Adaptation of Social Media Addiction Scale for Adults: Validity-Reliability Study

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Dear Editor-in-Chief

With the exponential growth of internet access and social media worldwide, social media addiction has emerged as a concerning issue affecting various aspects of daily life. Today, over 5 billion people globally use social media, accounting for almost 62,3% of the world's population (1,2). In Turkey, social media engagement has risen significantly, with an 11.1% annual increase in internet users, who make up 70.8% of the population (2). While social media offers many advantages, its addictive nature has sparked concern among health professionals, as excessive use can impact emotional well-being, interpersonal relationships, physical health, and overall life satisfaction (3).

The concept of social media addiction first gained scholarly attention with the development of the Facebook Addiction Scale by Andreassen and colleagues in 2012, marking an early effort to quantify social media dependence (4). However, as researcher M. Griffiths pointed out, social media addiction is a broad phenomenon that extends beyond any single platform and encompasses various digital behaviors, including messaging, gaming, and browsing. These behaviors can become habitual to the point of impairing regular functionality (5). Despite the recognition of internet gaming disorder in the DSM-5, social media addiction has not yet been formally classified, though it shares many characteristics with behavioral addictions. Therefore, there is a need for a standardized criterion, such as the social media addiction scale, to evaluate and treat social media addiction.

This study aimed to validate and establish the reliability of a Social Media Addiction Scale specifically adapted for Turkish adults. For this purpose, we utilized the Social Media Addiction Scale for Adolescents developed by Orbatu and colleagues, a 13-item scale with three dimensions that measure addiction preference for virtual life, functional impairment, and virtual pleasure. Each item on the scale is rated on a five-point Likert scale, and the internal consistency of the scale was high (Cronbach's alpha of 0.869), indicating it is a ro-

bust tool for measuring social media addiction behaviors (6). The adaptation of this scale for adults offers a valuable tool to measure addictive behaviors linked to social media, as it provides insights into how digital habits may affect adults differently than adolescents. This is particularly relevant in a rapidly changing digital landscape where access to social media is almost constant through mobile devices.

The study was conducted as a cross-sectional survey among 260 Turkish adults (166 women and 94 men) who were recruited online. Participants provided their demographic information and responded to the adapted Social Media Addiction Scale. Data were collected through a Google Form to ensure convenience and accessibility, aligning with the digital nature of the study.

Following data collection, a detailed statistical analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics Standard V25. I applied the Shapiro-Wilk test and Q-Q graphs to assess the normality of the data and used the Cronbach's alpha coefficient to evaluate the internal consistency of the items, which yielded a high reliability score (0.878). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's sphericity test confirmed the adequacy of the sample size and the factorability of the data, with KMO values exceeding 0.5 and Bartlett's test showing significance ($\chi^2=1528.218$; $P<0.001$). The scale's structure was evaluated through principal component analysis, which yielded three distinct components aligning with the original scale: preference for virtual life, functional impairment, and virtual pleasure. Together, these three components explained 64.3% of the total variance, indicating a strong fit for measuring the different aspects of social media addiction. The scale's dimensional structure reflects a comprehensive approach to social media addiction, capturing how virtual engagement affects users' functional abilities and life satisfaction.

In correlational analyses, strong positive relationships were found between impairment in functionality and the total addiction score (rho=0.761, $P<0.001$) and between virtual pleasure and the total addiction score (rho=0.657, $P<0.001$). These relationships highlight the extent to which social media use can become problematic, shifting from routine use to behavior that significantly impacts daily life. The scale's high internal consistency further supports its reliability; split-half testing yielded Cronbach's alpha values of 0.830, 0.839, and 0.846 for each subscale, and the Guttman split-half coefficient was 0.905 (Table 1).

Table 1: Statistics of the scale total score and sub-dimension scores

Scale Sub-dimensions	Items	Cronbach Alpha	Min	Max	Mean±SD	Min	Max
Total	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13	0.878	13	65	26.26±8.21	13	65
Preferring virtual life	5, 10, 11, 12, 13	0.830	5	25	7.89±3.23	5	25
Impairment in functionality	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	0.839	6	30	13.90±4.65	6	30
Virtual pleasure	8, 9	0.846	2	10	4.47±2.19	2	10

The need for such a tool is reinforced by the fact that social media use has grown into a significant component of daily life, driven by mobile devices and the constant accessibility of social platforms. While previous studies have utilized scales adapted from Facebook or gaming addiction scales, the broader focus of this Social Media Addiction Scale allows it to be applied across various social media platforms and behaviors. It is important to recognize that social media usage behaviors evolve rapidly; the scale may require regular updates to remain relevant and effective in tracking the behavioral shifts associated with new platforms or trends in social media.

As a result of this study, a Social Media Addiction Scale with high reliability and validity has been developed. This scale will aid researchers and clinicians in identifying individuals at risk for social media addiction, supporting further study of the effects of social media on adult life.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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