

## IMPACT OF PHUBBING BEHAVIOR ON RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION AMONG MARRIED COUPLES

Syed Muhammad Mudassir Ud Din<sup>\*1</sup>, Syeda Asma Gillani<sup>2</sup>, Alishba Tariq<sup>3</sup>,  
Jawaria Tariq<sup>4</sup>

<sup>\*1,3,4</sup>Student, Department of Psychology, University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muzaffarabad

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer Department of Psychology, University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muzaffarabad

### ABSTRACT

The current Research was aimed to assess the impact of phubbing behavior on relationship satisfaction among married couples in Muzaffarabad Azad Kashmir. The study investigate the significant difference across the level of education among couples on the basis of phubbing behavior. Sample of 300 married couples from Muzaffarabad Azad Kashmir was taken. Generic scale of phubbing (GSP), Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) were used. Total 22 questionnaires were received from the respondents from Muzaffarabad AJK. Analyze the data using SPSS (Social Science Statistical System).

The relationship is seen a negative correlation between the Phubbing behavior and Relationship satisfaction. Independent t-test analyzed that there is a significant difference between phubbing behavior and relationship satisfaction on the basis of gender among married couples. The ANOVA has been applied on education level and it analyzed that Higher education level participants exhibited higher levels of phubbing compared to lower education participants. Additionally, they individuals also showed lower levels of relationship satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Phubbing Behavior, Relationship Satisfaction, Married couples.

### INTRODUCTION

Phubbing is a combination of two words “phone” and “snubbing”. Being phubbed means to being snubbed by a person who is present with you in your company as he’s giving attention to his cell phone. The “phubb” word means an interrupting a conversation with someone when that person arrives, when he or she focuses to their smartphone or if you’re close to someone and he or she ignores you by attending their phone. Partner phubbing means phubbing while around your spouse or lover. (McDaniel & Coyne, 2014). Being a phubber can mean looking at your cell phone while talking to someone, interacting with one's phone, and avoiding human interaction. (Karadağ et al. 2015). Phubbing can be done anywhere and anytime, such as during meals, meetings conferences or discussion with family

and friends (Nazir and Pişkin, 2016). This phenomenon manifests in various forms, such as checking one's phone during conversations, meals, or intimate moments, browse social media in the company of others, or prioritizing smartphone use lags interaction with local people (Karadağ et al., 2015). It often leads to individuals becoming absorbed in their digital screens, effectively "snubbing" their companions, and, in the process, compromising the quality of the real- world social interaction (Roberts & David, 2016).

The allure of phubbing lies in the instant gratification and endless distractions offered by smartphones, which can disrupt the natural flow of human interaction, detract from the depth of personal connections, and even erode the emotional bonds between individuals (Adrianna

Sztolenwerk, 2020). While mobile devices undoubtedly provide numerous benefits and facilitate communication, the unchecked prevalence of phubbing behavior poses profound implications for the way we connect and relate to one another in the digital age. (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018b). Phubbing can diminish the ability to empathize with others (Adrianna Sztolenwerk, 2020). When individuals prioritize their smartphones over their partners, they may become less attuned to their partner's emotions and needs, leading to a breakdown in emotional connection. Phubbing has direct connection to an increase in relationship conflicts (McDaniel & Coyne, 2016).

The connection between smartphone habit and level of relationship satisfaction is a complex and well-documented one, with numerous studies highlighting the detrimental impact of phubbing behavior on the overall happiness and contentment within interpersonal relationships. Phubbing, or the smartphone habit one's partner during face-to-face interactions, has been consistently collected with lower levels of relationship satisfaction (Roberts & David, 2016). The marriage relationship is a personal reflection your spouse and their relationship (Cepukiene, 2019; Cizmeci; 2017). Relationship satisfaction as the level of closeness, love and social support between partner (Collins et al. 2009). In addition social satisfaction is a psychological situation in which peoples are satisfied with their social relationship and their experiences and expectations regarding romantic relationship. (Ward et al., 2009).

Connections and relationships are important factors that affect the quality of relationships (Prager, 1995). Sternberg (1986) believes that intimacy is an emotional state that involves opening oneself up to create the warmth and trust one needs to maintain a relationship with a spouse. Lack of coupletation in a couple's relationship may be due to the partner's confusing behaviors due to the partner's infrequent communication (Halpern and Katz, 2017).

Gender also affect relationships; men and women approach and interact with each other differently (Prager, 1995). Men tend to prefer physical or sexual intercourse, and men are more likely to

overcome or give up when faced with problems, while women tend to talk more sincerely, and women tend to resort to solutions when faced with problems (Prager, 1995). As for emotional support, emotional support includes care, support, and affection. Emotional support can also be understood as the expression of emotion, interest, concern, positive attention, the feeling of being listened to, and behavior that encourages others to target on a goal (Cohen, Gottlieb, & Underwood, 2000; Sarafino & Smith, 2014).

Several studies have shown the friendship between smartphone habit and romantic relationship satisfaction, which highlights the destructive effects of phubbing on the wellbeing of couples. James A. Roberts, Meredith E. David (2016) conducted a consider on Accomplice phubbing and relationship fulfillment among sentimental accomplices Phubbing was found to in a roundabout ultimately life satisfaction. Given the ever-increasing use of cell phones to Communicate between sentimental accomplices, the investigate offers understanding into the method by which such utilize may affect relationship fulfillment and individual prosperity ( James . Roberts, Meredith . David 2015).

The research was aims to explore the relationship between phubbing and relationship satisfaction among Indonesian dating couples. The method used in this study is a literature review where many studies are presented. This study revealed many related factors such as phubbing and satisfaction with romantic relationships. Increased sense of happiness, jealousy, indirect effect on depression of the person, and lack of relationship can harm relationships, connections, and good conversation. Therefore, the higher the phubbing behavior, the higher the relationship (Masitautami, et al, 2020).

Arshad and Imran (2022) investigated the relationship between spouse phubbing, conflict and couple satisfaction among married couples. It also focuses on exploring the role of head down partner and romantic jealousy in marriage. The study adopted a simple research design. Data include N=300 married people; n = 150 male n = 150 female from majors cities of Pakistan. Use the head-down partner scale, motivation to support conflict, and the ENRICH Marital Satisfaction

Scale. Pearson item minute relationship and different various leveled relapse investigation were conducted . Results showed that partner .Results showed that partner downplaying was positively associated with romantic jealousy. Studies showed that partner withdrawal and romantic jealousy were inversely associated with partner satisfaction. Results also showed that partner depression and conflict had a negative impact on marriage. It was concluded that increased cell phone use could lead to jealousy, which could affect relationships and personal health.

One study examined the effects of loneliness on perceptions of relationship happiness and depression. Loneliness mediates romantic relationships and depression. Empathy moderates the mediation effects. 504 Chinese adults completed social assessments of closeness, phubbing, loneliness, and empathy. Results showed that relationship satisfaction was negatively associated with phubbing. Loneliness enhances this process. In particular, social satisfaction increases the feeling of loneliness, which leads to more anxiety. Our study also shows that mediation is measured by mediation. In particular, the higher the level of understanding, the stronger the relationship between high levels of loneliness and the person, and the lower the person (Zhan Siqun et al., 2022).

### **Objectives:**

- 1.To investigate the impact Phubbing behavior on relationship satisfaction among married couples.
- 2.To explore the role of demographic (gender, education and year of marriage) on Phubbing behavior, relationship fulfillment among married couples.

### **Hypothesis:**

- H1:There is negative correlation between phubbing behavior and relationship satisfaction among married couples in Muzaffarabad.
- H2:Males are showing more phubbing behavior than females.
- H3:There is a statistically significant difference in phubbing behavior in education levels among the groups.

H4:The phubbing negatively predicts relationship satisfaction among married couples.

### **Research Methodology:**

#### **Instrument**

##### **Generic scale of Phubbing Scale**

The 15-item GSP was created by (Chotpitayasunondh and Douglas 2018b). There were four measurements: monophobia (NP, e.g., I feel on edge on the off chance that my phone isn't nearby), interpersonal strife (IC, e.g., I have clashes with others since I am utilizing my phone), self-isolation (SI, e.g., I feel substance when I am paying consideration to my phone rather than others.), and issue affirmation (Dad, e.g., I pay consideration to my phone for longer than I proposed to do so). Members were inquired to rate on a 7-point Likert scale extending from 1 (never) to 7 (always). GSP appeared higher inner consistency that's is  $r \geq 0.97$ .

##### **Relationship Assessment Scale**

Dicke, A., & Hendrick, C. (1988) proposed Relationship Assessment Scale RAS. The RAS is a short 7-item self-report inventory designed to measure general relationship satisfaction. Items are scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (low satisfaction) to 5 (high satisfaction). Total score can range from 3 to 21, with high scores meaning better relationship satisfaction. In the original study by Hendrick, the RAS Demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.92$ ) and good test-retest reliability ( $r = 0.79$ ) over a one-week interval. These results suggest that the scale provides consistent and stable measures of relationship satisfaction.

#### **Sample**

The sample consisted of 300 married couples from Muzaffarabad who are from age 18- 44 were included in this research.

#### **Sampling Technique**

Convenient sampling method was used.

#### **Procedure**

The questionnaire was distributed to three hundred couples from Muzaffarabad, Azad

Jammu and Kashmir. All the members were informed about the purpose of the study and asked to fill the questionnaire. The participants were asked to answer honestly. After collecting the data

from the participants, the data was transferred to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)..

**Results**

**Table 1:** Frequencies & Percentages across demographic variables (N=300)

Demographic variable		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	150	50.0
	Female	150	50.0
Age	18-26	98	32.7
	27-35	151	50.3
	36-44	51	17.0
Education	Matric	24	8.0
	Intermediate	82	27.3
	BS/MS	176	58.7
Year of marriage	1-4	76	25.3
	5-8	82	27.3
	9-12	76	25.3
	13-16	37	12.3
	17-20	29	9.7
Occupation	Business	49	16.3
	Govt. Job	44	14.7
	Private job	118	39.3
	Student	33	11.0
	Housewife	56	18.7

The statistical analysis was done based on the data collected from a sample of 300 people (150 males and 150 females) from Muzaffarabad AJK. The instructions stated that the age of the participants d

epended on: 18-26, 27-35 and 36-44. Education level matric, intermediate, BS/MS, marital status married and unmarried. Occupation government job, private job business, student and housewife

**Table 2:** Descriptive statistics and alpha reliability of Study Variables (N=300)

Variable	N	M	SD	α	Range	
					Min	Max
GSP	300	70.91	13.97	.80	23	88
RASS	300	25.67	5.92	.71	13	35

**Note:** GSP= Generic scale of phubbing; RAS= Relationship Assessment Scales  
.N=number pf sample; ,M=mean ;SD std.deviation  
In Table 2, the psychometric properties of the study variables are presented. The reliability analysis revealed high-reliability coefficients for the measurement scales, indicating satisfactory

internal consistency. Specifically, the reliability coefficients for Generic scale of phubbing and Relationship Assessment Scales were .80 and .71, respectively. In addition, the fact that the skewness value of the variable is less than 1 shows that there is no bias.

**Table 3:** Pearson Correlation among between phubbing behavior and relationship satisfaction (N = 300)

Variables	GSP	RAS
GSP	--	-.078*
RAS		--



\*P<0.05

Table 3 shows the values for Pearson correlation coefficients among the study variables. The results reveal significant correlations shows that significant negative correlation between Phubbing

behavior and relationship assessment scale ( $r = -.078, P<.05$ ), which indicates Higher level of phubbing is associated with lower level of relationship satisfaction among married couples.

**Table 4:** Mean, Standard Deviation and t –values of Male and Females Participants on Generic Scale of Phubbing and relationship assessment scale (N = 300)

Variables	Males (n = 150)		Females (n = 150)		t(298)	95% CI		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD		LL	UL	
GSP	45.91	15.97	42.37	14.12	-2.77*	-17.9	-2.95	.69
RAS	72.78	11.78	69.03	15.68	-2.34*	-6.60	-.53	.59

**Note:**  $p < 0.05$ ; GSP= Generic scale of phubbing; RASS= Relationship Assessment Scale.

The table presents mean, standard deviation, and t-values for Male and Females participants in relation to Generic scale of phubbing; and Relationship Assessment Scale. Significant mean differences are observed between the groups for Phubbing and relationship satisfaction indicating distinct psychological variations based on Gender

of the participants. It indicates that there is statistically significant difference between males and females on the scores of General Scales of Phubbing (GSP). Males score high on General Scales of Phubbing than females. Means that males showing more phubbing behavior than females.

**Table 5:** One-way ANOVA of education on General Scale of Phubbing and relationship Assessment scale (N = 300)

Variables	Matric (n = 139)		FA (n = 138)		BS (n = 23)		F	$\eta^2$	Post hoc
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
GSP	28.60	14.36	37.76	15.62	54.12	2.47	11.60***	.23	1<2<3
RAS	36.97	11.12	28.00	10.07	21.87	.83	8.23**	.18	3<2<1

\*\*\*\*P < .001

Table 3 displays the mean, standard deviation, and F-values for Education levels of Married couples' participants concerning Phubbing and relationship satisfaction. The results demonstrate significant mean differences on all study variables.

Specifically, the findings indicate that Higher education level participants exhibited higher levels of phubbing compared to lower education participants. Additionally, they individuals also showed lower levels of relationship satisfaction.

**Table 6: Multiple Regression Analysis predicting Relationship Satisfaction (N=300)**

Relationship Satisfaction

Model 2

95% CI

Variables	Model 1B	B	LL	UL
Constant	3.67	-1.53	-2.35	1.44
Age	-7.76	.43	-.37	.41
Gender	.03	.05	-.45	.34
Education level	-.46**	.19	-.66	.32
Year of marriage	1.39**	3.77	.23	.17
Occupation	1.55*	3.33	.55	.07
PB		-.64*	.25	.17
R2	.022	.44		
ΔR2		0.22		
F	4.09	15.2		
ΔF		6.21		

Table 6 presents the un-standardized coefficient and confidence interval for multiple linear regression analysis. The effect of demographic variables (age, gender, education level, year of marriage and occupation) was controlled in model 1. Results indicated significant predictors in model 2 for Relationship Assessment. Predictors as phubbing significantly negatively correlated with Relationship Satisfaction. The value of R2 showed that 44% of variance in the scores of Relationship Satisfaction can be accounted Phubbing behavior. Hence model 2 is explaining 22% additional variances in Relationship satisfaction.

## DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis stated that there is a positive relationship between phubbing behavior and the relationship between romantic partners ( $r = -0.78$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). A study conducted by (Johnson in 2020) Showed significant results that phubbing can negatively impact the relationships. Another study conducted in the similar context shows same results with accordance of previous studies that relationships are negatively impacted by the use of smart phone during the house time, which can be only be reduced by insight and eradicating the over use of smartphones during family time (Arshad & Imran, 2022).

The second hypothesis states that males show more phubbing behavior than females. The results indicated that there is significant difference

between men and women in phubbing behavior and males have shown high score in phubbing behavior than females. Our research findings support this hypothesis, as the results of research are consistent with findings of pervious several researches that are ( Karadağ et al., 2015). (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018).

The third hypothesis state that there is statistically significant difference in phubbing behavior in education level among groups. The findings indicate that Higher education level participants exhibited higher levels of phubbing compared to lower education participants. Additionally, they individuals also showed lower levels of relationship satisfaction is consistent with the previous research (Sztolenwerk, 2020).

The last hypothesis depict that phubbing negatively predicts relationship satisfaction among married couples, which is supported by the outcomes of the present study and also in according with the support of empirical literature that numerous studies, including those by Roberts and David (2016), Chotpitayasunondh and Douglas(2018a), and McDaniel and Coyne (2016), have consistently demonstrated a clear and adverse connection between phubbing behavior and relationship satisfaction.

## Conclusion

On the basis of results of this research, it is concluded that phubbing behavior has influence on relationship satisfaction. It is assessed that

couples with high phubbing behavior have low levels of relationship satisfaction. We find that there is statistically significant difference in phubbing behavior among men and women. And we also concluded that phubbing behavior is more in males than females. Moreover, there is statistically significant difference in phubbing behavior in education level among groups higher education level participants exhibited higher levels of phubbing compared to lower education participants to relationship satisfaction. Additionally, phubbing negatively predicts relationship satisfaction among married couples.

### Limitations

The study primarily focused on married couples, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other types of relationships, such as dating or cohabiting couples. Future research should consider a different type models. The data collected relied on self-reported measures, which may introduce biases, such as prejudice. This study was conducted within a specific cultural and societal context, and findings may not be universally applicable. Cultural norms, social expectations, and technology usage patterns can vary significantly, influencing the dynamics of phubbing behavior. It also did not extensively explore external factors that could influence phubbing and relationship satisfaction, such as work-related stress, financial concerns, or individual personality traits. These factors may interact with phubbing behavior.

### Suggestions

As research on the impact of phubbing behavior on relationship fulfillment continues to evolve, several avenues for future investigation emerge: In the future, case studies could be conducted with larger samples of married and unmarried couples across states and countries to investigate the impact of behavioral changes in the relationship. Based on the findings of current studies professionals should spread awareness about the phubbing behavior and its harmful effects on relationship satisfaction so that individuals themselves move away from this behavior as it badly affects relationship. Every age group should

try to understand this so that it'll help them to make their relationship stronger one.

### REFERENCES

- Adrianna Sztolenwerk ,( 2020)Phubbing and Romantic Relationships. Strategies of Polish Couples of Generation Y to eliminate phubbing behavior master Media Studies – Media &Creative Industries Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication Erasmus University Rotterdam.
- Arshad, A., & Imran, H. (2022). Partner phubbing, romantic jealousy and marital satisfaction Among married individuals. *Applied Psychology review*, 1(2), 01-06. <https://doi.org/10.32350/apr.12.01>
- Cepukiene, V. (2019). Does relationship satisfaction always mean satisfaction? Development of the couple relationship satisfaction scale. *Journal of Relationship Research*, 10(14), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jrr.2019.12>
- Chotpitayasunondh, V., & Douglas, K. M. (2018a). Measuring phone snubbing behavior: Development and validation of the generic scale of phubbing (gsp) and the generic scale of being phubbed (gsbp). *Computers in human Behavior*, 88, 5–17.
- Chotpitayasunondh, V., & Douglas, K. M. (2018b). The effects of “phubbing” on social interaction. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 48(6), 304–316. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12506>
- Collins, W. A., Welsh, D. P., & Furman, W. (2009). Adolescent romantic relationships. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60(1), 631–652. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.1.10707.163459>
- Esra cizmeçi (2017) disconnected, though satisfied: pphubbing behavior and relationship satisfaction .The Turkish Online Journal of Design, Art and Communication – TOJDAC April 2017 Volume 7 Issue 2
- Hendrick, S. S. (1988). A generic measure of relationship satisfaction. *Journal of*

- Marriage and the Family, 50, 93–99 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.06.020>.
- MasitaUtami, Muhammad Khairul Anam, and RakhmadiyahDewiNoorrizki, (2020), “The Relationship Between Phubbing and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction: A Literature Review” in International Conference of Psychology, KnE Social Sciences, pages 370–385.
- McDaniel, B. T., & Coyne, S. M. (2016). Identification and prediction of phubbing behavior: A data-driven approach. *Neural Computing and Applications*, 1- 10.
- Nazir and Pişkin, 2016 T. Nazir, M. Pişkin An explorative model to assess individuals’ phubbing risk. *Future Internet*, 11(1), 21.
- Prager, K. J. (1995). *The psychology of intimacy* (pp. x, 367). New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.
- Roberts JA, David ME. Put Down Your Phone and listen To Me: How Boss Phubbing Undermines The psychological Conditions Necessary For Employee engagement, 2015. Retrieved From <https://www.sciencedirect.com>.
- Sarafino, E. P., & Smith, T. W. (2014). *Health psychology: Biopsychosocial interactions*.
- Siqun Zhan\*, Silu Shrestha\* and Nian Zhong (2022) Romantic relationship Satisfaction and Phubbing: The role of loneliness and empathy DOI 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.967339
- Sternberg, R. J. (1986). A triangular theory of love. *Psychological Review*, 93(2), 119–135. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.93.2.119>
- Vanden Abeele, M. M. P., Antheunis, M. L., & Schouten, A. P. (2016). The effect of mobile messaging during a conversation on impression formation and interaction quality. *Computers in human Behavior*, 62, 562–569. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.04.005>
- Ward, P. J., Lundberg, N. R., Zabriskie, R. B., & Berrett, K. (2009). Measuring marital satisfaction: A comparison of the revised dyadic adjustment scale and the satisfaction with married life scale. *Marriage & Family Review*, 45(4), 412–429. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01494920902828219>.