenges in family life. Social media had different impacts on different types of family relationships, namely marital relationships, intergenerational relationships, and the family as a whole. Specifically, the use of social media has more negative effects on marital relationships but more positive effects on intergenerational relationships. In addition, different types of social media have different effects on family relationship quality. Compared to network-oriented public social media, integrated and closed social media is more conducive to enhancing family relationship quality.

Keywords: Systematic Review, Social Media, Family Relationship Quality, Family Communication

Kesan Penggunaan Media Sosial terhadap Kualiti Perhubungan Keluarga: Tinjauan Sistematik

Abstrak

Kemunculan dan populariti media sosial boleh membawa kepada perubahan dalam komunikasi keluarga dan mempunyai banyak kesan kepada hubungan keluarga. Tujuan kertas kerja ini adalah untuk mengkaji secara sistematik literatur tentang kesan penggunaan media sosial terhadap kualiti hubungan keluarga. Kertas kerja ini mencari lima pangkalan data untuk kertas bertulis bahasa Inggeris yang diterbitkan dalam jurnal akademik antara 2012 dan 2022. Sebanyak 44 kertas telah disertakan. Hasil semakan menunjukkan bahawa media sosial mempunyai manfaat yang signifikan untuk hubungan keluarga tetapi juga memburukkan lagi beberapa cabaran dalam kehidupan keluarga. Media sosial memberi impak yang berbeza terhadap pelbagai jenis hubungan kekeluargaan, iaitu hubungan suami isteri, hubungan antara generasi, dan keluarga secara keseluruhan. Secara khusus, penggunaan media sosial lebih banyak memberi kesan negatif terhadap hubungan suami isteri tetapi lebih banyak kesan positif terhadap hubungan antara generasi. Selain itu, pelbagai jenis media sosial mempunyai kesan yang berbeza terhadap kualiti perhubungan keluarga. Berbanding dengan media sosial awam yang berorientasikan rangkaian, media sosial bersepadu dan tertutup lebih kondusif untuk meningkatkan kualiti hubungan kekeluargaan.

Kata Kunci: *Kajian Sistematik, Media Sosial, Kualiti Perhubungan Keluarga, Komunikasi Keluarga*

Introduction

With the progress of the times, the penetration rate of mobile phones in the world has greatly increased, and they have penetrated into all aspects of people's lives (Yang, Ryu, & Choi, 2019). There is no doubt that social media has become increasingly popular over time because of that. In research, as a general term, social media covers a wide range of online platforms, such as blogs, video sharing, photo sharing, forums, social gaming, and virtual worlds (Aichner & Jacob, 2015). It has the characteristics of participation, openness, timely communication, communitization, and connectivity. Accessing information, entertainment, relaxation, and resources quickly and easily, enables individuals to find emotional resonance with family members and friends in their daily

interactions. Communication within the family has undoubtedly been greatly improved by the emergence of social media (Abel, Machin, & Brownlow, 2021; Marlowe, Bartley, & Collins, 2017), but its accompanying negative effects cannot be underestimated (Tadpatrikar, Sharma, & Viswanath, 2021). For instance, due to the inappropriate expression of Facebook messages, family members are more likely to have misunderstandings (Lopez & Cuarteros, 2020), and romantic relationships can be negatively affected by social networking sites, and this may lead to infidelity among younger members (Abbasi, 2019).

According to the interpersonal interaction between family members, family relationships can be classified into several types, such as husband-wife relationships, parent-child relationships, sibling relationships, and so on. Family relationship quality includes family emotion (eg, relationship satisfaction and intimacy), family behavior (eg, loyalty and divorce), and family function (eg, time spent together and the number of interactions) (Tammisalo & Rotkirch, 2022). It is important to understand that every relationship has its own dynamics and attachment patterns, as well as its own sources of conflict. As a result, the effects of social media use on family relationships may differ according to the type of relationship (Tammisalo & Rotkirch, 2022). For example, in romantic relationships, social media use can facilitate a number of benefits in romantic relationships, including satisfaction and affection (Arikewuyo, Efe-Özad, Dambo, Abdulbaqi, & Arikewuyo, 2021), but in parent-child relationships, parents may be able to be alerted to previously unknown risk behaviors that their children are engaging in, such as alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use, by actively monitoring the material that their child posts on his or her Facebook account (Abar, Farnett, Mendola, Koban, & Sarra, 2018).

This systematic review seeks to investigate the most recent evidence on the effects of social media use on family relationship quality. So, this study compiles and analyses studies of the effects of social media use on family relationships published between 2012 and 2022 to answer the main research question: What are the positive and negative effects of social media use on family relationships?

Methodology

Search Strategy

In order to conduct this review, the PRISMA guidelines were followed (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, Altman, & The PRISMA Group, 2009). This study searched for relevant research published between January 1, 2012, and December 31, 2022, in databases including Taylor & Francis Online, Scopus, Wiley Online Library, Web of Science and SAGE journals on September 22, 2023. These databases are globally renowned and authoritative academic journal publishing platforms. The following restrictions applied to all databases:

- (1) The publication year is limited to “January 1, 2012, to December 31, 2022”.
- (2) The language of publication is limited to English.

The search query was limited to abstracts. The search terms were: “Family” OR “Intergeneration*” OR “Sibling*” OR “Parent-child” OR “Parental” OR “Grandparent*” OR “Marital” OR “Parent-infant” OR “Couple” OR “Partner” OR “Parent-adolescent” AND “Mobile media” OR “Social media” OR “Social networking” OR “Instagram” OR “TikTok” OR “Twitter” OR “Facebook” OR “Reddit” OR “Digg” AND “relationship*”.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

This study included studies based on the following criteria: (1) Papers of any methodology are to be included; (2) Available as full-text;

(3) Published in the period between 2012 and 2022; (4) Were written in English; (5) Related to the research questions; (6) Published in selected digital databases.

This study excluded studies based on the following criteria: (1) Studies involving literature reviews, dissertation theses, congress abstracts and the grey literature; (2) Irrelevant to the research questions; (3) Duplicate studies.

Data Extraction

Reference management software Zotero was used to compile papers from database searches. The search in all databases searched included 2791 articles. After removing 863 duplicate studies and 553 non-journal articles, we reviewed the titles and abstracts of all found articles and

excluded 1127, leaving 248 articles. Among them, 225 articles could be searched in full text. According to the exclusion criteria, a total of 186 articles were further excluded. In addition, 5 articles meeting the criteria were selected from the reference list of the selected articles. Figure 1 describes the selection process and reasons for exclusion. In the end, 44 studies were reviewed in total.

A systematic process was used in order to extract and tabulate the key information relevant to the research question so that a comparative and synthesis of studies could be carried out. These data included authors, publication year, country of origin, methods, sample size, age of participants, medium of technology and results. The results section summarized the key conclusions and findings. A summary of the extracted information can be found in Appendix. An individual researcher completed the data extraction process, and another individual researcher reviewed the studies to be sure that they met the criteria that were used to exclude and include them.

Quality Assessment

All identified articles were assessed independently by two researchers using the “Qual-Syst” tool (Kmet, Lee, & Cook, 2004). There are two checklists included in this tool. The first checklist is for quantitative studies and the second one is for qualitative studies. These checklists were used to determine the quality of selected quantitative and qualitative studies. At the same time, combining both checklists was used to determine the quality of selected mixed-methods studies. Taking into account the quality scores, the articles were classified into three categories: strong quality ($\geq .75$), moderate quality (between .55 and .75), and weak quality ($\leq .55$) (Landais et al., 2020).

A consensus was reached through discussion when there were disagreements regarding the quality category. According to the “Qual-Syst” tool, the two independent researchers determined whether an article was included or excluded based on the means of their scores. In accordance with the rating system, only articles rated as moderate and strong were included. We evaluated 27 studies as “strong quality” and 17 studies as “moderate quality”. There was no article that had been excluded from the review process because they were all of strong or moderate quality.

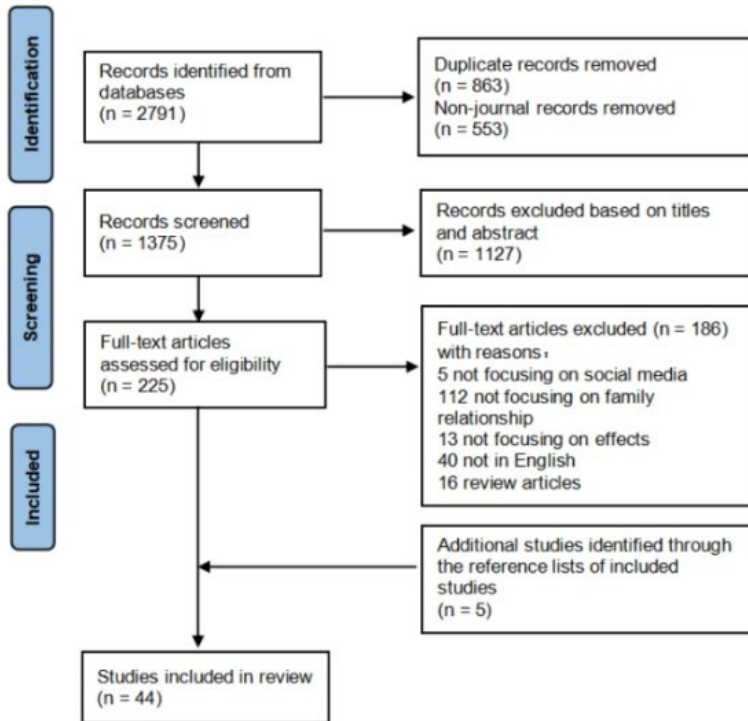


Figure 1: Flow Chart of the Article Selection Process

Characteristics of the Included Articles

This systematic review included 44 articles that were published between 2012 and 2022. The publication year of the included articles is shown in Figure 2, and the most articles were published in 2021, with a total of 10 articles. Out of the 44 selected articles, 14 were qualitative studies, 23 were quantitative studies, and 7 were mixed methods studies. In design, 40 studies were cross-sectional and only 4 were longitudinal. 25 studies covered exposure to social media in general, while 19 studies focused specifically on Facebook, WhatsApp, Skype, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, TikTok, Pinterest, Kuaishou, Sina Weibo, LINE, LinkedIn and others. 12 studies were conducted in Asia, 14 in the Americas, 5 in Europe, 4 in Africa, and 5 in Oceania. 4 studies were intercontinental. Among them, one was from Australia and Japan, one was from

Bangladesh and US, one was from Canada and UK, and one was from Nigeria and Turkey. Three types of family contexts were examined in these studies: marital relationships (14), intergenerational relationships (13), and the family as a whole (17).

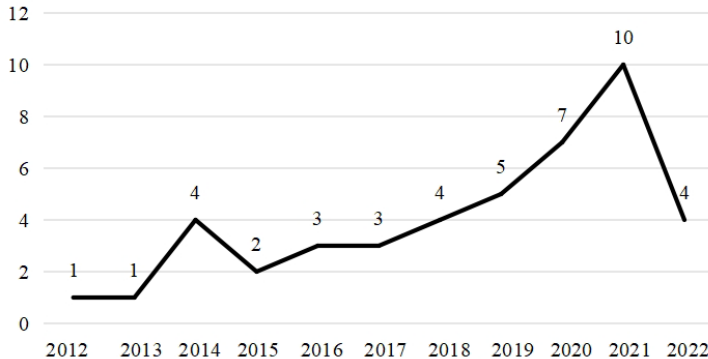


Figure 2: Publication Year of the Included Articles

Results

Social Media Use and Marital Relationships

There was a total of 14 papers investigating the impact of social media use on marital relationships. Some of these studies concerned the use of social media (6/14) with the rest being single studies of Facebook use (5/14), Twitter use (1/14), WhatsApp use (1/14) and MSN use (1/14). Eight studies employed a study design that used subjective ratings for both independent and dependent variables. Seven studies found that social media had both positive and negative effects on marital relationships, while the other seven studies mainly discussed the negative effects of social media on marital relationships.

Negative outcomes of social media use included infidelity (Arikewuyo et al., 2021; Clayton, 2014; Nelson & Salawu, 2017; Rea, Behnke, Huff, & Allen, 2015; Schneider, Weiss, & Samenow, 2012; Sharifinia, Nejati, Bayazi, & Motamedi, 2019), romantic jealousy (Arikewuyo et al., 2021; Iqbal & Jami, 2019; Nongpong & Charoensukmongkol, 2016), partner surveillance behavior (Arikewuyo et al., 2021; Iqbal & Jami, 2019), terminating or contemplating terminating the relationship (Akanle, Nwanagu, & Akanle, 2021; Clayton, 2014; Sharifinia et al., 2019; Valenzuela, Halpern, & Katz, 2014), romantic dissatisfaction (Arikewuyo

et al., 2021; Iqbal & Jami, 2019; Valenzuela et al., 2014), misinformation, network jam and insecurity between partners (Akanle et al., 2021), distraction of partner's attention (Vaterlaus, Stinson, & McEwen, 2020), decreased happiness (Valenzuela et al., 2014) and marital commitment (Sharifinia et al., 2019).

The main reasons for the negative effects of the use of social media on marital relationships are as follows. Firstly, married individuals monitored and envied their partner's social media interactions with others. Due to the low self-esteem and high levels of self-disclosure on social media (Nelson & Salawu, 2017), spouses were more likely to distrust their partners and to be concerned that their partners may cheat when using social media (Akanle et al., 2021; Nelson & Salawu, 2017). This concern reinforced their ability to monitor their partners' activities on social media. When they discovered that their partners were interacting with online friends or strangers, they felt jealous (Iqbal & Jami, 2019; Nongpong & Charoensukmongkol, 2016; Valenzuela et al., 2014). These situations were more common on the wife's side (Iqbal & Jami, 2019). Secondly, married individuals received emotional satisfaction from opposite-sex netizens and experienced a decrease in intimacy with their partners (Sharifinia et al., 2019). Social media could connect people with friends, family, and strangers (Valenzuela et al., 2014). When married individuals spent a lot of time sharing information and self-disclosure on social media, they reduced the frequency of important physical visits of spouses and this affected the growth and development of marital relationships (Akanle et al., 2021; Arikewuyo et al., 2021; Vaterlaus et al., 2020). When they felt unhappy in their marriage or had conflicts with their partner, they were more eager to receive emotional support from their opposite-sex friends on social media, trying to find the psychological well-being that usually came from social capital bonds (Nelson & Salawu, 2017; Valenzuela et al., 2014). Intimate relationships were basically built on emotional bonds and attachments. Frequent interaction with opposite-sex netizens also could generate attraction (Arikewuyo et al., 2021; Oni-Buraimoh & Adeyelu-Macaulay, 2018). It was inevitable that emotional infidelity on social media networks would lead to sexual infidelity in the offline world (Arikewuyo et al., 2021; Nelson & Salawu, 2017).

In addition to the two reasons mentioned above, disturbing family order and balance (Sharifinia et al., 2019), compulsive use (Valenzuela et al., 2014), reduced searching costs for extra-marital affairs (Valenzuela et al., 2014), dependence on social media (Nelson & Salawu, 2017; Whiteside, Aleti, Pallant, & Zeleznikow, 2018), misinformation and social

comparison (Akanle et al., 2021) were also the reasons why social media had a negative impact on marital relationships. Therefore, it is necessary for couples to formally and informally regulate the use of media and technology in their marriage (Vaterlaus et al., 2020).

However, if used properly, social media has also been shown to promote marital satisfaction (Arikewuyo et al., 2021), especially for distant spouses (Akanle et al., 2021). Social media were cheap, handy, flexible and easy to use (Akanle et al., 2021; Vaterlaus & Tulane, 2019). Couples can use it for full-day communication (Vaterlaus et al., 2020). Especially, sexting between spouses could enhance displays of affection significantly (Oni-Buraimoh & Adeyelure-Macaulay, 2018).

Due to the flexibility of social media platforms, distant couples could maintain a high degree of intimacy and communication (Vaterlaus & Tulane, 2019). Using social media for communication could have a positive impact on marital relationships (Rea et al., 2015).

In addition, Whiteside et al. classified Facebook use into four types and proposed that relationship satisfaction varies depending on the type of Facebook usage while controlling household income, rather than just the frequency and duration of Facebook use, as previously emphasized in research (Whiteside et al., 2018).

Social Media Use and Intergenerational Relationships

There was a total of 13 papers investigating the impact of social media use on intergenerational relationships. 12 studies examined the impact of social media on intergenerational relationships by cross-sectional methods. Only one study used longitudinal study methods. That article explored whether the association between social network use and relationship quality between college students and their parents has changed (Ramsey, Gentzler, Morey, Oberhauser, & Westerman, 2013). Researchers surveyed college students online in 2009 and 2011 for comparison. 6 studies focused on the use of social media by parents and children, while the other 7 studies focused on the use of social media by grandparents. 2 studies used qualitative methods, 3 studies used mixed methods, 8 studies used quantitative methods. Regarding the impact of social media use on intergenerational relationships, 9 studies reported a positive outcome, and 3 studies found a negative. Only one study found that the daily use of digital technology by teenagers did not affect offline interaction between parents and teenagers (Jensen, George, Russell, Lippold, & Odgers, 2021).

According to the findings of these studies, the negative impact of social media on intergenerational relationships is mainly due to excessive use and even addiction to social media (Mu, Jiang, Xu, & Chen, 2022; Sabha, 2022; Sampasa-Kanyinga, Goldfield, Kingsbury, Clayborne, & Colman, 2020). The negative impact of social media use on parent-child relationships differed between genders but did not differ by age (Sampasa-Kanyinga et al., 2020). Parents, especially mothers, are addicted to social media, which can lead to children being ignored and social separation between parents and children (Sabha, 2022). However, using social media regularly (two hours or less a day) did not have a significant correlation with the relationship between parents and their children (Sampasa-Kanyinga et al., 2020).

Most studies have shown that social media use can strengthen intergenerational relationships. Children can gain higher relationship satisfaction, intimacy, support and instrumental assistance by communicating with their parents through social media (Coyne, Padilla-Walker, Day, Harper, & Stockdale, 2014; Ramsey et al., 2013). Seven articles focusing on grandparents' use of social media all indicated that the positive impact of social media use on grandparents' relationships with their children, grandchildren and other family members. Loneliness and social neglect are two of the most common problems faced by the elderly (Adzmi, Ramly, Nazri, Farid, & Rahman, 2021; Akanle, Yusuf, Ola-Lawson, & Akanle, 2018). Social media allowed grandparents to communicate with distant children and grandchildren, especially when they were separated by a large geographical distance (Freeman et al., 2020; Hwang, Fu, Brown, & Silverstein, 2022). This could not only alleviate the loneliness of grandparents, but also enhance their intimacy with their children and grandchildren (Adzmi et al., 2021; Akanle et al., 2018; Thomas, 2020). Social media has become the digital gathering place for families (Freeman et al., 2020). In addition, children or grandchildren taught grandparents how to use social media, and grandparents were eager to learn more and even keep up with the latest technologies (Adzmi et al., 2021; Freeman et al., 2020). Social media was used by grandparents to establish connections and communicate with their younger family members, as well as to learn about and engage in activities with their young children actively (Freeman et al., 2020; Hashimi, 2021). They were also able to discuss a variety of topics with the younger generation, including amusement, politics, as well as religious advice (Adzmi et al., 2021; Gantumur et al., 2020).

Social Media Use and the Family as a Whole

There was a total of 17 papers investigating the impact of social media use in the context of family as a whole. 7 studies used quantitative methods; 9 studies used qualitative methods; 1 study used mixed methods. A total of 14 studies examined social media use in the family context by cross-sectional methods. Only three studies used longitudinal study methods. One study involved 50 interviews, monthly informal discussions and 472 social media diaries and was conducted online over 12 months. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of social media on the connection between foreign refugees living in New Zealand and their family members overseas (Marlowe & Bruns, 2021). Another one included a four-month interval between the two surveys (Stevic, Schmuck, Karsay, & Matthes, 2021). This article investigated the impact of social media use on face-to-face communication and family relationship quality in Germany. The third paper aimed to investigate how Timorese workers under the Australian Seasonal Workers Program use social media to maintain long-distance family relationships (Wu, 2021). Observations and semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants at regular intervals over the three-year investigation period.

Regarding social media use, 2 studies reported a positive outcome, 2 found a negative outcome and 11 studies indicated both positive and negative outcomes. Two studies found no association between social media use and family relationship quality (Ledbetter, Taylor, & Mazer, 2016; Stevic et al., 2021). Negative outcomes of social media use included causing misunderstandings (Lopez & Cuarteros, 2020), reducing family satisfaction (Iovu, Runcan, Runcan, & Andrioni, 2020), reducing the frequency and quality of face-to-face communication (Hänninen, Taipale, & Korhonen, 2021; Marlowe & Bruns, 2021; Sharaievska & Stodolska, 2017), causing the tension in family relationships (Anwar, Ahmed, Hashem, & Mahmud, 2015), and creating barriers between families and young people (Ali, 2016).

Positive outcomes of social media use mainly included maintaining contact with family members (Joo & Teng, 2017; Kneidinger, 2014; Sharaievska & Stodolska, 2017), enhancing family cohesion (Hänninen et al., 2021; Johnson & Francis, 2022; Sharaievska & Stodolska, 2017), establishing enjoyable family leisure (Sharaievska & Stodolska, 2017), promoting family democracy (Hänninen et al., 2021), refamilisation (Hänninen et al., 2021), enabling the elderly to keep up with current

trends and enhancing the power of young people in families (Hänninen et al., 2021).

Researchers paid much attention to the use of social media in long-distance families. 7 articles studied this aspect. Because the family environment, family structure, and daily life of long-distance families are different from other families. The emergence of social media has brought many conveniences to family communication among long-distance families. Firstly, social media has opened pathways to reconnect and even form new relationships with family members (Marlowe & Bruns, 2021), allowed long-distance families around the world to communicate easily (Ali, 2016), maintained family bonds (Hillyer, 2021; Wu, 2021) and promoted a sense of long-distance cooperation (Sinanan, Hjorth, Ohashi, & Kato, 2018). In addition, social media reaffirms ideals of familyhood and contributes to expressing care and acknowledgment (Sinanan et al., 2018). Then, social media helps to strengthen a sense of commonality (Sinanan et al., 2018), family, belonging, and purpose (Marlowe & Bruns, 2021) in long-distance families, restore and maintain family unity (Alinejad, 2019; Hänninen et al., 2021), create a sense of (transnational) home, and solve loneliness and cultural transmission problems (Marlowe & Bruns, 2021). Finally, social media fundamentally changes how the family works (Marlowe & Bruns, 2021).

Types of Social Media and Family Relationships

There are 19 papers conducted by researchers about specific social media platforms. Among them, there are 14 studies about Facebook. The research results of 7 studies showed that it had both positive and negative effects on family relationship quality, 6 studies showed a negative effect, and only 1 study showed a positive effect. There are five studies about WhatsApp. The research results of 4 studies showed that it had both positive and negative effects on family relationship quality, and 1 study showed a positive effect. There are three studies about Instagram. The research results of 2 studies showed that it had both positive and negative effects on family relationship quality, and 1 study showed a negative effect.

There are two studies about Skype, all showing that it had both positive and negative effects on family relationship quality. There are two studies about Twitter and two studies about short-form videos, all showing negative effects. Through analysis, it can be concluded that different social media platforms have different effects on family relationship quality.

Discussion

This analysis identified that the effects of social media use varied considerably across studies, often due to family relationship types and social media types.

Compared with other family relationships, social media use seems to negatively affect marital relationships more. All studies examining the impact of social media use on marital relationships found negative results. Additionally, a significant number of negative outcomes were associated with romantic relationship-specific stressors like infidelity, jealousy, and relationship dissolution. The findings of this study are similar to those of previous studies that have also identified these stressors most obviously in relation to social media (Mancini, Imperato, & Sibilla, 2019; Rus & Tiemensma, 2017; Tammisalo & Rotkirch, 2022). In these reviews, it was found that social media appeared to present unique challenges to romantic relationships because of its easy accessibility to real or imagined romantic alternatives (Clayton, 2014; Daspe, Vaillancourt-Morel, Lussier, & Sabourin, 2018; Liu & Zheng, 2019). Social media, nevertheless, also had some positive benefits, such as recognizing the relationship publicly, facilitating positive communication with partners and strengthening overlapping networks. Our review also supported these positive aspects.

As pointed out by previous studies, there may be a gender-based difference in the effects of social media on marital relationships (Iqbal & Jami, 2019). It was more common for women to conduct online surveillance and to experience Facebook-related jealousy than it was for men. In contrast, men reported being more satisfied with their marriage and more trusting. But whether this applies to most families is still questionable. Because their research was conducted in a patriarchal society like Pakistan. Men have a privileged status within society, leading them to be more independent. In marriage relationships, men hold a more dominant position. As a result of women being religiously as well as financially dependent on their husbands, this creates a psychological dependency that perpetuates this social hierarchy. In Islam, men are allowed to practice polygamy, which causes women to worry about the stability of their marriages. As a result, they feel it is extremely necessary to monitor their husband's Facebook and keep an eye on what he posts (Helsper & Whitty, 2010). Based on this, this study suggests that couples should communicate honestly and inform each other of their intentions in social media activities in a timely manner. When married users believe that their spouse's social media activities are predictable, depend on

their relationship, and have faith over each other's intentions, they will reduce their insecurity and trust their spouse. Their marital relationship will be strengthened. In addition, the impact of social media on marital relationships in different social backgrounds and the differentiated impact of social media on marital relationships from a gender perspective should be explored in the future. This will help provide more targeted advice for married users on social media use and help them use social media without endangering their marital relationships.

Social media use seems to have a greater positive effect on intergenerational relationships than on other types of family relationships. Researchers were more concerned about the effects of social media use by grandparents in families. On the one hand, grandparents are enthusiastic about using new technologies in order to keep in contact and maintain family bonds with their children and grandchildren who do not live with them. On the other hand, younger family members introduce and teach their grandparents how to use new technologies and help them adapt to social media more quickly. These all contribute to promoting intergenerational communication in families and improving intergenerational relationships.

Meanwhile, different social media platforms have different effects on family relationship quality. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and short-form video, these network-oriented public digital spheres (Hillyer, 2021; Sinanan, 2019), have mostly negative impacts on family relationship quality. In marital relationships, users using these social media can increase the likelihood of jealousy, infidelity, and even divorce. In marital relationships, users' use of these social media can increase the likelihood of jealousy, infidelity, and even divorce. In one fifth of divorces, Facebook is the reason for divorce (Bigman, 2011). Because the original goal of Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter is to help users find people with common interests and establish romantic relationships with strangers (Okorie, Ekeanyanwu & Obanua, 2010). Users can self-disclose on the platform (Nelson & Salawu, 2017), share and communicate with strangers, especially the opposite sex (Docan-Morgan & Docan, 2007), thus distracting their attention from their families, especially their partners, and providing convenience for extramarital affairs (Valenzuela et al., 2014). Two studies on short-form video both showed its negative impact on intergenerational relationships. This is mainly because when users are addicted to watching, shooting or posting short videos, they ignore their families and reduce parent-child interaction time (Mu et al., 2022; Sabha, 2022). Based on this, this study suggests that users need to be aware of this problem and take the

initiative to reduce the time spent on short-form video. They should spend more time with family members and enhance interaction and communication among family members. At the same time, smartphones have the function of setting screen time and limiting application access. This can reasonably limit the time users spend on mobile phones and short-form video, and effectively avoid ignoring family members due to short-form video.

However, WhatsApp, a social media characterized by intimate and closed group conversations (Sinanan, 2019; Vincent & Haddon, 2017; Wojahn, Oliveira, & Domingues, 2017), has mostly a positive impact on family relationship quality. Because it provides users with a more private space, it seems more suitable for expressing or hiding emotions, more suitable for having or avoiding arguments, and more suitable for communications involving a few or many people (Hillyer, 2021). It enhances the user's sense of connection and intimacy with a specific person (Karapanos, Teixeira, & Gouveia, 2016). For example, couples sending sexual messages and images via WhatsApp is conducive to building a better (Oni-Buraimoh & Adeyure-Macaulay, 2018), and family members can communicate frequently in the family WhatsApp group, strengthening family members' relationships (Adzmi et al., 2021).

In addition, for users from different cultural backgrounds, various networking actions may have different results on family relationship quality. For example, Brazilians prefer voice communication with their families because they believe that voice is more immediate and convenient, and the tone can convey richer emotions than text, allowing them to feel a sense of real-time connection with their families. But Japanese people prefer text communication, using stickers and emojis. They believe that sending voice messages directly is not in line with Japanese etiquette, and text communication is more personal and intimate (Hillyer, 2021). Therefore, future research should focus on the cultural background and reveal how cultural factors affect the effects of social media use on family relationship quality. A clearer description of the research background should be provided to readers. This can help readers understand the social and cultural environment of the research and assist readers in gaining a deeper understanding of the root causes of the research phenomenon.

Conclusions

Overall, social media has significant benefits for family relationships. For example, it provided more communication opportunities, helped families feel more connected, enhanced family cohesion and intimacy, enabled older people to participate more in family communication, and had a positive impact on the democratization of the family. However, social media has also exacerbated some of the challenges in family life. For example, it increased the possibility of infidelity, jealousy and even divorce in marriage, reduced the frequency and quality of face-to-face communication, caused misunderstanding and reduced family satisfaction. Meanwhile, different social media platforms have different impacts on family relationship quality. Compared to network-oriented public social media, integrated and closed social media is more conducive to enhancing family relationship quality. Based on these findings, this study suggests that couples should communicate honestly and inform each other of their intentions in social media activities in a timely manner to increase mutual trust. Users should reduce their time on short-form video and spend more time with their families to avoid neglecting family members due to addiction to social media. Future research can explore the impact of social media use on family relationship quality in different social and cultural backgrounds, as well as the differentiated effects of social media on marital relationships from a gender perspective.

Author's Declaration

This article has not been published previously, not under consideration for publication elsewhere. This publication has approved by all authors for publication and not be published elsewhere printed or electronically in the same form or in any other language without the written consent of the copyright-holder, which is Forum Komunikasi.

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Appendix: Details of included articles

No.	Author, Year	Method	Sample size	Country	Age range	Medium of technology	Results	Qualit y rating
1	Adzmi et al., 2021	Qualitative (Interviews), CR	15	Malaysia	20-35	WhatsApp	The WhatsApp group can help family members to maintain the connection.	S
2	Akanle et al., 2018	Mixed (Survey, Interviews), CR	200 questionnaires, 20 in-depth interviews	Nigeria	41-60	N	Social media can intensify intimacy between grandparents and their children.	S
3	Akanle et al., 2021	Mixed (Survey, Interviews), CR	372 questionnaires, 20 couples in- depth interviews	South Africa, Nigeria	Above 18	N	Social media facilitates communication and intimacy between long-distance couples and maintain marriages. But misinformation, marital breakdown, internet congestion and insecurity caused by social media can threaten marriages.	S
4	Ali, 2016	Quantitative (Survey), CR	175	Pakistan	20-26	N	Social media helps transnational families stay connected. Using social media excessively can have a negative impact on family	S

							relationships.	
5	Alinejad, 2019	Qualitative (Interviews), CR	19	The Netherlands	20-40	N	Social media can generate and transmit intimate emotions, nevertheless, it can distract people's attention from intimate relationships.	S
6	Anwar et al., 2015	Mixed (Survey, Interviews), CR	15 interviews, 106 questionnaires	Bangladesh, USA	16-65	N	Imbalanced social network use causes tension in family relationships.	M
7	Arikewuyo et al., 2021	Qualitative (Interviews), CR	25	Nigeria, Turkey	28-52	N	Social media can enhance satisfaction, affection, jealousy, monitoring of romantic partners, infidelity, and distraction within marital relationships.	S
8	Clayton, 2014	Quantitative (Survey), CR	581	USA	18-67	Twitter	Active Twitter use can lead to more Twitter-related conflicts between romantic partners, which can lead to infidelity, breakups, and divorce.	S
9	Coyne et al., 2014	Quantitative (Survey), CR	491 families	USA	12-17	N	The use of social networks will strengthen parent-child relationships.	S

10	Freeman et al., 2020	Mixed (Survey, Focus group interview), CR	37	Canada, UK	67-89	N	Social media can strengthen intergenerational communication.	S
11	Gantumur et al., 2020	Quantitative (Survey), CR	59 grandparents, 59 grandchildren	Mongolia	18-30 and above 60	Facebook	Social media can maintain and enhance the quality of the grandparent-grandchild relationship.	M
12	Hänninen et al., 2021	Qualitative (Extended group interview), CR	133	Finland	20-38	N	Social media can reinforce family solidarity between distant family members but reduce the frequency and quality of traditional social interaction between family members.	S
13	Hashimi, 2021	Mixed (Action-based research and an intergenerational approach, Survey), CR	144	Bahrain	55-80	N	Digital media use benefits maintaining and strengthening family relationships.	M
14	Hillyer, 2021	Qualitative (Interviews), CR	20	USA	N	WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Line, Skype, Instagram	ICT platforms can help alleviate family separation anxiety and improve the quality of communication among transnational family members, but some	M

						and others	emotional needs of family members cannot be met under environmental barriers.	
15	Hwang et al., 2022	Quantitative (Survey), CR	519	USA	M=69	N	Digital communication enables older and younger generations to stay connected during the COVID-19 pandemic as an alternative to face-to-face visits.	S
16	Iovu et al., 2020	Quantitative (Survey), CR	708	Romania	13-35	Facebook	Facebook engagement and family satisfaction are negatively correlated.	S
17	Iqbal and Jami, 2019	Quantitative (Survey), CR	302	Pakistan	19-52	Facebook	Facebook use intensity negatively effects marital satisfaction.	M
18	Jensen et al., 2021	Quantitative (Survey), CR	Q1: 2104, Q2, Q3: 388	USA	9-15	N	Adolescents' daily use of digital technology is not associated with positive parent-teen offline interactions.	S
19	Johnson and Francis, 2022	Qualitative (Interviews), CR	20	Australia	13-17	N	The participants recognised the impact of digital device use on the family and valued device-free time.	S

20	Joo and Teng, 2017	Quantitative (Survey), CR	89	Malaysia	18-34	Facebook	On the one hand, FB promotes interpersonal relationships between friends and family, and on the other hand, it also has a negative impact.	M
21	Kneidinger, 2014	Quantitative (Survey), CR	987	Germany	12-73	Facebook	By using SNS, only a small proportion of the 25-year-olds and younger can strengthen connections with family members, while the 45-year-olds and older can improve intergenerational relationships more frequently.	S
22	Ledbetter et al., 2016	Quantitative (Survey), CR	411	USA	18-35	N	Media use is not related to relationship intimacy when media enjoyment is low.	M
23	Lopez and Cuarteros, 2020	Quantitative (Survey), CR	120	Philippines	N	Facebook,	Facebook can facilitate family communication and alleviate conflicts in the family, but cause misunderstandings.	S
24	Marlowe and Bruns, 2021	Qualitative (Digital ethnography), L	15	New Zealand	N	N	Social media provides transnational families with a sense of family, belonging and purpose, but presents significant challenges for	M

							local families.	
25	Mu et al., 2022	Quantitative (Survey), CR	242	China	under 18	TikTok, Kuaishou, Sina Weibo	SFV addiction negatively and significantly affects the quality of parent-child relationships.	M
26	Nelson and Salawu, 2017	Quantitative (Survey), CR	250	South Africa, Nigeria	23-50	Facebook	Facebook usage and emotional infidelity awareness levels are positively correlated. The degree of self-disclosure towards the opposite sex is positively correlated with Facebook emotional infidelity.	M
27	Nongpong and Charoensukmongkol, 2016	Quantitative (Survey), CR	256	Thailand	M=36	Facebook	Partner's social media use is positively associated with loneliness, lack of affection, and jealousy experienced by the respondents.	S
28	Oni-Buraimoh and Adeyelu-Macaulay, 2018	Mixed (Survey, Interviews), CR	20	Nigeria	N	WhatsApp	Sexting between spouses can help establish better relationships, but if it is done with others, it may lead to intimate relationships outside of marriage.	S
29	Ramsey et	Quantitative	216	USA	18-22	N	Students who had more frequent telephone	S

	al., 2013	(Survey), L						communication with their parents reported higher relationship satisfaction, intimacy, support, and instrumental assistance.	
30	Rea et al., 2015	Qualitative (Interviews), CR	10	USA	24-34	N		Military couples can retain their relationship through social media. Infidelity is related to social media.	S
31	Sabha, 2022	Quantitative (Survey), CR	284 parents	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	25-40		Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Pinterest, LinkedIn	Saudi parents joining the internet has a negative impact on parent-child relationships and the quality of interaction.	M
32	Sampasa-Kanyinga et al., 2020	Quantitative (Survey), CR	9732	Canada	11-20	N		Regular social media use (two hours or less) and parent-child relationships are not significantly correlated. But excessive use of social media is associated with poor relationships between parents and children.	M
33	Schneider et al., 2012	Quantitative (Survey), CR	34	USA	M=44.3	N		Cybersex infidelity has a negative impact on spouses'	S

							and partners' relationships.	
34	Sharaievska and Stodolska, 2017	Qualitative (Interviews), CR	22	USA	N	N	Families can enjoy leisure time together, keep in touch with each other and foster a sense of belonging by using SNS. Nevertheless, using SNS may also lead to decreased family time, reduce attention during face-to-face interactions and cause negative comparisons and concerns regarding youth social development.	S
35	Sharifinia et al., 2019	Quantitative (Survey), CR	100	Iran	N	MSN	The connection between MSN and MC is negative. The connection between MSN and EA is positive.	S
36	Sinanan et al., 2018	Qualitative (Interviews), CR	27	Australia , Japan	N	N	Social media reaffirms ideals of familyhood and contributes to expressing care and acknowledgment and plays a key role in maintaining transnational family relationships through displays of ideal familyhood.	M
37	Sinanan, 2019	Qualitative (Observation),	17	Australia	23-54	Facebook, WhatsApp, Skype,	Digital media can have a positive impact on family relationships, but it can also	M

		CR				Instagram	create negative feelings of forced communication.	
38	Stevic et al., 2021	Quantitative (Survey), L	833+ 461	Austria, Belgium	16 and older	N	Smartphone use is not associated with family relationships.	S
39	Thomas, 2020	Qualitative (Interviews), CR	58	Thailand	60–69	N	Social media help the older to connect with family members more efficiently and economically. The downside of social media is the richness of the communication.	M
40	Valenzuela et al., 2014	Quantitative (Survey), CR	1160	Chile, USA	18-39	Facebook	Social networking sites are negatively associated with marriage quality and happiness, and positively associated with experiencing a troubled relationship and considering divorce.	M
41	Vaterlaus and Tulane, 2019	Mixed (Survey, Interviews), CR	132	USA	N	N	The use of interactive technology has both positive and negative effects on marital relationships.	S
42	Vaterlaus et al., 2020	Qualitative (Daily diaries, Interviews),	20	USA	22-29	N	Technology can enhance the sense of connection in marriage, but it can distract attention from the	S

		CR					relationship in various ways.	
43	Whiteside et al., 2018	Quantitative (Survey), CR	518	Australia	above 18	Facebook	Under the control of household income, relationship satisfaction varies depending on the type of social media usage.	M
44	Wu, 2021	Qualitative (Observation, Interviews), L	50	Australia	25-40	Facebook, WhatsApp	Social media makes it possible for transnational families to connect, but this kind of connection may not necessarily repair family relationships.	S

CR: cross-sectional study, L: longitudinal study, N: no data available, S: strong quality, M: moderate quality.