




Exploring the Psychological and Relational Consequences of Smartphone Overuse in Marital Relationships

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the line: “Jealousy, in particular, has emerged as a central construct in understanding how technology-mediated interactions may threaten marital satisfaction and commitment.” The connection between smartphone overuse and jealousy could be made more explicit here. Right now, jealousy is introduced broadly before linking it back to digital contexts.

The sentence: “When she gets angry, I just play games on my phone. It’s easier than facing the fight.” reflects avoidance coping. Consider linking this to maladaptive emotion regulation literature to strengthen the theoretical framing.

You write: “This aligns with theories conceptualizing jealousy as a relational barometer...” Please integrate findings more directly with participants’ verbatim narratives to avoid the discussion becoming overly theoretical and detached from the data.

In “In Taiwan, where family harmony and relational obligation are highly valued, smartphone overuse may be particularly destabilizing...” This is a strong point but should be supported by a citation from Taiwanese or East Asian family research.

The sentence: “The reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases such as selective memory and social desirability.” Please consider triangulation strategies (e.g., diary methods, partner corroboration) that could be suggested for future studies to mitigate these limitations.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The sentence: “Experimental studies have demonstrated that imagined partner infidelity reliably induces jealousy, which in turn predicts stronger mate retention strategies...” cites older studies. Please update with the most recent empirical works (2023–2025) to reinforce contemporary relevance.

Later in the introduction, you state: “Jealousy cannot be fully understood without attending to cultural and social frameworks.” Yet the introduction mainly references Western literature. It would strengthen the rationale to discuss cultural expectations of marriage in Taiwan earlier to justify the sampling context.

The quote: “She is sitting beside me, but her mind is inside the phone. It feels like we live in different worlds.” is powerful. However, the theme discussion could expand on how this perceived “living in different worlds” aligns with attachment theory and relational disengagement.

The section: “The decline in intimacy observed in this study parallels research documenting how technological engagement at bedtime interferes with sexual and emotional closeness.” Consider expanding with physiological or chronobiological perspectives (e.g., blue light, sleep disruption) as a contributing mechanism.

The paragraph stating: “Escapism through smartphones... resonates with clinical distinctions between adaptive jealousy and pathological patterns.” This is an important link. Please clarify whether the authors interpret this as a clinical risk or as a subclinical relational pattern.

You note: “Couples negotiated boundaries such as screen-free times...” It would be valuable to discuss whether these strategies emerged spontaneously or were learned (e.g., from therapy, media, peers). This contextual detail enhances applicability.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.