

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**SOCIAL MEDIA-INDUCED JEALOUSY AND MARITAL SATISFACTION  
OF MARRIED COUPLES IN SOGAKOPE TOWNSHIP**



**ROSELINE DZIGBORDI ADZAHO**

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**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

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**OCTOBER, 2022**

## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

I, ROSELINE DZIGBORDI ADZAHO, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

### SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis/dissertation/project as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

DR. PATRICIA MAWUSI AMOS (Supervisor)

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## **DEDICATION**

To my children and husband



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Patricia Mawusi Amos for her insightful suggestions and support during the whole period of the study. Her office was always open whenever I ran into a trouble spot or had a question about my research. She consistently allowed this thesis to be my own work but steered me in the right direction whenever she thought I needed it.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between social media usage, social-media induce jealousy and marital satisfaction among married couples in Sogakope Township in the Volta region of Ghana. A descriptive survey design was used. The population of the study comprises all married couples in the Sogakope Township. A sample size of 420 respondents was used for the study and selected using a stratified sampling technique. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. From the analyses, it emerged that social media usage differs among married couples. However, the nature of social media platform use differs among married couples and its use also differs significantly among married couples when they were grouped by gender. It was revealed that social media-induced jealousy negatively correlates with marital satisfaction. It was recommended among others that marriage counsellors should exploit how social media platforms could be used in healthy ways to promote communication among married couples. It was again recommended that married couples should be encouraged to pay attention to the emotional feelings of their partner and must avoid engaging in social media activities that will elicit unpleasant emotions.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background to the Study**

Marriage has been recognised as a holy institution ordained by God (Adzaho, Amoako & Danyoh, 2020). The basic foundation for the formulation of married unions are companionship and procreation (Macionis, 2008). Further, marriage involves commitment from both couples who have agreed to be bonded with obligations to each other (White, 2015). When couples make choices to marry, they do so with the intention of living happily ever after (Ngonidzashe, 2016). Every married couple want a loving, happy, successful marriage that can withstand turbulent storms of life. According to Ngonidzahe (2016), marriages depend on many different things to be successful: trust, love, time, friendship, understanding, honesty, loyalty, sincerity and above all effective communication and concluded that a marriage without effective communication is likely to crush from the onset. Communication is considered key element which signals the level of marital satisfaction experience (Esere, 2006; Joo & Teng, 2017). Communication is the lubricant easing the friction between couples (Olagunju & Eweniyi, 2002).

Marital instability is a phenomenon that has been on the increase in most developed and African countries including Ghana (Frimpong, 2013). Marital relationship seems to be a common topic of discussion on social media platform. To help address challenges in marital relationship, Adegoke and Esere (1998) admonish couples to make effort to work on their communication challenges. Challenges in marriage starts little but in the absence of effective communication, it may escalate beyond couples' control (Adzaho et al., 2020). Wondemu (2006) conceptualise communication as means of exchanging emotions and meaning as one try to understand

the other by considering each other's perspective. However, communication is restricted to words but could also take the form of listening, silence, facial expressions, gestures, touch and all the other non-language symbols and clues used by couples in giving and receiving meaning (Bienvenu, 1970). The conventional offline form which involves face-to-face interaction has been the primary means of communicating until the emergence of technology (Williams, 2012). However, the proliferation of technological tools such as mobile phones, computers and internet is gradually affecting face-to-face form of communication (Kimeto, 2016).

Social media is a set of digital tools mainly characterized by social networking sites that allow users to “forge and nurture relationships with unprecedented ease and frequency” (Minkel, 2012, p. 269). Social networks are open, web-based and user-friendly social platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Skype, LinkedIn or WhatsApp that make it possible for one to connect to the other (Ozad & Uygurer, 2014; Hassan & Thomas, 2006). Social media platforms have made it possible for couples today to instantly connect across geographical locations by exchanging personal information online (Williams, 2012). The number of active social media users worldwide has surpassed 3 billion, and users spend an average of 136 minutes per day accessing Social Media Platforms [SMPs] (Statista, 2019). Furthermore, the lockdowns that were implemented to fight the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic further increased the use of SMPs worldwide (GlobalWebIndex, 2020; Tregoning, 2020).

The exponential rise and over-reliance on social media in marriages comes with both positive and negative consequences (Turkle, 2011; Young, 1999), and it is influencing how people relate (Kimeto, 2016; Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). According to Clayton (2014), SMPs helps users keep in touch with others; SMPs makes it easier for individuals to share information about their romantic relationships to a wider

network of people (Fox & Warber, 2013). In addition, some couples reported that their relationships became more flirtatious and exciting as never before (Taylor & Vincent, 2005). According to Horst (2010), social media allow couples to stay in touch, to share pictures and to have online conversations with the use of web-cameras. Hertlein (2012) also observes that online gaming may contribute to a couple's ability to fantasize in their relationship, acquire and or improve socialization skills, and an ability to better understand their partner's context. For Parker, Blackburn, Perry and Hawks (2013), social media platforms provide unique opportunities for couples to connect to satisfy both function and emotional needs. However, the frequent use of SMPs could be detrimental to the marital institution (Clayton, 2014; Saleh & Mukhtar 2015). Saleh and Mukhtar (2015) postulate that with the advent of social media, more stable marriages are likely to suffer great deal. This could be due to couples devoting much attention to the virtual world than to their spouses which is likely to induce an unpleasant emotion between couples (Turkle, 2011).

The use of Social Media Platforms (SMPs) could contribute to the recreation of jealousy due to perceived or actual infidelity that is perpetuated through virtual means (Dunn & Ward, 2020). Kristjansson (2016) define jealousy as a compilation of feelings. The concept of jealousy is conceived as a multi-dimensional construct that involves the interplay of reasoning, emotions and overt behaviour (Kristjansson, 2016; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989). According to Utz and Beukeboom (2011) jealousy exhibit itself in forms like reactive, anxious and possessive. Jealousy may be conceptualised as the perceived or actual threat of losing a valued relationship (Muisse et al., 2014). It may also be understood as an emotional response to such a perceived threat (Utz & Beukeboom, 2011; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989), where in most instances, the valued relationship is primarily romantic or sexual in nature (Dijkstra et al., 2013). The

surveillance of a partner activities and the perceived thought of losing a loved one could lead to negative emotions (Daspe et al., 2018). Among married couples, the avoidance of a partner and the over-reliance on SMPs could elicit a social media-induced jealousy which could involve violent behaviour or conflicts (Carpenter, 2016). This is especially significant because SMPs use has been linked to the potential breakdown of marriages (Holmgren & Coyne, 2017; Iqbal & Jami, 2019). In most married relationship jealousy results from threat arising out of any form of infidelity (Dainton & Stokes, 2015). This unpleasant feeling directs an individual's emotions, such as distrust or resentment toward their partner (Dunn & Ward, 2020).

Nitzburg and Farber (2013) suggest that the tenuous sense of interpersonal connection available through social media can negatively affect a marriage by exacerbating users' pre-existing difficulties with trust. They further imply that even for the most stable marriage, Social Networking Service (SNS) such as Facebook can create some tension because a spouse has additional relationship rituals to attend to and must balance their partners' needs with the rules and customs of public disclosure of details of their relationship through SNS. The use of social media among Ghanaians has also seen astronomic acceptance over the years as about 14.1% of the population was using some form of social media to enhance communication (Amegatcher, 2014). In a survey conducted by the Annual Ghana Social Media Report (AGSMR, 2016), Ghana ranked 47th in the internet user base rankings. Social media usage in Ghana is also continuously growing and estimated at 40% social media penetration with almost every online mobile user having a social media account or on a social messaging channel such as WhatsApp. The survey further revealed that the average Ghanaian spend not less than 3hours 30 minutes browsing the internet on his/her phone, out of which 3hours 13 minutes of this is spent on social media (WEARESOCIAL Report,

2016). Social media in Ghana make it possible for people to extend beyond two-way communication by allowing networks of people to instantly connect across geographical locations by exchanging personal information online.

Married couples in the Sogakope Township are among the many Ghanaians who have accepted social media as the virtual interactive platform for the dissemination and receiving of information over the internet. The international highway from Togo through Ghana to Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire) passes through Sogakope, making it unique abode for the indigenes and other national from all works of life. With increased access to mobile phones and strong internet connectivity, many couples are getting connected to Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc. on daily basis. In the same vein, the people of Sogakope place premium on affection, trust, expectation, respect, sacrifice, responsibility and emotional bonding. According to Fuchs (2008), social media are currently presented with a double face: it can possibly create new digital divides widening the gap created by digital and social exclusion for couples.

As the world is increasingly changing with respect to technological advancement in communication, social bonding and emotional closeness, there is the need to investigate empirically the role that social media-induce jealousy plays on the relationship between social media use and marital satisfaction among married couples in Sogakope. It is against this background that a study of this nature is undertaken.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Considering the positive perception that societies have about marriages as a means of enjoying a lasting companionship, safety, emotional support, love and understanding; it seems to be the dream of most parents to see their adult children get married (Gull et al., 2019). However, outside these positive outlooks on marriage,



marital life also comprises numerous conflicts, misunderstanding and pressures which is triggered by a number of factors of which include social media (Lukacs & Quan-Haase, 2015). The proliferation of technology and the use of social media platforms have changed our lives: our work, education, our perception of ourselves and towards our families (Horst, 2010; Levinson, 2004).

A rising amount of research has tried to assess the possible impact of social media on marital relationship globally. In America, Watkins (2019) study suggests that the use of social media increases cyberbullying, where social media platforms are used to display repeated behaviour aimed to scare people about marriage. In addition, Mesch (2006) concludes that the frequent usage of social media platforms has resulted in less time spent with family among married couples. A study by Lenhart and Duggan (2014) in America reported that 10% of internet users are of the opinion that social media had a “major impact” on their mutual rapport. Some of the respondents felt that their spouses were often distracted by their cell phone when they were together and often got upset by the amount of time they spent online or by what they were doing online. Clayton, Nagurney and Smith (2013) found that the usage of Facebook anticipated harmful relationship outcomes, such as breakups, divorces, and cheating. Furthermore, Ridgway and Clayton (2016) found that conflicts related issues ensue among married couples when one poses selfies on Instagram without the concern of the other couple. Additionally, a survey by Valenzuela, Halpen and Katz (2014), found that Facebook anticipated higher rates of divorce in 43 different states.

Studies in Africa suggest that 45% of the family institution today are struggling to survive. Husbands and wives frequently undergo strained relationships (Mbwirire, 2017). In addition, Saleh and Mukhtar (2015) suggest that the sharing of ambiguous information, compulsive Internet use, and online portrayal of intimate relationships is

jeopardising many romantic relationships. According to Mbwirire (2017) social media have become a necessary evil to most marital institutions as couples are more likely to devote much attention to the virtual world than to their spouses which is a threat to stability and family cohesion.

In Ghana, there have been a growing body of literature on social media and marital satisfaction. For the most part, this literature deals with the role of social media on students' learning (Mahama, 2015), market women (Djanie, 2015), and on how social media use influences marital communication (Adzaho, Amoako & Danyoh, 2020). In addition, most explored in the discourse about marital satisfaction is centred on gender role ideology (Offei, 2015), sexual satisfaction (Dabone, 2012) and parental style and attachment (Awuah, 2013). Some areas in marital satisfaction less explored is the role that social media induced jealousy plays in marital satisfaction.

The Sogakope Township located in the South Tongu District is said to have most married couples relying on social media platforms for their daily interactions (Adzaho et al., 2020). Married couples' reliance on social media platform in Sogakope has the potential to elicit negative emotions among married couples (Kimeto, 2016). These negative emotions could take the form of the feelings of suspicion, jealousy, feelings of loneliness and emotional distance among married couples.

Being on social media exposes Married couples to jealousy-inducing information, which in turn compels them to search for more information on the SNS in question, and this could induce even more jealousy (Nitzburg & Farber, 2013). This spiral effect compromises trust in the marital relationship which is a foundational element of long-lasting marital commitment (Nakonenzy & Denton, 2008). This suggests that little is known about how social media induced jealousy influences marital satisfaction, hence this study seeks to address this gap by examining the relationship

between social media induced jealousy and marital satisfaction among married couples in Sogakope in the South Tongu District of the Volta region of Ghana.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between social media usage, social-media induce jealousy and marital satisfaction among couples in Sogakope Township in the Volta region of Ghana.

### **Objectives of the Study**

Specifically, the study is designed to examine:

1. how social media usage influences marital satisfaction
2. how social media usage predicts jealousy
3. the relationship between social-media induced jealousy and marital satisfaction.
4. The role of induced jealousy in the relationship between social media usage and marital satisfaction.
5. if male and female married couples differ in the time, they spent on social media platforms
6. if married couples differ in their usage of social media with respect to their age.

### **Research Hypotheses**

H<sub>0</sub>: Social media use does not significantly predict marital satisfaction among married couples

H<sub>1</sub>: Social media use significantly predict marital satisfaction among married couples

H<sub>0</sub>: Social media use does not significantly predict jealousy among married couples.

H<sub>1</sub>: Social media use significantly predict jealousy among married couples.

H<sub>0</sub>: Social media-induced jealousy does not significantly predict marital satisfaction.

H<sub>1</sub>: Social media-induced jealousy significantly predict marital satisfaction.

H<sub>0</sub>: Social media-induced jealousy does not significantly mediate the relationship between social media usage and marital satisfaction among married couples.

H<sub>1</sub>: Social media-induced jealousy significantly mediate the relationship between social media usage and marital satisfaction among married couples.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference in the time married couples in Sogakope spent on social media with reference to their gender.

H<sub>1</sub>: Female married couples spend more time on social media than married males in Sogakope.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference in social media use among individuals with married status with respect to their age groupings.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is statistically significant difference in social media use among individuals with married status with respect to their age groupings.

### **Significance of the Study**

Firstly, the findings of this study will illuminate how social media affect marriage communication in Sogakope. As such, marriage and family therapists can draw from the study findings to inform their practice so that they are more effective and relevant to the modern-day couples. This will help marriage counsellors in understanding the nature and rate of social media usage by couples to guide would-be couples develop effective means of communication in marriage. Insights gleaned from

this study can also be used to come up with policies that govern the dissolution of marriages in order to strengthen the family unit.

In addition, the findings from this study can also be used in social settings to sensitize couples on the strategies that they can use to build stable marriages in the wake of social media communication technologies. It will help in understanding the forms and rate of social media usage by couples in Sogakope.

Finally, the study will add to the body of knowledge by contributing to literature on the level of social cohesion among couples. This study will also confirm the significance of the relationship between social media and marital communication of couples. Insights gleaned from this study can also be used to come up with policies that govern the dissolution of marriages in order to strengthen the family unit. Finally, this study is likely to inspire other researchers to embark on similar studies into the role of social media in familial relationship in Ghana.

### **Delimitations**

The study was delimited to only married couples in the South Tongu District. The study contextually was delimited to finding out the nature of social media use among couples. It will further delve into gender, and religious differences in the nature of social media usage. In addition, the study was delimited to finding out the relationship between social media use and marital satisfaction as well as the role of jealousy.

### **Organisation of the Study**

The entire study was organized into five chapters. Chapter One presents a brief overview of the study and situates it in the academic context by giving an introduction of the social media. It also includes the statement of the problem, purpose of the study,

research questions, research hypotheses, significance and delimitations. Chapter Two presents review of related literature. The methodology is explained in Chapter Three and comprises the procedures, activities and processes used in gathering and analysing the data collected. Chapter Four provides the analysis of the data gathered, discussions of the study in relation the research questions and the research objectives of the study. Chapter Five presents a summary of the study findings, conclusion, recommendations and recommendations for future studies.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter reviews literature related to the study so as to establish what is known both theoretically and empirically and the knowledge gap that needs to be filled and thus has warranted the study. The content of the literature covers the, theoretical review, conceptual and relating empirical studies.

#### **Theoretical Frameworks**

The study was underpinned by Media Dependency Theory and the Attachment vs. Independence Theory. The media dependency theory presents the rationale behind couples' dependency on social media while the Attachment vs Independence theory explains social-media induce jealousy.

#### **Media Dependency Theory (MDT)**

Media Dependency Theory posits that an individual will be more depending on the media which have his or her needs fulfilled (DeFleur, 1989). The theory suggests that when people are getting more dependent on social media, the influence of media on their perceptions and behaviours become stronger. It is to say that dependency on social media changes as the environment and goal of users also change. By implication, social media attracts marriage couples by offering the content which is able to fulfil the needs for understanding, entertainment and information. It also encourages the couples to maintain the level of attention and also the affective motivation influenced by the emotional reactions that the media bring to them, and that it will enhance the level of marital satisfaction. Burrus (2010) has agreed that people become more dependent on

social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to gain latest information of friends and to maintain relationship with friends and family.

It has shown that people nowadays are becoming more and more dependent on social media in terms of time spent on networking sites. It is also about information, happiness and sadness, social life and cohesion that bring them to the heavy use of social media. This study hereby looked into the extensive use of social media and to what extent marriage couples in Sogakope are dependent on social media for the purpose of social life which also leads to marital cohesion.

### **Attachment vs. Independence Theory**

It is only natural for a young couple to appear as if they share one life. Within most Christian societies, marriage vows state that, “the two shall become as one”. This kind of attachment, if carried out in the relationship for an extended amount of time, can become a strain on the individualistic characteristics of each partner. Eckstein and Axford (1999) noted that young children and adolescents need to learn a healthy balance between attachment and independence. They say that when couples feel both independent from and attached to their partner, they appear to be happiest. Several theoretical bases have been used by numerous researchers to explain the concept of a balance between attachment and independence in the marital dyad. One of the most prominent of these theories is Bowlby’s Attachment theory.

Guided by Bowlby’s Attachment Theory Ainsworth (1985) noted that adults who possess a secure attachment style tend to develop mental models of themselves as being valued and worthy of others’ concern, support, and affection. Significant others are described as being accessible, reliable, trustworthy and well intentioned. Secure individuals report that they develop closeness with others easily, feel comfortable depending on others and having others depend on them, and rarely are concerned about



being abandoned or others becoming extremely close to them. Their romantic relationships, in turn, tend to be characterized by more frequent positive affect, by higher levels of trust, commitment, satisfaction and interdependence, and by happy, positive, and trusting styles of love.

According to Ainsworth, adults who hold an ambivalent or attached style, tend to possess mental models of themselves as misunderstood or under-appreciated. They report that others seem to be reluctant to get as close as they would prefer, frequently worry that their significant others do not truthfully love them or will abandon them the first chance they get. These beliefs along with others such as, that partners are undependable and are unwilling to commit themselves, force these adults to over-commit (i.e. become too attached) in order to counterbalance the views that are held of their partners.

Conversely, adults who hold an avoidant or detached style tend to possess mental models of themselves as being aloof, emotionally distant, and skeptical. They report that others seem to be overly eager to make long-term commitments to relationships and/or are just unreliable. The feelings of being uncomfortable when close and difficulty trusting and depending on others, forces these adults to push away and become disengaged from significant others in order to relieve the tensions of the uncomfortable feelings.

In essence attachment can be adequately represented in terms of two underlying dimensions. These dimensions reflect the degree to which an individual feels uncomfortable in close romantic relationships (discomfort with closeness) and the degree to which he or she fears abandonment from romantic partners (anxiety over abandonment). High discomfort with closeness involves a belief that attachment figures are untrustworthy and cannot be relied upon to provide assistance in times of need. In

contrast, high anxiety over abandonment involves a belief that a married person is ‘unlovable’ and unworthy of help from attachment figures in time of need (Roberts & Noller, 1998, p. 121).

This modality of thinking puts a lot of emphasis on how one thinks of his/her partner. Although there is some truth to the idea that humans must categorise entities outside of themselves in order to realize a consistency within the world, nevertheless the way in which this organisation occurs starts within the self. This is touched upon within Bowlby’s theory, but is either not extended to its full length or not given the importance it so rightly deserves.

A belief that one is unlovable by others probably will result in abandonment issues for the individual, but what of the individual who has never learned how to be comfortable alone. This person probably will have abandonment issues also but, in this context, does not hold the negative self-view of ‘I am unlovable’; this person would hold a view more closely to that of ‘I am nothing if I am alone’. Each of these individuals will possibly be too attached to his/her partners, but it has little to do with how they categorize their partner and everything to do with what’s going within themselves.

Eckstein and Leventhal (1999) used the analogy of a ‘three-legged sack race’ to illustrate the importance of a balance in the level of attachment and independence in a marital relationship. Using theoretical bases of family systems, they too state that there are two types of imbalances that can occur; “one is the concept of too much dependence (no individuation), the other extreme imbalance is independence (no contact)” (p. 400). Within the analogy a couple that maintains this balance has their inside legs inside the sack and their outside legs free. When there is no individuation then all three legs are

inside the sack, and when there is far too much independence all three legs are outside the sack.

This analogy of the three-legged sack race was used to describe these theoretical concepts in laymen's terms for the Eckstein and Leventhal experiment. The author seeks to add to this already useful analogy and say that instead of looking at three distinct levels of attachment, for the purposes of this study the researcher was looking at an attachment continuum that is curvilinear in nature. The three extremes of attachment, independence, and balanced would fall to the far right, left, and top respectfully.

Gottman, in a third theoretical basis, in his 1998 review of the Bank Account Model (BAM) which assessed the seven negative patterns in ailing marriages, suggests that "...the amount of cognitive room that couples allocate for the relationship and their spouse's world," soothes each individual and aids in problem resolution (p. 182). Problem resolution is one of many areas of a relationship that can be fixed in a less stressful state when a balance between attachment and independence is maintained within the relationship. Levels of attachment in the marital dyad are extremely important areas of research because of the tendency for insecure attachments to lead to marital violence. "Discomfort with closeness is primarily associated with a lack of emotional involvement in relationships and a strong tendency to deny negative affect (Eckstein & Leventhal, 1999, p.408).

The Attachment verse Independence theory could be used to explain the repercussion that a partner overdependence on social media could have on the other partner. The modality of thinking puts a lot of emphasis on how one thinks of his/her partner considering activities on social media platforms.

## **Conceptual Review**

### **The Concept of social media**

Sharaievska (2012) indicates that though technologies limit face-to-face interactions, they open the world of cultures, people, and online communities. Sharaievska further argued that social network sites in particular, have redefined our perceptions of ourselves, our friendships, our families and communities. Internet-enabled technology is affecting social relationships in a manner unprecedented in the world today. The explosion of social media usage for communication as characterized by the proliferation of social networking sites (SNS) and exponential rise in users is influencing how people relate.

The public nature of SNSs makes it easier for individuals to share information about their romantic relationships to a wider network of people and to do so much more quickly than via traditional face-to-face communication (Fox & Warber, 2013). Minkel (2012) recorded that about 1 in 8 married couples in the US met via social media in the year 2009. Thus, social media tools are not merely technologies that facilitate human interactions. Rather, they establish, shape and even define relationships (Fox & Warber, 2013).

### **Nature of Social Media Use among Couples**

Social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Instagram have attracted millions of users including couples, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily communication practices. These applications are reviewed below;

#### **Facebook usage**

Facebook is handled among other social networks in this study because of being the most popular and most heavily visited social network website (eBizMBA, 2010).

Facebook could be defined as a social utility that helps people share information and communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and co-workers and also provides an added sense of community. A quantitative study on Facebook group uses and gratifications examined the needs and real-world social conditions that drive Facebook group use (Park, Kee & Valenzuela, 2009). Participants joined political groups primarily for socializing, entertainment, and to seek status and information (Park et al., 2009). While this study highlighted the usefulness of political Facebook groups, the motivations can potentially be applied toward other topics as well. However, qualitative research on Facebook groups has not been done. Assessing the actual interaction between group members will provide more insight into the motivations for using Facebook groups as support for real world circumstances (Sharaievska, 2012).

Facebook provides an opportunity to users, to create personalized profiles that include general information like education background, work background, and favourite interests and also to add links and song clips of their favourite bands, post messages on friends' pages, and post and tag pictures and videos, among other things (Rosmarin, 2007; Zywica & Danowski, 2008). A case study conducted by Saleh and Mukhtar (2015) in Dutse L.G.A Jigawa State, Nigeria revealed that the Facebook is the most frequently used social media in the study area.

According to Sharaievska (2012), while the overall number of Facebook users globally is still on the rise, the majority of the increase comes from developing countries. Snow (2017) called this phenomenon “Facebook fatigue” among users and explained it as the conscious desire of people to decrease the amount of time spent on Facebook. Sharaievska (2012) added that this fatigue arose because people want to live their real lives in a more meaningful ways: spending time in face-to-face interaction,

talking to family members on the phone, studying or participating in other activities they found to be more important.

### **Use of twitter**

The number of people who use Twitter has been on the rise and from the year of its inception in 2006 till 2010 has gained about 180 million users (Yarov, 2010). Twitter was created by Jack Dorsey, Biz Stone and Evan Williams in March of 2006 and launched to the general public in July of the same year (Hernandez, 2011). However, in 2007, Twitter became an official company and in 2009 its growth was reported at 1382%, which allowed it to surpass MySpace in the number of unique visitors.

Twitter provides users a communication platform to initiate and develop connections in real time with thousands of people with shared interests (Sarno, 2009). It is also a way to get to know strangers who share the details of their daily lives (Thompson, 2013). Although users can access Twitter across many electronic devices, Twitter user interactivity is still somewhat limited compared to other social media platforms.

Twitter is still popular among various groups of population in many countries of the world. Unique feature of Twitter, that makes it different from Facebook and MySpace, is the user's ability to "tweet" a response to the question "What's happening?" in 140 symbols. Using this micro-blogging system various "elite" (media, celebrities, organizations, and bloggers) and "ordinary" users give other users of Twitter an opportunity to "follow" their lives (Wu, Hofman, Mason, & Watts, 2011). Twitter provides opportunity for variety of individuals and organizations to publicize their actions which made it attractive to users, including couples of various age groupings.

## Use of Instagram

Instagram was launched as an iPhone app at October 2010 and rapidly gained popularity, reaching 10 million users in September of 2011. It was named “iPhone app of the year” by Apple on December 2011 and was bought by Facebook four months later (Casas, 2016). It is a social media app that uses images as the means of communication (Huang & Su, 2018). According to Dungo (2018), Instagram gives users the choice to either make their personal profile public, for anyone to view, or private, where they have control over who follows them and can view their profile and posts. Instagram acts like a virtual photo album which can be appealing to some individuals, but may also have negative drawbacks such as greater social comparison, greater false self-presentation, and greater need for popularity (Brandtzaeg, 2012; Dungo, 2018; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016; Tobin & Chulpaiboon, 2016). Twitter is a microblog network where members interact through concise messages of up to 280 characters (Rosenfeld, Sarne, Kraus, Sina & Avidov, 2018).

Casas (2016) added that Instagram allows the user to take a picture or a short video, edit its visual and metadata properties and post it to the network. Edition of the media content can be made by a variety of pre-defined filters - considered one of the main features of the service. Moreover, users can add captions, hashtags and geolocation metadata. After posting a media, other users can interact with it through comments and signs of approval (“likes”). The user can also share this content in other online social networks, which extends the post’s reach to beyond Instagram.

The use of Instagram in familial communication was extensively covered in Sheldon and Bryant’s (2016) study. Sheldon and Bryant assessed the motives behind the use of Instagram. It was found that documentation was distinct to Instagram in comparison to other Social Networking Sites (SNSs) like Facebook or Twitter.

Furthermore, creativity was a new motivation that was not found in prior studies done on SNS motivation. Instagram's appeal for visual self-presentation allows users to express themselves creatively through photos and videos, as well as use filters to edit and enhance their posts, which may be particularly fitting for various artists to share and display their work to get more popularity and opportunities for self-promotion. On Instagram, users become friends by 'followee' or 'followers'. Comments, 'likes' and updates are the supportive functions provided on Instagram to interconnect with others and keep track on the latest posts (Naaman, Boasa & Lai, 2010).

Further findings from Sheldon and Bryant's (2016) study suggest that coolness was negatively associated with ratings of life satisfaction among some of the participants. Participants who rated higher on using Instagram for coolness spent more time editing their photos before uploading them to their profiles. Use of editing software and filters to enhance photos may be more appealing for some individuals to reinforce the degree of popularity and status they have with their peers by increasing the number of likes and followers they have on Instagram. An individual who may score lower on ratings of life satisfaction may be more likely to enhance their self-presentation online, through engaging in more deceptive like-seeking behaviour, to make up for the discrepancy offline.

Instagram is currently the most popular social media app among young people around the world. More than 70% of people between the ages of 12 and 24 are Instagram users (Huang & Su, 2018). The current study also aims to expand on the findings developed by Sheldon and Bryant (2016) by examining whether couples in Sogakope use Instagram for their daily communication with the rest of the world.



## **Use of WhatsApp**

WhatsApp, a mobile instant messaging application, has reached 500 million users worldwide, sharing 700 million photos and 100 million videos daily (Acton & Koum, 2014). Built as an alternative to short messaging service (SMS), WhatsApp offers real-time texting or communication, including the ease of sharing information (e.g. contact list) or media content (e.g. audio, video files, images, location data). WhatsApp also provides additional social information to its users, e.g., contacts can see when their friends are online, when they are typing and when they last accessed the application. Finally, WhatsApp provides delivery notifications, highlighting when a message is sent and when it's delivered to the recipients' device. Church and Oliveira (2013), in their multi-method study involving 140 individuals (between 20- and 60-year-olds) in Spain, found that WhatsApp was commonly adopted for convenience in communication and cost benefits.

WhatsApp is currently the most popular social media app among people irrespective of race, location and access around the world. The current study also examines whether couples in Sogakope over-indulge in WhatsApp for their daily communication with the rest of the world.

## **Time Spent on Social Media**

Raj (2012) has indicated that Malaysians spend averagely nine hours per week on Facebook, which is one of the highest compared to other countries. NewStraitsTime.com (2011) indicated that Malaysians are spending more time interacting on the virtual world. Most of them will log in to Facebook through smart phone when they are waiting, on bed and they are addicted to the social media (Joo & Teng, 2017). According to Parr (2010), the average U.S. Internet user spends more than seven hours per month on Facebook, or more than 14 minutes per day. Pempek,

Yermolayeva and Calvert (2009) did a study with the objective of finding out how much time young adults spend on Facebook. In their findings, it was reported that users spent approximately 30 minutes on Facebook every day.

Sponcil and Gitimu (2012) found that college students spend approximately 30 minutes daily on social media, Buhari et al (2014) found that Nigerian Polytechnic students use social media daily, Shabir, Hameed, Safdar & Gilani (2014) also found that the youth spend an average of 30 to 60 minutes on social media daily, and Wang, Chen and Liang (2011) found that 45% of their respondents reported spending 6-8 hours in a day checking social media sites. Internet users spend more time on Instagram than on other social media sites (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

### **Age and Social Media Usage**

Statistics on social media suggests that majority of social media users are young adults (Pew Research Centre, 2010). However, some evidence suggest that a number of older social media users are picking up (Madden, 2010; Smith, 2018). According Pew Internet research on older adults, social media use among internet users age 50-64 years grew by 88% (Pew Research Centre, 2010). Substantial differences in social media use by age was established in Smith's study (2018). The author found that 78% among those ages 30 to 49, to 64% among those ages 50 to 64 and to 37% among Americans 65 and older use any social media.

There are pronounced differences in the use of various social media platforms within the young adult population. Americans ages 18 to 24 are substantially more likely to use platforms such as Snapchat, Instagram and Twitter even when compared with those in their mid- to late-20s. With the exception of those 65 and older, Facebook

is used by a majority of Americans across a wide range of demographic groups. But other platforms appeal more strongly to certain subsets of the population.

Madden and Zickuhr (2011) reported that social networking sites have been very popular with young adults ages 18-29 almost since their inception. Between February 2005 and August 2006, the use of social networking sites among young adult internet users ages 18-29 jumped from 9% to 49%; during this same time period, use of these sites by 30-49-year olds remained essentially unchanged. Since then, users under age 30 have continued to be significantly more likely to use social networking sites when compared with every other adult age group. In May 2011, over eight in ten internet users ages 18-29 use social networking sites (83%), compared with seven in ten 30-49-year-olds (70%), half of 50-64-year-olds (51%), and a third of those age 65 and older (33%).

These statistics reveal one thing; that the adult population is gradually participating online. Though literature established that young adults use social media for communication in various subjects (Papp, Danielewicz, & Cayemberg, 2012; Pew Research Center, 2015), little is known about the variations in the use of social media by couples who appeared to be relatively older and medium-low socio-economic status. The study is intended to fill this knowledge in literature.

### **The Concept of Jealousy**

Jealousy is a provoked emotion, triggered by an event involving a friend or significant other. A jealous lover can emotionally alter their characteristics very quickly based on their emotional responses. Higher passion and love can result in greater jealousy (Marshall et al., 2012). However, not all researchers approach jealousy in that way. Relationship factors and character traits can contribute to feelings of jealousy.

Feelings of jealousy can be connected to low levels of trust and self-esteem (Muise et al., 2009). According to Utz and Beukeboom (2011), there are three types of jealousy: reactive, anxious, and possessive. Reactive jealousy is an emotional reaction based off of a partner's infidelity. Anxious jealousy is the fear that your partner may be unfaithful. The third type of jealousy is possessive, which is monitoring partner behaviour as well as trying to control their other heterosexual relationships (Utz & Beukeboom, 2011).

Utz and Beukeboom said "reactive jealousy occurs as a reaction to a real threat to the relationship, whereas anxious and possessive jealousy can also occur in the absence of a real threat" (p. 513). Marshall et al. (2012) argued that jealousy, although usually thought of as a negative trait, could reinforce closeness to a loved one. Jealousy is a cyclical design working directly with the feedback loop (Marshall et al., 2012). In simple terms, when a message is sent, the message's receiver then replies with feedback creating a constant looping motion. "Facebook increases exposure to information about one's partner that may arouse jealousy and jealousy in turn, may increase the time spent on Facebook in search of relationship-relevant information" (Marshall et al., 2012, p. 2). When it comes to Facebook, the access to their partner's information may lead to a higher degree of jealousy based on the information one is exposed to (Muise et al., 2009).

As a result, from habitual use of SNS, it is not surprising that individuals may begin to resent or have feelings of loathing towards their partner. Romantic jealousy can create negative thoughts about a partner and the relationship as a whole (Elphinston & Noller, 2011). Negative thoughts cause anxiety in the relationship. Couples tend to trust their partners less, and in turn, are less satisfied with their relationship (Elphinston & Noller, 2011; Marshall et al., 2012). Furthermore, those individuals who have negative feelings of self-worth tend to believe they are unworthy of love to begin with

(Marshall et al., 2012). Maintaining a satisfying relationship can be more difficult if the individual had a negative past experience on a social networking site (Elphinston & Noller, 2011).

Social media usage may result in negative effects on a relationship (Gershon, 2011). Marshall et al. (2011) established that inappropriate activity on social media platforms put a negative strain on relationships. People began to check their partner's online activity on a daily basis because of the jealousy they felt (Elphinston & Noller, 2011). When individuals felt instability in their relationship, online activity caused the expected jealous responses (Marshall et al., 2011).

Utz and Beukeboom (2011) described a scenario in which an observer saw a picture on Facebook of their partner with his arm around a member of the opposite sex. He explained that because the picture was available for so many eyes to see online, it was a public self-threat to a relationship. When other people could see the pictures online, it was anticipated there could be a jealous reaction (Marshall et al., 2011). These types of pictures, as innocent as they may be, can create an emotional jealous disturbance that may make the person feel they were completely betrayed by their partner (Helsper & Whitty, 2010; Whitty, 2008). Women reported more of these types of cyber infidelity than men did (Helsper & Whitty, 2010).

### **Social Media Communication among Couples**

Communication skills are the ability to symbolically and efficiently transfer the meanings and messages one has in mind, when the couple's communication is of a better quality, they can feel closer to each other and enjoy being together (Baghipour, 2010). Communication plays a central role in marriage, and the communication skills are the key predictors of relationship satisfaction between couple (Lavner, Karney &

Bradbury, 2016). Marital communication represents key element in understanding current marital dynamics (Olaganatha, 1997). Since the maintenance of relationships has increasingly become dependent on husbands' and wives' appreciation of marriage, gaining insight in spousal marital communication is of utmost importance in this study (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1995). Several researchers claim that one of the core elements in appreciation of the marital relationship is communication (Becvar & Becvar, 1996; Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994). Communication is not only instrumental for marital satisfaction but even one of the most crucial factors contributing to it (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Noller & Fitzpatrick, 1990).

Harris (2012) posed legitimate question, what do couples communicate when they are communicating? In answering this poser, Harris proposed three variables, namely commitment, trust and intimacy. According to Harris, commitment denotes how we “hang in there” and contribute to our marital friendship, even when things aren't going particularly well, is a sign of how committed we are to our relationship. Loyalty and fidelity are aspects of commitment and trust. Trusting relationships are relationships in which both partners are dependable, available to support each other, and responsive to each other's needs. An ability to negotiate conflict and a positive outlook about the future of the relationship are also components of trust. Finally, intimacy denotes the social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical connections we make with each other determine the levels of intimacy we experience in our relationships. These variables are needed for effective relationship.

According to Bolte (1975) the communication system of the couple is a vital force, determining much of their happiness together. Our attempt to at improving marital relationships must start with working on the communication between husband

and wife. Craddock (1980) found that therapists he surveyed commented on the fact that couples experiencing marital difficulties either fail to attempt to communicate, or the attempts they do make prove unsatisfactory, often leading to arguments. Noller (1982) found that wives low in marital adjustment wanted their husbands to communicate with them more, and particularly to start more interesting conversations with them, to show more appreciation for the things they did well, to express their emotions more clearly, and to give them more attention.

Snyder (1979) suggested that communication skills are important not only because they provide the means for solving problems and differences, but make an increased level of intimacy possible. Lewis and Spanier (1979) in setting up their model of marital satisfaction and stability emphasized a group of variables which they labelled rewards from spousal interaction, and which included affective expression and problem-solving ability. Behaviours affecting marital satisfaction are self-disclosure (Boyd & Roach, 1977; Olaganatha, 1997).

Marital communication can be analyzed in different ways. Most communication consists of talk, of conversation. Couples have to learn how to talk openly and constructively, sharing more and more of themselves as time goes by. Communication is also non-verbal in which partners try to communicate feelings or thoughts without using words. Sometimes the non-verbal and verbal messages are in conflict with one another, leading to confusion in and between the spouses (Olaganatha, 1997). For this reason, some couples rely on social media for communication.

The structure of social media affords users many advantages to other forms of communication. Most social media sites are highly accessible, as they are available at all times. Social media can typically be accessed from a range of media sources including desktop computers, smart phones, and tablets, allowing great flexibility in

their use. While motivations for use tend to be relationship-oriented, additional applications are being developed and used. For example, the broad accessibility makes social media especially useful for some people who cannot attend face-to-face support programs or appointments, such as those with physical disabilities, chronic illness, mental illness (Davis & Calitz, 2014), and those living in geographically remote areas.

Social media can also be useful for people with busy family commitments (e.g., military spouses caring for household duties, employment, and children's activities). The flexibility also allows people to seek out information, support, and resources at times and places that are convenient for them, thereby overcoming the challenges surrounding fitting scheduled meetings or activities into already full schedules. Social media also allows people to provide and receive immediate feedback, support, and information quickly, usually from anywhere in the world (Borden et al., 2015). Many social networking sites involve instant interaction, allowing users to participate in real-time events anywhere around the globe. This ability to have such immediate communication can be especially helpful for military families as a means of staying connected during separations, including deployments. Once the infrastructure is created, communication can be inexpensive, overcoming costs associated with other forms of communication (Borden et al., 2015).

Although communication via social media has numerous advantages (e.g., convenience, easy access, low-cost), Borden and her colleagues have identified several possible challenges associated with its use, including the risks of miscommunication, harm to relationships, unhealthy social comparison, security/privacy breaches, exposure to danger (e.g., cyberbullying), leaks of sensitive information, and the spread of rumors.



## **Study Area**

The study was conducted in Sogakope Township which is located in the South Tongu District. The township is located in the Southern part of the Lower Volta Basin and bounded to the north by the Central and North Tongu Districts, to the east by the Akatsi South District, to the west by the Ada East District of the Greater Accra Region and to the south by the Keta Municipality. Records of teenage pregnancies are common in the various communities at Sogakope leading to school dropout, cohabitation, forced marriages, no livelihood skills and overall disempowerment of the adolescent girl. The town is mostly known for its river tourism. The lower Volta Bridge is also the site for the famous Tortsogbeza, an annual festival held during Easter, which involves diving off the bridge, and is held in conjunction with the neighbouring town, Sokpoe.

## **Marital Satisfaction**

Karney and Crown (2007) referred to marital satisfaction as the extent to which a spouse perceives the marriage to be personally, fulfilling and worth maintaining. According to Vangelisti (2012), marital satisfaction has been the outcome variable of choice for most scholars studying interpersonal communication in romantic relationships on the assumption that if partners are happy, their marriage is likely to remain intact, otherwise, the relationship may crumble. However, Vangelisti quickly points out that despite the premium placed on marital satisfaction, scholars have begun to acknowledge that satisfaction is not the only way to conceptualize marital success. Karney and Crown (2007) for instance argue that although marital satisfaction and marital stability are significantly associated, they are not overlapping constructs in the sense that marriages can persist for years despite neither spouse's experiencing much satisfaction, just as relatively satisfying marriages can nevertheless end. A further

distinction is offered by Oranthikal and Vabsteenwegen (2006) who observe that while stability is a characteristic of the couple, marital satisfaction is an individual characteristic and refers to how the individuals evaluate their marriage.

Consistent with this discourse is a caveat introduced by William and Lebow (2005) with regard to meaning making. They argue that marriages remain stable for various exogenous reasons such as cultural prohibitions on termination, economic, religious and legal reasons, among others. They illustrate that within cultures in which marital satisfaction is not a prominent factor, such as arranged marriages where the wisdom of the elders prevails and whether the partners are satisfied with their relationship, is of little consequence to stability. They contrast the western culture from other cultures, noting that marital satisfaction in the west is a construction based on acceptance of voluntary, rather than obligatory, marriage formats. They explain that for voluntary relationships, partners choose one another based largely on romantic notions of love and the success of the marriage is dependent on the personal happiness of individuals, not on the fulfilment of cultural expectations. Gottman's (1999) research for example showed that low marital satisfaction did not necessarily eventuate into either marital stability or dissolution. His research indicated that at any given time, marital stability and marital satisfaction (or marital happiness) may be at varied levels, thus challenging the notion of a direct linkage.

### **Impact of Social Media Utthse on Marital Satisfaction**

Henline and Harris (2006) states that technology in general introduces a potential to misinterpret messages between partners in relationships and marriages. This may create barriers in problem solving and intimacy development. There are also complaints of poor attention partners because one may concentrate with the gadget at

the expense of his/her partner (Ngonidzashe, 2016). For instance, Hawkins and Hertlein (2013) claim that online gaming in relationships may disrupt intimacy processes and introduce feelings of exclusion from one area of their partner's life, potentially resulting in perceived neglect and jealousy. As such, these communication technologies may also disrupt communication between parties.

Whitty (2003) also discovered that if a partner's computer is left accessible or a spouse's password is known, partners will often engage in investigatory behaviours that lead to the discovery of infidelity activities. It has also been the popular social networks such as the Facebook and WhatsApp that have contributed to a number of marriage breakdowns with the families. For instance, Lumpkin (2012) stated that 33% of divorce cases mentioned Facebook in 2011 and involved inappropriate messages to individuals of the opposite sex.

Social networks such as the Facebook introduce a potential to misinterpret messages on another's profile. Some make some comments on another's photograph, can send private messages and chat online. If this information is misinterpreted with a partner, it may lead to some disagreements within the household. Hertein and Anchet (2014) summarise by stating that the other challenges introduced by technology into relationships include distancing, lack of clarity and impaired trust.

Joo and Teng (2017) reiterated that online communication may bring to a bad experience on online behaviour too. It is stated by Christofides, Muise, and Desmarais (2012) that postings on Facebook may also lead to feelings of regret if negative consequences such as loss of opportunity or punishment are experienced. Online disclosures may also result in negative consequences for romantic relationships that those who spend more time on Facebook are more likely to experience jealousy in

response to ambiguous information that they see on the site, which may have consequences for their intimate relationships (Christofides, et al., 2012).

According to a study by Chou and Edge (2012), Facebook is a powerful influence in digital lives nowadays. It has changed their users' perceptions of the lives of friends and family members. The highlight is that the longer the people log on Facebook, the more they start to believe that others have a better life than they do. This may even cause most of them having bad impression and looking down on their family members which eventually leads to a negative conversation and relationships. Prono-Australia (2012) has further elaborated the negative aspect of social media use. Our practitioners say that separating and divorced families often use Facebook, email and mobile phones unconstructively. Abuse and bullying of previous partners through these methods is a common issue, where guidance may be required to ensure that such contact is less emotional, more business-like and productive (Prono-Australia, 2012).

Social networks such as the Facebook introduce a potential to misinterpret messages on another's profile. Some make some comments on another's photograph, can send private messages and chat online. If this information is misinterpreted with a partner, it may lead to some disagreements within the household. Hertein and Anchet (2014) summarise by stating that the other challenges introduced by technology into relationships include distancing, lack of clarity and impaired trust. Henline and Harris (2006) state that technology introduces a potential to misinterpret messages between partners in relationships and marriages. This may create barriers in problem solving and intimacy development. Whitty (2003) also discovered that if a partner's computer is left accessible or a spouse's password is known, partners will often engage in investigatory behaviours that lead to the discovery of infidelity activities.

According to Si (2012), WhatsApp festers negative emotions in users; including anxiety, guilt, pressure, distraction, embarrassment, suspicion, and confusion. Symptoms of these emotions include worrying and a decreased self-esteem when faced with long replies, pressure to respond to messages immediately, relationship mistrust with who another person is contacting, confusion with regards to what the intended meaning of the message is, and more (Ali & Kootbodien, 2017).

Communication scholars Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kiesler, Mukopadhyay, and Scherlis (1998) conducted a study to examine how Internet use affects social involvement. They found that increased Internet use was associated with withdrawal from one's social circle and resulted in less psychological well-being (Kraut et al., 1998). Kraut et al. (1998) explained that strong personalities are usually supported by physical closeness or proximity, and that the Internet diminishes the significance of physical closeness in initiating and maintaining strong social connections. These physical connections are what safeguard people from the stresses of life and a withdrawal from these physical relationships may have negative implications for one's sociality (Kraut et al., 1998).

Evaluation results at the University of Chile show that spending time on social networks will destroy marriage, as well as create depression in people. Accordingly, the rate of divorce and separation in people who spend a lot of time on social networks, by far, is the most of people who experience life without social networks. In a subsequent study, Clayton (2014) examined how SNS use, specifically Twitter use, influences negative interpersonal relationship outcomes. Clayton specifically examined the mediational effect of Twitter-related conflict on the relationship between active Twitter use and negative relationship outcomes, and how this mechanism may be

contingent on the length of the romantic relationship. A total of 581 Twitter users aged 18 to 67 years completed an online survey questionnaire. The results suggested that active Twitter use leads to greater amounts of Twitter-related conflict among romantic partners, which in turn leads to infidelity, breakup, and divorce.

Notwithstanding these weaknesses in the use of social media, some studies show that young adults in romantic relationships are using SNS to connect with their partners in a positive way, which may increase relationship satisfaction (Papp et al., 2012; Pew Research Center, 2015). They found that partners that share their relationship status were more likely to state that they were satisfied with their relationship. Posting partner updates and posting pictures with their partner also led to a higher degree of relationship quality (Steers, Øverup, Brunson, & Acitelli, 2015).

## **Empirical Review**

### **Age Difference in Marital Satisfaction**

The relationship between age and marital satisfaction has been studied by several authors. Heaton (2002) conducted a study and found that the age of a married person plays the greatest role in accounting for trends in marital satisfaction and dissolution. He suggested based on this that there is a difference in marital satisfaction based on how old or young a person is. He again found that women who marry at older ages have more stable and satisfying marriages. In a similar vein, Jose and Alfons (2007) examined the effects of age on marital satisfaction and found that the older one was at the time of first marriage, the less adjusted the individual would be toward the marriage and consequently, the less satisfaction one would express. They explained that this was because middle-aged adults seemed to have greater adjustment problems than young people. This implied that there is a difference in marital satisfaction levels on

the basis of age. Further, a study by Kliegel and Shapiro (2007) produced a contrasting finding that age did not play a role in predicting marital satisfaction.

### **Duration of Marriage Influencing Marital Satisfaction**

A longitudinal study conducted by Huston (as cited by Mathews, 2002) found a substantial decline in reported marital satisfaction during the first year of marriage. This implies that duration of marriage had a bearing on marital satisfaction levels. Similarly, a study by Zare, Golmakani, Shareh, Taghi Shakeri and Khadem (2014) found that there was significant difference in marital satisfaction on the basis of duration of marriage. They found specifically that there was an inverse relationship between marriage duration and marital satisfaction.

This implied that marital satisfaction decreased with increasing marriage duration. The findings of Jadiri, Jan bozorgy and Tabatabai (2009) also revealed a similar trend that duration of marriage was a determining factor in marital satisfaction levels. Studies by Shaabani et al. (2007) and Bannyfatemeh and Taheri (2009) also revealed that there is an influence of duration of marriage on marital satisfaction levels. However, the findings above were inconsistent with the results of Javanmard et.al (2016) who revealed that marital satisfaction levels had no relationship or association with duration of marriage. Similarly, Yousefi, Noranipur and Besharat (2005) also found no difference in marital satisfaction levels with reference to duration of marriage.

Many studies have focused on the newlywed years, as the risk of divorce appears to be greatest during the first three years of marriage and over one-third of divorces occur within the first five years (National Center for Health Statistics, 1991). Becker (1991) has suggested that divorces early in marriage are predicted by changes in how one views one's partner, which are often the result of gaining negative

information about the spouse after marriage. Divorces later in marriage, however, are the result of changes and life events that have affected the relationship. Indeed, individuals who divorce after long-term marriages tend to blame infidelity, growing apart, and problems with family cohesiveness (Amato & Previti, 2003; Kitson, 1992), whereas those in short-term marriages cite personality clashes and basic incompatibility. Despite these inconsistencies in the findings, the bulk of studies reviewed have found an association between duration of marriage and marital satisfaction levels.

### **Gender and Social Media Usage**

Gender is well known predictor of online behaviour (Casas, 2016). Most of these studies investigated specific usage of social media (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.). For instance, Pfeiffer, Kleeb, Mbelwa, and Ahorlu (2014) report that the use of social media platforms in Africa is gendered, with Tanzania reporting 71% male users and 29% female users. Saleh and Mukhtar (2015) found that more women are subscribing to the social media than their male counterparts in Dutse L.G.A Jigawa, Nigeria. Tufekci (2008) also found that women are four to five times more likely than men to use social networking sites. The following section examines gender influence on the use of the various social media platforms.

A study by Rungta (2015) indicated that gender did influence the usage of WhatsApp in some cases, but there were a lot of elements like usage style, pattern, preference that showed little or no significant difference among genders. Rungta's study further reported that females were more visible in the area of usage of emotions, changing of profile pictures and status, sharing pictures, sharing emotional outburst,



etc. In terms of time spent online, Rungta (2015) reported that males spent less time than females on WhatsApp.

Mazman and Usluel (2011) examined gender differences in the use of Facebook on four sub-constructs (namely maintaining existing relationships, making new relationships, using for academic purposes and following specific agenda). From the study, it was found that females use Facebook for maintaining existing relationships, academic purposes and following agenda higher than males while males use it for making new relationships at a rate higher than the females. A study by Bartholomew, Schoppe-Sullivan, Glassman, Dush and Sullivan (2012) confirmed that mothers have greater use of Facebook than fathers, and more of mothers' Facebook friends includes their family members and their relatives, but fathers with their Facebook friends, communicating in outside of Facebook.

On gender issues in the use of Instagram, different perspectives were reported. For instance, a background survey of Instagram users in Taiwan revealed that female users constitute the majority and are also more active (Huang & Su, 2018). However, Casas's (2016) study revealed that the differences in the behaviour of male and female users are not very pronounced. Despite reporting statistically significant results, Casas attributed this to the large size of the sample size. Also, although the distributions for the average of comments and likes are practically the same for both genders, females have a slightly higher ratio of average likes and comments per follower than males.

Similarly, Al-Kandari, Al-Hunaiyyan and Al-Hajri (2016) investigated the gender differences on Instagram use among 539 Kuwaiti higher education students. The study confirmed that males are more likely than females to post their personal pictures on Instagram, more likely to disclose their personal information and more likely to have

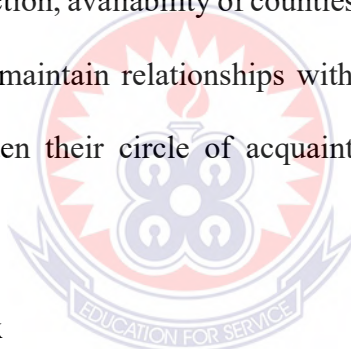
public accounts unlike females who are more likely to have private accounts than males. Instagram use by males and females will not eschew from those uses of other social media. Females use it to socialize and provide opinion while males use it to collect information and pass time.

Finally, Goudreau (2010) posited that females compose the majority users of Twitter. Females prefer Twitter and other related social media because they are interpersonal and discussion-oriented while males gravitate towards information and content-oriented media (William, Consalvo, Caplan & Yee, 2009; Guadagno, Muscanell, Okdie, Burk & Ward, 2011). Al-Kandari et al. (2016) argued that females prefer social media more than males because these media are primarily social in their nature and this nature is similar to the social makeup of females. Men and women use Twitter in roughly equal proportions today (Duggan & Smith, 2014). Nilizadeh, Das, Ahn, Kapadia, Groggel, Lista and Rojas (2016) also found statistically significant differences between male and female users, in terms of self-presentation, activity, as well as how much they are followed, retweeted, and listed. Female users tweet more, follow more, have younger accounts, are more likely to have profile images, and to be retweeted and listed. At the same time, female users are less likely to be verified and to provide a location or URL in their profiles.

From the perspectives so far presented, it appears that the influence of gender on social media use is more profound in related studies. However, little or no attention is given to gender influence on social media use among couples in the Sogakope. This study aimed at finding out whether gender of marriage couples would affect the nature of social media use in Sogakope.

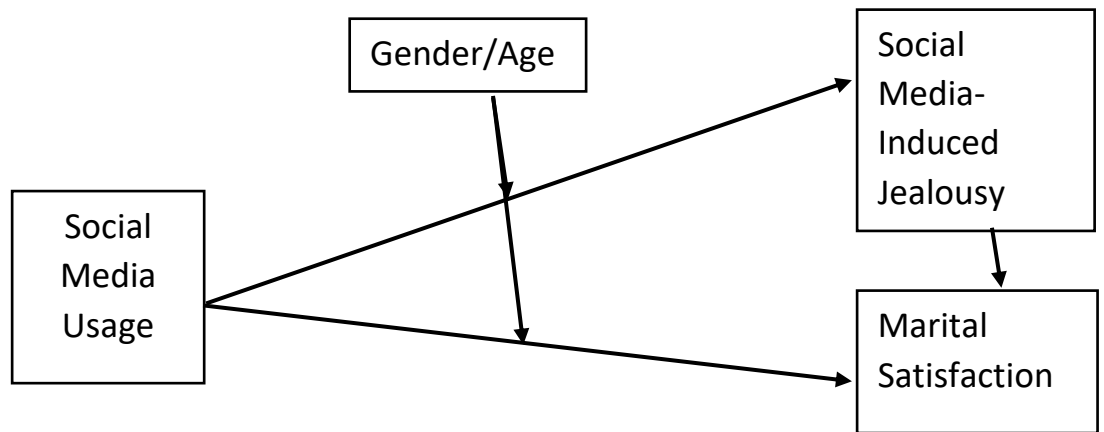
## **Social Media and Marital Satisfaction**

In a study by Mesch and Talmud (2006), some portion of the youth reported their online relationships to be important and valuable. Mesch and Talmud explained that people used online relationships as a source of social support that was not available at home. Their need for social support allowed their online friendships to become more important, strong and intimate. Hertlein and Webster (2008) agreed that the development of modern communication technology has led to changes in the dynamics of interaction among people as well as to changes in how personal identities, families, friendships and communities are experienced and perceived. Opportunities provided by modern technologies and the Internet (instant sharing of pictures, immediate and inexpensive video connection, availability of countless online communities and groups) help people not only to maintain relationships with relatives and friends around the world but also to broaden their circle of acquaintances with similar interests and experiences.



## **Conceptual Framework**

The following conceptual framework was used to undertake the research. The framework draws from the review of related literature. The framework depicts three sets of variables and the arrows indicate the direction of the relationship between the study variables. The independent variable is Social Media Usage which is measured by type, frequency, timing, duration. The Social Media-Induced Jealousy represent the moderator variables while Marital Satisfaction represent the dependent variables.



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework showing the relationship between Social Media use, Social Media-Induced Jealousy and Marital Satisfaction.**

### **Summary of Literature Review**

This chapter discussed the theoretical perspectives on social media addiction among couples. The chapter also looked at studies on social media from the perspective usage among young adults. Most of the literature reviewed found that people use social media for variety of reasons across the world. While the effects of technology on identity and community have been widely discussed in the academic literature, little is known about how marriage couples are influenced by changes associated with social media use.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

Methodology represents systemic investigation aimed at solving research problems (Leavy, 2017). This section presents the research approach, research design, study area, population, sample and sampling technique, research instrument, data collection procedures, and data processing and analysis technique employed in the study. The ethical considerations observed in the study were also discussed.

#### **Research Approach and Design**

Research design is the general plan of how research questions will be answered (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). It highlights the specific procedures used in the research process which include data collection, data analysis, and report writing (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2012). According to Ary, Jacob, Sorenson and Razavieh (2010), research design is the blueprint for obtaining the information needed to address a research problem. For the purpose of this study, research design refers to the plan or framework used to approach a research problem and come up with appropriate and relevant answers to research questions and hypotheses.

The study adopted the quantitative approach. According to Onwuegbuzie, Gerber and Abrams (2017), the quantitative research approach primarily involves the collection, analysis and interpretation of numerical data that stem from numerous sources such as personality inventories, standardized test, Likert format scale (Onwuegbuzie, Gerber & Abrams, 2017). The approach was underpinned by the positivist school of thought. The positivists assume that knowledge is objective and quantifiable through the use scientific methods to enhance precision in the description

of variables and establishing the relationship among variables (Creswell, 2016). The researcher associates herself as a positivist and hence used a structured questionnaire to survey the views of respondents (Creswell, 2016).

For the purpose of the study, a descriptive survey design which emphasized the measurement and analysis of relationships between variables was used (Creswell, 2016; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). Descriptive survey was adopted because the researcher is of the view that it reveals the features of certain phenomena in order to explain a particular problem or enable the researcher to describe the conditions as they exist (Pride & Ferrell, 2008). Analyses in descriptive surveys are usually in the form of descriptive and inferential statistics. In descriptive surveys, researchers do not have direct control over independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulable (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). The researcher considers the descriptive sample survey the most appropriate because the simple surveys do little more than asking questions and reporting answers about status of something (phenomena) to studies but present explicit statement about relationships between variables Amedahe (2002). According to Hackett (as cited by Awabil, 2002), the descriptive survey design can be used to gather data on social media-induced jealousy and marital satisfaction, to aid the provision of counselling services. Awabil further stated that survey research makes possible the collection of data on large numbers of people. Finally, survey research is relatively easy to conduct. The design is however associated with some weaknesses. Among them are the difficulties in obtaining a truly random sample of the population and the problem of low response rating that plague all surveys, Hackett (as cited by Awabil, 2002). Despite its shortcomings, the survey design was the most appropriate, since it will lead the researcher to draw meaningful conclusions from the data obtained.

## Population

According to Chandan, Singh and Khanna (2005), population is a group of the variables that is being studied. Cooper and Schindler (2011) concurred with Chandan, Singh and Khanna (2005) a population is the entire collection of components about which inferences are made. The population of the study comprises all married couples in the Sogakope township. Data from the Registrar General Department (2020) concludes that there are an estimated number of 1500 married couples who fall within the age bracket (30 – 60 years) in the Sogakope township. this is made of 986 (66%) married couple in the age bracket of 31 – 40 years, 425 married couples in the age bracket of 41- 50 years, and 89 married couples in the age bracket of 51 – 60 years.

## Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 420 married couples was used for the study. To get the individual participants, I employed stratified sampling technique to select the 420 married couples. The elements in the population were put into three main sub-groups. These sub-groups include: age ranges of respondents. Table 3.1 provides details of the sampled individuals.

**Table 3.1: Proportion of married couples sampled with Age and Gender**

Age group	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
31-40	110	166	276
41-50	48	71	119
51-60	10	15	25
Sub-total	168	252	420

## Research Instruments

Questionnaires were used in gathering data for this research. I designed and adapted standardised scales from other authors. The decision to use questionnaire is

justifiable since it is affordable and can be distributed on a large scale over a short period of time (Creswell, 2012; Newman, 2007).

In the utilisation of a questionnaire, the presence of the principal investigator is not strictly necessary since research assistants could administer the questionnaire on his/her behalf (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). In this study, I recruited and oriented four colleagues to help in the administration of the questionnaire. The self-report nature of questionnaire increases the risks of respondents giving false information which could in turn affect the validity of the findings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). However, I made several efforts to assure respondents that the data will be kept confidential and anonymous after seeking for their consent and that they were at liberty to drop out of the study any time they wish. Respondents were also asked to provide responses as frankly as possible (Neuman, 2007).

The questionnaire comprised four parts labelled from 'A' to 'D'. Section 'A' comprised items soliciting for respondents' background data. The demographic variables included gender, and age range of respondents. Additionally, Section 'B' contained items soliciting data regarding time spent on social media platforms. These items were constructed based on relevant literature. Section 'C' was made up of 15 items adapted from the Facebook Jealousy Scale by Muise, Christofides and Desmarais (2009), and this solicited information on Social media-induced jealousy. Section 'D' was made up of 13 items adapted from the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale by Crane, Middleton and Bean (2000), and this measured marital satisfaction.

This study adapted the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) and the Facebook Jealousy Scale. The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale was used to measure marital satisfaction. The RDAS was developed by Crane, Middleton and Bean (2000) to measure marital satisfaction among married couples by assessing seven dimensions



of couple relationships within three overarching categories including Consensus in decision making, values and affection, satisfaction in the relationship with respect to stability and conflict. RDAS contains 14 items, each of which asks the respondents to rate certain aspects of her/his relationship on a 5 or 6-point scale. The Facebook Jealousy Scale by Muise, Christofides and Desmarais (2009) was adapted to measure social media-induced jealousy. This scale is made up items measured on a 7-point Likert scale which the researcher altered to a 5-point Likert scale (0 not at all to 5 very likely) for easy interpretation. The reliability estimate of the scale was examined using Cronbach's alpha reliability method. The reliability coefficients obtained ranged from .91 - .96, an indication of good internal consistency.

### **Pre-Testing**

The questionnaire was once again pre-tested with 150 married couples in Accra. This was done to enhance the validity and reliability of items on the questionnaire before a final data collection. Additionally, the adopted scales were also pilot tested to determine whether the items on the questionnaire portray the intended meanings by the original researchers in Ghanaian context.

Results and feedback on the pre-test were used to refine the instrument before the final data collection. The instrument was finally validated. The validation was done using the Smart Partial Least Squares (SmartPLS), which was introduced by Ringle, Wende, and Will (2005). This type of SEM is very efficacious in performing a confirmatory factor analysis. In the confirmatory factor analysis, the theoretically predetermined factor structure is confirmed by the current data. In other words, in the confirmatory factor analysis, factors to be loaded on an observed variable are

predetermined. Thus, for the purpose of this study, the various scales of the instrument were confirmed with the collected data by means of confirmatory factor analysis.

In terms of the factor analysis, the factor loadings, construct validity, and reliability were determined. Items, which had low factor loadings (thus, below .30) were discarded before the final data collection (Pallant, 2010). In addition, convergent validity was assessed using AVE of .50 or more (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation proposed by Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt (2015). Henseler et al. found that HTMT is able to achieve higher specificity and sensitivity rates (97% to 99%) compared to the cross-loadings criterion (0.00%) and Fornell-Lacker (20.82%). HTMT values close to 1 indicates a lack of discriminant validity. Using the HTMT as a criterion involves comparing it to a predefined threshold. If the value of the HTMT is higher than this threshold, one can conclude that there is a lack of discriminant validity. Kline (2011) suggested a threshold of 0.85 In addition, Gold, Malhotra, and Segars (2001) argued with it and proposed a value of 0.90.

### **Social Media-Induced Jealousy Scale**

This aspect outlines the results on the validation of the “Social Media-Induced Jealousy Scale”. The details of the confirmatory factor analysis are presented in Tables 3, 4, 5 and Figure 1.

As shown in Table 3, the factor loadings of items B2, B4, and B5 were below .30, as a result, these items were discarded since their factor loadings were below the recommended loading (Pallant, 2010).

**Table 3.1: Factor loadings of Social Media-Induced Jealousy Scale**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Factor Loading</b>
C1	.288*

C2	.616
C3	.529
C4	.282*
C5	.399
C6	.771
C7	.221*
C8	.721
C9	.443
C10	.678
C11	.761
C12	.752
C13	.488
C14	.765
C15	.204*

### Reliability and Convergent Validity

The reliability (internal consistency) and convergent validity of the scales on the questionnaire were also estimated. An alpha value of .70 or above was considered appropriate for internal consistency (Karagoz, 2016). The coefficients are presented in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4: Reliability and Convergent Validity of Social Media-Induced Jealousy**

Scale			
Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
.76	.86	.82	.30

From Table 3.4, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for Social Media-Induced Jealousy scale was .76 and the corresponding composite reliability was .82. Generally,

these coefficients are good indicators of internal consistency, since they were not below .70. The results in Table 3.4 further revealed that the AVEs (Average Variance Extracted) was less than .50. This suggests that convergent validity for Social Media-Induced Jealousy scale was not established. Convergent validity was assessed using AVE (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

### **Marital Satisfaction scale**

This section presents the results on the validation of the marital satisfaction scale. The details of the confirmatory factor analysis are presented in Tables 3.5, and 3.6.



**Table 3. 2: Factor loadings of Marital Satisfaction Scale**

Items	Factor Loading
D1	.456
D2	.578
D3	.569
D4	.658
D5	.214*
D6	.708
D7	.596
D8	.203*
D9	.429
D10	.619
D11	.596
D12	.782
D13	.789

As presented in Table 3.5, all the items had loadings above .30 in exception of items D5 and D8. These two items were discarded since their factor loadings were below the recommended loading (Pallant, 2010).

The reliability (internal consistency) estimate for the scales were estimated using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The coefficients are presented in Table 3.6.

**Table 3. 3: Reliability and Convergent Validity of Marital Satisfaction Scale**

Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
.82	.84	.80	.31

From Table 3.6, the Cronbach's Alpha and the composite reliability coefficients for the scale was above .70. This coefficient is a good indicator of the internal consistency of the scale. The results in Table 3.6 further revealed that AVEs for the scale was less than .50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This implies that convergent validity for the marital satisfaction scale was partially established.

### Data Collection Procedures

The researcher visited schools, working places and worshiping centres to administer the questionnaires after handing over a cover letter from the Department of Counselling Psychology. Visiting these centres gave me the convenience in meeting a large number of married couples and made accessibility easy for me. The leaders of the centres were contacted for approval to engage married couples in the study. Respondents were briefed on how to respond to the items and they were given the opportunity to ask questions or to call the researcher to clarify difficulties encountered in the course of responding to the items. In order to encourage the respondents' quick response to the questionnaire, they were served with the cover letter to explain the purpose of the study and the importance of the study to the respondents. It took 15 minutes for a participant to complete a questionnaire. On the specified dates, myself and four other trained research assistants, assisted in the distribution of the questionnaires by hand to the married couples with in Sogakope township. During working days, the researcher together with trained research assistants visited schools and work places. In addition, gathering places such as markets and churches were

visited on weekends to solicit for the opinions of married couples in these places. The completed questionnaires were retrieved immediately. This increased the return rate of the questionnaires administered. Since this study covered a number of gathering places, the total duration for the data collection was five weeks. A 90% return rate was achieved.

### **Data Processing and Analysis**

The questionnaires were scrutinised systematically to ensure their completeness. Respondents who did not respond to more than 10% of the items on the questionnaire were eliminated (Martin & Bridgmon, 2012). The questionnaires were then numbered from one to the last number. The data was screened for entry errors and outliers. Inferential analyses (independent t-tests, Analysis of Variance as well as simple mediation) were done using a confidence interval of 95% and an alpha level of .05. Regarding the inferential analysis, the researcher checked for the normality assumptions together with other significant assumptions depending on the type of statistical analysis. To further enhance the precision of the results, the bootstrap approach was used for the inferential analyses. This procedure took care of the anomaly of the distribution of scores on the variables.

The regression analyses with 1000 bootstrap samples with bias corrected accelerated confidence intervals for hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 was deemed appropriate. Hypothesis 5 was tested using Independent samples t-tests. Hypothesis 6 was tested using the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). In furtherance, for a particular result to be significant, the bootstrap upper and lower confidence interval should not contain '0', thus, both the upper and lower confidence intervals should be of the same sign ('++' or '--'). This means the confidence interval does not include 0, which means the regression coefficient cannot be 0. Hypothesis 4 was tested using the simple

mediation model of PROCESS by Hayes (2018) with 5000 bootstrap samples. The intent of this hypothesis was to examine whether social media-induced jealousy would explain/mediate the relationship between social media usage and marital satisfaction. This hypothesis was tested using model 4 of PROCESS which deals with simple mediation. In this model, social media-induced jealousy was used as a mediator in the relationship between social media usage and marital satisfaction. All the variables were continuous-scaled variables.





## CHAPTER FOUR

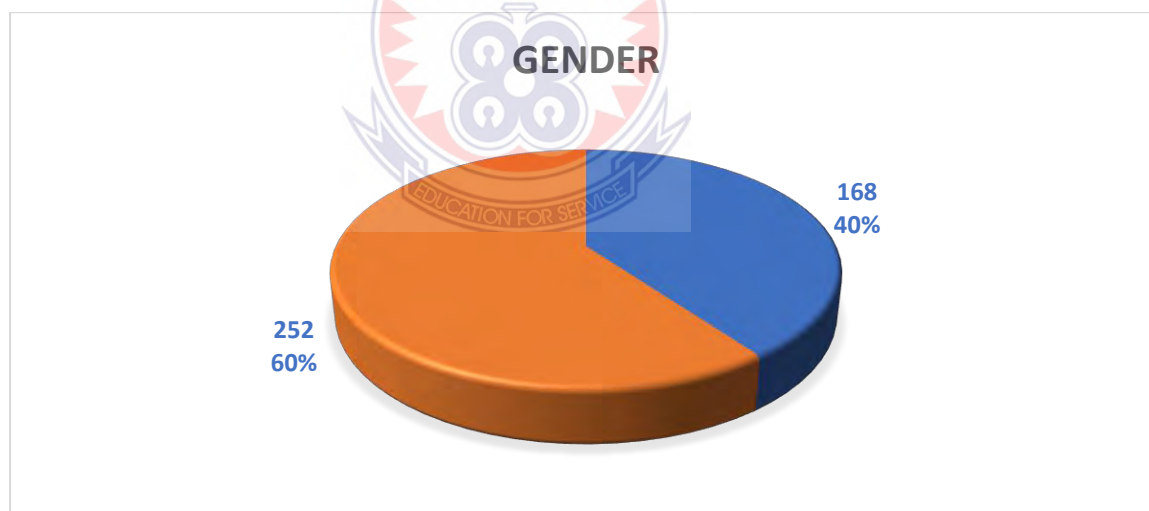
### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### Introduction

This chapter is segmented into three main sections. The first section looked at the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The second section focused on the presentation and discussion of the main findings of the study in line with the various hypotheses formulated.

#### Respondents' Characteristics

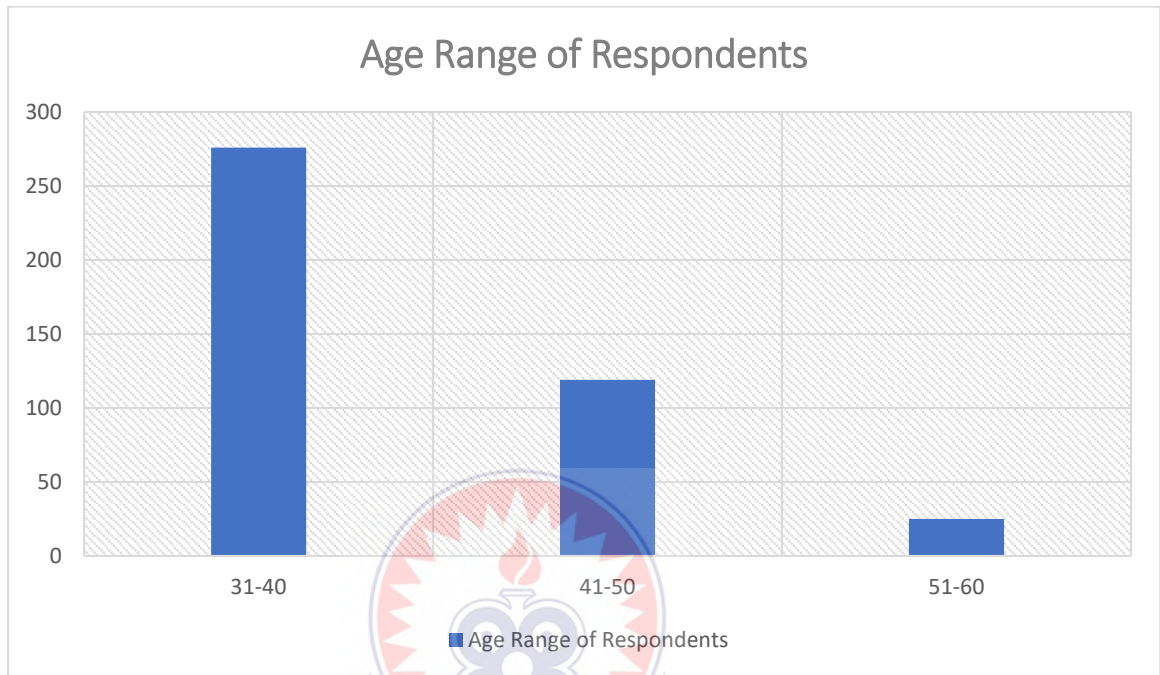
This section deals with the demographic information of the respondents. These include gender and age range of respondents. Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 give details of these demographic distribution.



**Figure 4.1: Gender Distribution of Respondents**

It is seen from the Figure 4.1 that, most of the respondents used for the study were females (60%) as compared to male respondents (40%). The disparity in the sex distribution was due to the fact that it was difficult to get married couples thus husband and wife concurrently. Hence, the sample size and selection were based on men who

were married (husband) and women who were married (wife). As a result, the 420 participants comprised individual men and women with marital status within Sokagope. The study also sought to find out the ages of the respondents. Figure 4.2 presents results on the ages of respondents.



**Figure 4. 2: Age Distribution of Respondents**

The result in Figure 4.2 shows that majority of the 276 (65.7%) respondents were between the ages of 31-40, while the age range of 41-50, 119 (28.3%) of the respondents fall within that range. Also, a total of 25 (6.0%) respondents falls within the ages of 51-60.

#### **Nature of social media use as reported by couples**

The respondents reported on their preferred social media platforms. The details of the results are presented in Table 4.1

**Table 4. 1: Social media platforms frequently used by couples**

Social Media	Frequency	%
--------------	-----------	---

Facebook	333	79.28
Twitter	161	38.33
Instagram	163	38.80
WhatsApp	420	100.00

Source: Field data (2022).

The result in Table 4.1 shows that the respondents reported highly on the use of WhatsApp (100%). It was followed by Facebook (79.28%) and Instagram (38.80). Twitter was not frequently used by the respondents (38.33).

### Research Hypothesis one:

H<sub>0</sub>: Social media use does not significantly predict marital satisfaction among married couples

H<sub>1</sub>: Social media use significantly predict marital satisfaction among married couples

This hypothesis sought to determine whether social media usage among married couples would predict marital satisfaction. The hypothesis was tested using a simple linear regression analysis with 1000 bootstrap samples with bias corrected accelerated confidence intervals. The bootstrap samples were interpreted in terms of confidence intervals. For a particular result to be significant, the bootstrap upper and lower confidence interval should not contain '0', thus, both the upper and lower confidence intervals should be of the same sign ('+ +' or '- -'). Table 4.2 presents the results.

**Table 4. 2: The Influence of Social Media usage on Marital Satisfaction**

Dependent Variable	B	Beta	Bias	P value	Std Error	95% C. I	
						Lower	Upper

Marital	-2.723	-.543	.058	.001	.438	-3.515	-1.3675
Satisfaction							
Adjusted $R^2 = .291$ .							

The results in Table 4.2 show that social media usage explained 29.5%, of the variances in marital satisfaction. The results further revealed that social media usage was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction,  $B = -2.723$ , *Boot 95%CI* (-3.52, -1.37).

This implies that, the time a married couple spent on social media platform influences how satisfied they are in their marriage union. For example, the results suggest that, a unit increase in time spent on social media platforms would lead to an inverse decrease of 2.72 in marital satisfaction among married couples. That is to say, the more time a married couple spent on social media platform the less happy he/she becomes in the marriage union and vice-versa. It can be inferred from this finding that anytime there is an increase in the use of social media, marital satisfaction may decrease.

### **Research Hypothesis two:**

$H_0$ : Social media use does not significantly predict jealousy among married couples.

$H_1$ : Social media use significantly predict jealousy among married couples.

The purpose of this hypothesis was to determine whether social media usage would predict the emotional feeling of jealousy among couples. The simple linear regression analysis with 1000 bootstrap samples was performed to test this hypothesis. The predictor variable was social media usage and this was measured on a continuous basis. The criterion variable was Jealousy which was also measured on a continuous basis. Details of the results are presented in Table 4.3

**Table 4. 3: How Social Media usage induce Jealousy**

Dependent Variable	B	Beta	Bias	P value	Std Error	95% C. I	
						Lower	Upper
Jealousy	.991	.285	-.055	.038	.454	.038	1.693

Adjusted  $R^2 = .081$ .

The results in Table 4.3 indicate that social media usage explained 8.1% of the variances in Jealousy. It was further evident from the results that, social media usage significantly predicted the feeling of jealousy among married couples  $B = .99$ , *Boot 95%CI* (.038, 1.693).

The results imply that, the frequent usage of social media platforms could result in an unpleasant emotional feeling such as jealousy among married couples. That is to say, married couples who attached a lot of importance to social media activities and hence spent more time on social media platforms without paying attention to their partners are more likely to induce jealousy in their counterpart. In other words, a social media addictive partner is more likely to experience unpleasant emotional or attitudinal response from his/her partner.

### **Research Hypothesis three:**

$H_0$ : Social media-induced jealousy does not significantly predict marital satisfaction.

$H_1$ : Social media-induced jealousy significantly predict marital satisfaction.

The purpose of this hypothesis was to determine whether social media-induced jealousy would predict marital satisfaction among couples. The simple linear regression analysis with 1000 bootstrap samples was performed to test this hypothesis. The predictor variable was social media-induced jealousy and this was measured on a continuous

basis. The criterion variable was marital satisfaction which was also measured on a continuous basis. Details of the results are presented in Table 4.4.

**Table 4. 4: How Social Media-Induced Jealousy influences Marital satisfaction**

Dependent Variable	B	Beta	Bias	P value	Std Error	95% C. I	
						Lower	Upper
Marital Satisfaction	-.863	-.788	-	.001	-.031	-.922	-.800

Adjusted  $R^2 = .62$ .

The results in Table 4.4 show that social media-induced jealousy explained 62% of the variances in marital satisfaction. The results further revealed that social media-induced jealousy,  $B = -.86$ , *Boot 95%CI* (-.92, -.80) was a significant negative predictor of marital satisfaction. The results imply that the more jealous a couple's partner becomes the less likely couples are satisfied with their marriage union and vice versa. In other words, the feeling of insecurity among married couples could lower one's self-esteem making him/her perceived other people as threats to the married relationship. This unpleasant feeling could possibly lead to one trying to control the other partner activities, hence resulting to marital dissatisfaction.

**Research Hypothesis four:**

H<sub>0</sub>: Social media-induced jealousy does not significantly mediate the relationship between social media usage and marital satisfaction among married couples.

H<sub>1</sub>: Social media-induced jealousy significantly mediate the relationship between social media usage and marital satisfaction among married couples.

The intent of this hypothesis was to examine whether social media-induced jealousy would explain/mediate the relationship between social media usage and marital satisfaction among married couples. The mediation analysis was performed using Model 4 of Hayes' PROCESS, with 5000 bootstrap samples. The predictor variable was social media usage (X), and the criterion variable was marital satisfaction (Y). Both variables were measured on a continuous basis. The mediating variable was social media-induced jealousy (M), this was also measured on a continuous basis. Details of the results are presented in Table 4.5.

**Table 4. 5: Model Summary**

Model	Variable	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Df1	Df2	P
One	Constant	.29	14.10	1	159	.00
	Social Media Usage					
Two	Constant	.32	56.55	2	158	.00
	Social Media Usage					
	Induced Jealousy					

**Table 4. 6: Regression Coefficients for Marital Satisfaction**

Model	Variable	B	BSE	CR	BLLCI	BULCI
One	Constant	21.95	1.81	12.12	18.37	25.53
	Social Media Usage	.99	.26	3.75	.47	1.51
Two	Constant	60.08	3.14	19.16	53.89	66.28
	Social Media Usage	-2.51	.34	-7.28	-3.19	-1.83
	Induced Jealousy	-.22	.10	-2.21	-.41	-.02

From Table 4.5 and 4.6, the model for Social media usage, was statistically significant,  $F(1, 159) = 14.10$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $R^2 = .29$ . Social Media usage was therefore a

significant predictor of marital satisfaction,  $B = 21.95$ , Boot 95%CI (.47, 1.51). Similarly, model two which contains Social media usage and Social media-induced jealousy, was statistically significant,  $F(2, 158) = 56.55$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $R^2 = .32$ . Thus, in model two, both social media usage,  $B = -2.51$ , Boot 95%CI (-3.19, -1.83); and social media-induced Jealousy,  $B = -0.22$ , Boot 95%CI (-0.41, -0.02) were significant predictors of marital satisfaction. Details of the indirect effect (mediation analysis) is presented in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.7: Indirect Effect, Direct Effect and Total Effect for Marital Satisfaction**

	Effect	BSE	CR	P	LLCI	ULCI
Total effect of X on Y	-2.72	.33	-8.16	.00	-3.38	-2.06
Direct effect of X on Y	-2.51	.34	-7.28	.00	-3.19	-1.83
Indirect effect of X on Y	Effect	BSE	BLLCI	BULCI		
	-.22	.19	-.68	.01		

Completely standardised effect (c'cs): Total effect = -.54; Direct effect = -.50  
X- Social Media Usage; Y- Marital Satisfaction. \*Significant,  $p < .05$  level

As shown in Table 4.7, the direct effect of Social media usage on marital satisfaction was statistically significant,  $B = -2.51$ , Boot 95%CI (-3.19, -1.83). This implies that without the mediator variable (Social media-induced Jealousy), social media usage solely predicted marital satisfaction. This suggests that, a unit increase in social media usage would adversely or negatively influence marital satisfaction. Thus, married couples who attach a lot of importance or attention to social media activities are more likely experience marital dissatisfaction in their union. Further, when the mediator variable (social media-induced jealousy) was introduced into the relationship, as shown in the indirect effect, the relationship was equally statistically significant, -.22, Boot 95%CI (-.68, .01). This implies that, social media-induced jealousy



mediated/explained the relationship between social media usage and marital satisfaction among married couples.

**Research Hypothesis five:**

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference in the time married couples in Sogakope spent on social media with reference to their gender.

H<sub>1</sub>: Female married couples spend more time on social media than married males in Sogakope.

To assess whether male and female married couples differ in the time, they spent on social media platforms. Thus “Female married person will spend more time on social media than married male person in Sogakope”. To test for gender difference in social media use among married couples, an independent samples t-test was conducted on the data. Respondents were required to select social media platforms they frequently used, hence it was possible for respondents to select as many as applicable to them. It is therefore, possible the responsible to a social media platform will not sum up to the 420 respondents. The results are presented in Table 4.8.

**Table 4. 8: T-test analysis on gender and nature of social media use**

Social Media	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t	P
Facebook	Male	125	1.58	.64	323.56	-3.135	.00
	Female	208	1.85	.91			
Twitter	Male	66	1.21	.57	81.83	2.003	.00
	Female	95	1.06	.25			
Instagram	Male	66	1.21	.57	161	.605	.154
	Female	97	1.16	.43			
WhatsApp	Male	166	2.13	1.03	382.88	-1.608	.00
	Female	254	2.31	1.17			

Source: Field data (2022).

Table 4.8 shows that differences exist in the individual mean scores of male and female respondents with respect to the time spent on social media platforms among couples. The independent sample t-test analysis indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in time spent on Facebook among male ( $M = 1.58$ ;  $SD = .64$ ) and female married couples ( $M = 1.85$ ;  $SD = .91$ );  $t(323.56) = -3.135$ ,  $p = .00$ . This means that most married females in Sogakope spent much of their time on Facebook than their male counterparts. Hence the mean difference observed in the descriptive statistics. Similarly, there was a statistically significant difference in time spent on WhatsApp among married females ( $M = 2.31$ ;  $SD = 1.03$ ) and married males ( $M = 2.13$ ;  $SD = 1.03$ );  $t(382.88) = -1.068$ ,  $p = .00$ . In the same vein, married males and females differ statistically in terms of time spent on Twitter;  $t(81.83) = 2.003$ ,  $p = .00$ . Conversely, there was no statistically significant difference in time spent on Instagram among married females ( $M = 1.16$ ;  $SD = 0.43$ ) and males ( $M = 1.21$ ;  $SD = .57$ );  $t(161) = .605$ ,  $p = .154$ . This finding could be that most couples in Sogakope do not see themselves to

be public figures, hence do not patronize the use of Instagram which requires them uploading videos about their life.

### Research Hypothesis six:

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference in social media use among individuals with married status with respect to their age groupings.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is statistically significant difference in social media use among individuals with married status with respect to their age groupings.

To assess whether there is a statistically significant age difference in the amount of time spent on social media platform by married couples in Sogakope. Thus “There is a statistically significant difference in social media use among married couples with respect to their age groupings”. ANOVA test was run to answer the hypothesis and the results are presented in Table 4.9 and Table 4.10 respectively.

**Table 4. 9: Descriptive statistics on social media usage by age range**

Social media/Age	N	Mean	S. D	Homogeneity of Variance				
				Levene's	Df1	Df2	Sig.	
Facebook	31-40 years	237	1.97	.85	34.587	2	330	.000
	41-50 years	80	1.25	.44				
	51-60 years	16	1.00	.00				
Instagram	31-40 years	111	1.27	.57	33.548	2	160	.000
	41-50 years	40	1.00	.00				
	51-60 years	12	1.00	.00				
Twitter	31-40 years	109	1.18	.49	18.072	2	158	.000
	41-50 years	40	1.00	.00				
	51-60 years	12	1.00	.00				
WhatsAp p	31-40 years	276	2.60	1.12	30.365	2	417	.000
	41-50 years	119	1.60	.76				
	51-60 years	25	1.28	.46				

Source: Field data (2022)

From the descriptive statistics it appears that the usage of social media platforms differs with respect to age. The descriptive statistics, however, does not really tell whether the difference that exists is significant. Hence, a reliance on the ANOVA test results to determine that. In employing the ANOVA results for confirmation, the homogeneity of variances assumption was not met for all the analysis. The results, indicated from the Levene's tests, showed that equal variances were not assumed (Levene's statistic (2, 330) = 34.587;  $p = .00$ ; Levene's statistic (2, 160) = 33.548;  $p = .00$ ; Levene's statistic (2, 158) = 18.072;  $p = .00$ ; Levene's statistic (2, 417) = 30.365;  $p = .00$ ), hence the Welch Brown significant values and its test statistics were used and the ANOVA test results were regarded on the verification whether the differences existing in the descriptive are statistically significant. The ANOVA results is presented in Table 4.10.

**Table 4. 10: One-way ANOVA test on nature of social media use by age**

Social media		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta Square
Facebook	Between Groups	40.519	2	20.260	35.601	.000*	0.177
	Within Groups	187.793	330	.569			
	Total	228.312	332				
Instagram	Between Groups	2.587	2	1.293	5.765	.004*	0.067
	Within Groups	35.892	160	.224			
	Total	38.479	162				
Twitter	Between Groups	1.185	2	.593	3.556	.031*	0.043
	Within Groups	26.330	158	.167			
	Total	27.516	160				
WhatsApp	Between Groups	108.352	2	54.176	54.328	.000*	0.206
	Within Groups	415.838	417	.997			

Total	524.190	419
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Source: Field data (2022)

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to compare the mean differences in social media usage with respect to couples' age. Age ranges were grouped into three (31-40 years; 41-50 years; 51-60 years). There was a statistically significant difference in the use of Facebook as a media platform among the age range of married couples [ $F(2, 330) = 35.601, p = .00$ ]. Despite reaching a statistical significance, the actual difference in mean between the three age groups was small (eta squared = .177). This suggests that 17.7% of variance is associated with Facebook usage.

Similarly, there was a statistically significant difference in the use of Instagram as a media platform among the age range of married couples [ $F(2, 160) = 5.765, p = .004$ ]. Despite reaching a statistical significance, the actual difference in mean between the three age groups was quite small (eta squared = .067). This suggests that 6.7% of variance is associated with Instagram usage.

In the same vein, there was a statistically significant difference in the use of Twitter as a media platform among the age range of married couples [ $F(2, 158) = 3.556, p = .031$ ]. The use of WhatsApp media platform among couples with respect to their age groups indicated a statistically significant difference [ $F(2, 417) = 54.328, p = .000$ ]. Despite reaching a statistical significance, the actual difference in mean between the three age groups was small (eta squared = .206). This suggests that 20.6% of variance is associated with WhatsApp usage. Upon reaching a statistical significance, a post hoc comparison was deemed to be necessary hence conducted and the result is shown in Table 4.11.

**Table 4. 11: Post Hoc Comparison**

Social Media	Age Range		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Facebook	31-40 years	41-50 years	.720*	.098	0.000
		51-60 years	.970*	.195	0.000
	41-50 years	31-40 years	-.720*	.098	0.000
		51-60 years	.250	.207	.448
	51-60 years	31-40 years	-.970	.195	0.000
		41-50 years	-.250	.207	.448
Instagram	31-40 years	41-50 years	.270*	.087	0.007
		51-60 years	.270	.144	0.148
	41-50 years	31-40 years	-.270*	.087	0.007
		51-60 years	.000	.156	1.000
	51-60 years	31-40 years	-.270	.144	.148
		41-50 years	.000	.156	1.000
Twitter	31-40 years	41-50 years	.183*	.075	0.042
		51-60 years	.183	.124	0.304
	41-50 years	31-40 years	-.183*	.075	0.042
		51-60 years	.000	.134	1.000
	51-60 years	31-40 years	-.183	.124	.304
		41-50 years	.000	.134	1.000
WhatsApp	31-40 years	41-50 years	1.005*	.110	0.000
		51-60 years	1.321	.209	0.000
	41-50 years	31-40 years	-1.005*	.110	0.000
		51-60 years	.317	.220	0.321
	51-60 years	31-40 years	-1.321*	.209	0.000
		41-50 years	-.317	.220	0.321

Source: Field Survey, (2022)

\*Mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

A Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score with respect to Facebook media usage for couples within the age range of 31-40 years ( $M = 1.97, SD = .85$ ) was significantly different from couples in the age bracket 41-50 years ( $M = 1.25, SD = .44$ ). In addition, a significant difference was observed in among

couples within the ages of 31-40 years ( $M = 1.97, SD = .85$ ) and 51-60 years ( $M = 1.00, SD = .00$ ).

For the use of Instagram among married couples, a post-hoc comparison indicated that the mean score for couples within the age brackets of 31-40 years ( $M = 1.27, SD = .57$ ) was significantly different from couples in the age bracket 41-50 years ( $M = 1.00, SD = .00$ ).

The use of Twitter as media platform among married couples, a post-hoc comparison indicated that the mean score for couples within the age brackets of 31-40 years ( $M = 1.18, SD = .49$ ) was significantly different from couples in the age bracket 41-50 years ( $M = 1.00, SD = .00$ ).

A final Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score with respect to WhatsApp media usage for couples within the age range of 31-40 years ( $M = 2.60, SD = 1.12$ ) was significantly different from couples in the age bracket 41-50 years ( $M = 1.60, SD = .76$ ). In addition, a significant difference was observed among couples within the ages of 31-40 years ( $M = 2.60, SD = 1.12$ ) and 51-60 years ( $M = 1.28, SD = .46$ ).

These post hoc results indicate that indeed statistically the usage of social media platforms among married couples in Sogakope is not the same across age range. Hence social media usage varies among married couples with respect to their age.

## **Discussion of Results**

### **The nature of Social media platforms frequently used by married couples**

The study revealed that, the social media platforms commonly used among married couples were WhatsApp and Facebook. The result disagrees with Yarov's (2010) study which found that couples use Twitter frequently. Similarly, Wu et al (2011) found that Twitter provides opportunity for variety of individuals and organizations to publicize their actions which made it attractive to users, including couples of various age groupings. The results further disagree with Huang and Su's (2018) study which found that Instagram is currently the most popular social media app among young people around the world. Also, Sheldon and Bryant (2016) reported that Internet users spend more time on Instagram than on other social media sites (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). It appears couples in Sogakope are not celebrities who may publicise their actions online for others to follow. This result is not surprising judging from the socio-economic background of many couples in the township. It could also be that social media platforms such as tweeter and Instagram were less known to most married couples in Sogakope.

According to Sharaievska (2012), the overall number of Facebook users globally is on the rise with majority of the increase coming from developing countries. This assertion was later confirmed by Saleh and Mukhtar (2015) that the Facebook is the most frequently used social media in Dutse L.G.A Jigawa State, Nigeria. In this study, Facebook is the second preferred social media platform frequently used among marriage couples. The outcome could be described in the words of Snow (2011) as "Facebook fatigue" among couples. It appears couples in Sogakope have found alternative means of communicating thoughts and feelings with predefined images.



WhatsApp platforms provide alternative means where couples in Sogakope disseminate social information. Agreeably, Church and Oliveira (2013), in their multi-method study involving 140 individuals (between 20 and 60-year old) in Spain, found that WhatsApp was commonly adopted for convenience in communication and cost benefits. It is this convenience in communication and cost benefits that could be driving couples in Sogakope to frequently use this social media platform. Perhaps, couples see this media as ideal for sharing photos, messages, contacts, videos, make voice and video calls to anywhere in the world at relatively cheaper cost as compared to other social media

### **Gender and social media use among married couples**

The study revealed that social media usage significantly differs among married couples when there are categorised in terms of gender. By implication, husbands and wives approximately use social media platforms in different measure. The result supports the findings of Pfeiffer et al.'s (2014) who reported that the use of social media platforms in Africa is influenced by gender. Similarly, the result is in line with Saleh and Mukhtar (2015) position that more women are subscribing to the social media than their male counterparts. Tufekci (2008) also found that women are four to five times more likely than men to use social networking sites. In terms of specific findings, it was established that differences in the use of Facebook could be attributed to gender as Bartholomew et al. (2012) and Mazman and Usluel (2011) reported in their respective studies. Huang and Su (2018) and Goudreau (2010) revealed that female users constitute the majority and are also more active on Facebook.

In addition, the finding supports Skogen, Hjetland, Bøe, Hella, and Knudsen (2021), assertion that married females are higher than the average index for paying attention to their online feedback and spend more time and energy on online activities.

One possible reason for their dependence on social media activities could be that they could lack self-control, making it difficult to overcome their desires.

It is deduced that knowledge in the use of social media is skewed among married couples in Sogakope with respect to gender. One reason that helped to explain this finding was that married couples in general relied more on, and often used social media when attempting to acquire or share information with others. For example, messaging, following, tweeting and videoing are common phenomena among social media users. This finding also implied that preferred social media platforms could be influenced by gender.

### **Age differences in the use of social media among married couples**

The study revealed a statistically significant difference among married couples with respect to their age and usage of social media platforms. A further analysis revealed that married couples with the age range of 31-40 years make significant use of social media platforms. This finding supports the assertion of Li, Lin, Wu, Xue, and Zhang (2021) that social media plays an important role in middle-aged people's daily life. According to Scott (2014) people between the ages of 30 and 44 have relatively stable families and jobs, and they usually need to communicate with their family and working partners by smartphone. As a result, social media not only play a recreational role in the daily life of middle-aged people, but they can also help work and strengthen family ties (Scott, 2014). Similarly, the finding is in line with Coto, Lizano, Mora, and Fuentes (2017) conclusion that social media provide elders with platforms to build connections regardless of the location and time, significantly reducing the sense of loneliness and increasing elders' life quality and mental health. It could be that married couples within the age range of 30-40 years in Sogakope relied on social media deal with their state of boredom.

### **How Social Media usage could predict Marital Satisfaction**

The study revealed that social media usage was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. This implies that, the time a married couple spent on social media platform influences how satisfied they are in their marriage union. In other words, the results suggest that, a unit increase in time spent on social media platforms would lead to an inverse decrease of 2.72 in marital satisfaction among married couples. That is to say, the more time a married couple spent on social media platform the less happy he/she becomes in the marriage union and vice-versa.

The findings agreed with the thought of Henline and Harris (2006) that technology in general introduces a potential to misinterpret messages between partners in relationships and marriages which may lead to dissatisfaction in the relationship. Following people, viewing pictures and commenting on post may create barriers in problem solving and intimacy development. Similarly, the finding supports Lumpkin (2021) assertion that most social medial platforms such as the Facebook and WhatsApp have contributed to a number of marriage breakdowns as a result of dissatisfaction in the relationship.

### **How Social Media usage could predict Jealousy among married couples**

The results imply that, the frequent usage of social media platforms could result in an unpleasant emotional feeling such as jealousy among married couples. That is to say, married couples who attached a lot of importance to social media activities and hence spent more time on social media platforms without paying attention to their partners are more likely to induce jealousy in their counterpart. In other words, a social media addictive partner is more likely to experience unpleasant emotional or attitudinal response from his/her partner. This finding supports Si (2012), assertion that addiction to social media activities such as WhatsApp festers negative emotions in users;

including anxiety, guilt, pressure, distraction, embarrassment, suspicion, and confusion. Symptoms of these emotions include worrying and a decreased self-esteem when faced with long replies, pressure to respond to messages immediately, relationship mistrust with who another person is contacting, confusion with regards to what the intended meaning of the message is, and more (Ali & Kootbodien, 2017). Social networks such as the Facebook introduce a potential to misinterpret messages on another's profile. Some make some comments on another's photograph, can send private messages and chat online. If this information is misinterpreted with a partner, it may lead to some disagreements within the household. Hertein and Anchet (2014) summarise by stating that the other challenges introduced by technology into relationships include distancing, lack of clarity and impaired trust. Henline and Harris (2006) state that technology introduces a potential to misinterpret messages between partners in relationships and marriages. This may create barriers in problem solving and intimacy development. Whitty (2003) also discovered that if a partner's computer is left accessible or a spouse's password is known, partners will often engage in investigatory behaviours that lead to the discovery of infidelity activities. Hawkins and Hertlein (2013) believed that online activities may disrupt intimacy processes and introduce feelings of exclusion which may result in perceived neglect and jealousy. It could also be that since people tend to show themselves as having a "perfect" life in front of strangers, other users seeing these contents may feel jealous, having dissatisfaction with their life and creating low self-esteem due to the comparison (Hunt, Marx, Lipson, & Young, 2018).

### **How Social Media-Induce Jealousy could predict marital satisfaction**

The study further revealed that social media-induced jealousy was a significant negative predictor of marital satisfaction. The results imply that the more jealous a married couple becomes the less likely his/her partner becomes satisfied with their

marriage union and vice versa. In other words, the feeling of insecurity among married couples could lower one's self-esteem making him/her perceived other people as threats to the married relationship. This unpleasant feeling could possibly lead to one trying to control the other partner activities, hence resulting to marital dissatisfaction. This finding supports Si (2012), assertion that addiction to social media activities such as WhatsApp festers negative emotions in users; including anxiety, guilt, pressure, distraction, embarrassment, suspicion, and confusion. Symptoms of these emotions include worrying and a decreased self-esteem when faced with long replies, pressure to respond to messages immediately, relationship mistrust with who another person is contacting, confusion with regards to what the intended meaning of the message is, and more (Ali & Kootbodien, 2017). Social networks such as the Facebook introduce a potential to misinterpret messages on another's profile. Some make some comments on another's photograph, can send private messages and chat online. If this information is misinterpreted with a partner, it may lead to some disagreements within the household. Hertein and Anchet (2014) summarise by stating that the other challenges introduced by technology into relationships include distancing, lack of clarity and impaired trust. Henline and Harris (2006) state that technology introduces a potential to misinterpret messages between partners in relationships and marriages. This may create barriers in problem solving and intimacy development. Whitty (2003) also discovered that if a partner's computer is left accessible or a spouse's password is known, partners will often engage in investigatory behaviours that lead to the discovery of infidelity activities. Hawkins and Hertlein (2013) believed that online activities may disrupt intimacy processes and introduce feelings of exclusion which may result in perceived neglect and jealousy.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter begins with a summary of the study, summary of the key findings relating to each objective and the conclusions drawn from each of them. Next, the specific recommendations, stemming from the findings and conclusions relevant for consideration by marriage counsellors, are then made. The chapter ends with some suggestions for further research.

#### Summary

The purpose of this study is to investigate social media usage, social media-induced jealousy and marital satisfaction among married couples in Sogakope Township in the Volta region of Ghana. Based on the population of 1,580 marriage individuals in the Sogakope Township, a sample of 420 was drawn for the study. The structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Data obtained were analysed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics. A summary of the key findings of the study follows.

#### Key Findings

1. Social media usage explained 29.5%, of the variances in marital satisfaction.

The results revealed that social media usage was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction.

2. Social media usage explained 8.1% of the variances in Jealousy. It was evident from the results that, social media usage significantly predicted the feeling of jealousy among married couples.

3. Social media-induced jealousy explained 62% of the variances in marital satisfaction. The results revealed that social media-induced jealousy, was a significant negative predictor of marital satisfaction.
4. Social media-induced jealousy mediated/explained the relationship between social media usage and marital satisfaction among married couples.
5. Differences exist in the individual mean scores of male and female respondents with respect to the time spent on social media platforms among married individuals.
6. How younger married couples use social media differ from how older married couples use social media.

## **Conclusion**

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings from the study. It was concluded that some married couples are not satisfied with their partners use of social media in daily interactions with others. Also, some married couple develops jealous attitudes as a result of their partners usage of social media for their daily interactions with others. The time spent on social media suggests that most female married couples are still glued to happenings on social media and may also be concern about their counter parts activities on such platforms.

Concerning gender and age differences, it was concluded that the use of social media differs across various gender and age groups. Female and male married couples would use social media platforms for sending and receiving message, audio and video contents but differs in terms of the they dedicate to these media platforms.

It was further concluded that couples recognise the consequential effects of social media usage on marriages. Divorce in marriage characterised by social media

addiction is imminent as online infidelity is likely to compromise stability of relationship. Finally, regarding whether statistically significant relationship exist between social media-induced jealousy and marital satisfaction, it was concluded that a negative strong relationship exists between the two variables. This suggest that anytime there is an increase in the feeling of jealousy as a result of a couple's addiction to social media activities, marital satisfaction may decrease and vice-versa.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the key findings and conclusions, the study recommends the following:

1. Married couples should be encouraged to control their usage of social media and be open to their partners on what they do with social media to reduce dissatisfaction in marriages.
2. Married couples should be conscious about the amount of time spent on such media. This will help reduce and eliminate the unpleasant feeling of jealousy among married couples and help improve healthy marital relationship.
3. The study revealed a significant difference among male and female married couples with respect to their social media usage. As a result, it is recommended that marriage counsellors should exploit how social media platforms could be used in healthy ways to promote communication among married couples.
4. The study revealed a statistically significant difference among married couples with respect to their age and usage of social media platforms. It is recommended that Couples' age should be significant variables to be considered by marriage counsellors when creating awareness on the applications of social media to enhance communication among married couples. For this reason, counsellors



should highlight the potential problem that social media usage could pose on marital satisfaction among couples.

5. The study revealed that the frequent usage of social media platforms could result in an unpleasant emotional feeling such as jealousy among married couples. It therefore, recommended that married couples should be encouraged to pay attention to the emotional feelings of their partner and must avoid engaging in social media activities that will elicit unpleasant emotions. This will in turn help married couples avoid needless argument, insecurity and misunderstanding which are possible indicators of marital dissatisfaction.

### **Contribution to Practice**

The results of the study have contributed practically in the area of marriage counselling. Marriage counsellors would lay more emphasis on the use of social media and its negative impact on marriage unions.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

Since the sampling size of this study was small it really only scratches the surface. A larger survey would offer more data about the phenomenon. Qualitative research that includes more detailed experiences and perceptions should also be conducted. Ideally, research that not only asks participants about their perceptions, but also employs ethnographic observations, and experimental research should be included in further studies.

### **Limitations of the Study**

A study of this nature revealed some challenges which might affect the validity of the responses. The self-report nature of the questionnaire predisposes the results to some biases as the validity and reliability of the results obtained are dependent on the accuracy of the responses provided by the respondents. Thus, respondents who provide false information cannot be easily traced and removed from the analysis. However, respondents were assured of confidentiality and informed consent was taken to ensure that respondents provided accurate and objective data. Again, since data was gathered within a defined geographical location the results of this study may not be generalised beyond the study area.



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## APPENDICES

## SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MARRIED COUPLES

**Dear Sir/Madam**

My name is Roseline Adzaho, and I am a graduate student at University of Education, Winneba. I am inviting you to participate in a research study “**Social Media-Induced Jealousy and Marital Satisfaction: A study of Married Couples in Sogakope Township**”. Your involvement in the study is voluntary, so you are not obligated to participate and there are no consequences for deciding not to participate in the study. You are not also obligated to identify yourself by name; however, you will be asked questions about your identity (i.e. gender, and age). Information you include in this survey will remain fully confidential and will only be reviewed by the researcher and the researcher’s supervisor. You are encouraged to complete the survey privately and not share responses with your spouse in order to ensure minimal risk.

**Instructions:** Please answer the following questions by putting a tick (✓) or number for each appropriate answer to the best of your ability.

**Section A: Demographic Information**

1. What is your sex?

Male	Female

2. How old are you?

Less than 30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	51-60 years	61 years and above

**Section B: Social Media Use**

3. How much time a day do you spend on your preferred social media?

Social Media	Less than 1hr	1 - 3hrs	4 - 6hrs	More than 6hrs
Facebook				
Twitter				
Instagram				
WhatsApp				

### Section C: Social Media Induced Jealousy

Please, indicate your degree of agreement with each statement with respect to how each applies to you by tick.

4. Very Likely (VL)

3. Likely (L)

2. Unlikely (UL)

1. Somewhat unlikely (SU)

0. Very unlikely (VU)

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>VU 0</b>	<b>SU 1</b>	<b>U L 2</b>	<b>L 3</b>	<b>VL 4</b>
1.	I become jealous after seeing that my partner has added an unknown member of the opposite sex to social media platform					
2.	I become upset when my partner does not post an accurate relationship status on his/her social media handle					
3.	I feel threatened when my partner adds a previous romantic or sexual partner to his or her social media friends.					
4.	I monitor my partner's activities on social media					
5.	I become jealous after seeing that my partner has posted a message on the wall of someone of the opposite sex.					
6.	I question my partner about his or her social media friends.					

7	I experience jealousy when my partner posts pictures on social media of him or herself with an arm around a member of the opposite sex.					
8	I become upset when my partner limits my access to his or her social media profile.					
9	I become jealous when my partner posts pictures of him or herself with a previous romantic or sexual partner on social media					
10	I am suspicious about the private messages that my partner sends over on social media handles.					
11	I worry that my partner will become romantically involved with someone on social media platforms.					
12	I become jealous after seeing that my partner has received a wall message from someone of the opposite sex.					
13	I look at my partner's social media pages when I am suspicious of his/her activities.					
14	I fight with my partner about social media.					
15	I question my partner about his or her social media activities.					

**Section D: Marital Satisfaction**

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

		<b>Always Agree</b>	<b>Almo st alway s Agree</b>	<b>Occasion ally Agree</b>	<b>Frequent ly disagree</b>	<b>Almost Always disagree</b>	<b>Always Disagre e</b>
1.	Religious matters	5	4	3	2	1	0
2.	Demonstrations of affection	5	4	3	2	1	0
3.	Making major decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
4.	Sex relations	5	4	3	2	1	0
5.	Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)	5	4	3	2	1	0
6.	Career decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0

		<b>All the time</b>	<b>Most of the time</b>	<b>More often than not</b>	<b>Occasion ally</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Never</b>
7.	How often have you considered divorce?	0	1	2	3	4	5
8.	How often do you and your partner quarrel?	0	1	2	3	4	5

9.	Do you ever regret that you married?	0	1	2	3	4	5
10	How often do you and your mate get on each other's nerves?	0	1	2	3	4	5

**How often would you say the following events occur between you and your partner?**

		Never	Less than once	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More often
11	Have an exciting exchange of ideas	0	1	2	3	4	5
12	Work together on a project	0	1	2	3	4	5
13	Calmly discuss something	0	1	2	3	4	5

*Thank you.*