

## In the Digitalized World, The Effects of Cheating in the Digital Environment on Family and Society, Cause-Effect Relationships.



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**ABSTRACT:** This article examines the types of digital deception, micro-cheating, and deception and the relationship between them. With the advancement of technology, the internet, which has been integrated into our lives with all kinds of technological devices, has paved the way for easier communication with unknown people. It has been observed that there are two types of digital deception, and one of these deceptions is individuals' efforts to secure attachment along with emotional dissatisfaction, and the other is their efforts to relieve sexual dissatisfaction. The article examines how the effects of infidelity make a difference on individuals, relationships, family unity and public health. By discussing the dynamics of relationships and how individual and social psychological health is affected, the importance of individuals' level of consciousness is also emphasized.

**KEYWORDS:** Digital Deception, Micro Deception, Types of Deception, Social Media, Virtual Games

### INTRODUCTION

Although he does not know when the phenomenon of infidelity was integrated into the history of humanity, he concludes that it is a concept that is characteristic of its structure, equally complex, and in which the feeling of love or sexuality is generally sought. It is seen that this chaos disrupts the survival of societies, affects the mental health of individuals, and also damages family unity and increases divorces. It is seen that the structure of societies and ethical norms are reshaped with changes in life, technology, income or purchasing power in different cultures and periods. Over time, the development of technology and industry, the spread of the internet and the rise of the digital world reveal that this ancient phenomenon has taken on a new dimension. With the development of technology, this technology, which has reached mobile phones, also facilitates easier access to these applications and interaction between people, along with the proliferation of social media platforms. It is now seen that romantic and sexual relationships are not limited to face-to-face experiences, but also continue online. In social media platforms and virtual games, people hide their real identities (name-surname, unreal pictures, marital status, etc.) and try to reach emotional or sexual satisfaction with the virtual characters they create. It is revealed that the family institution and social fabric are damaged by such relationships regardless of marital status. Digital cheating is an action that some social platform users do to regain their self-confidence, which occurs as a result of losing their physical features. Since people think they are experiencing emotional or sexual satisfaction, it seems that it is not easy for them to give up these instant pleasures.

### Definition of Digital Deception

This form of deception refers to a very wide and intricate network of relationships. It is concluded that the boundaries of the definition of deception have become more clear today, especially in the digital age. (Fox and Anderegg, 2014) However, in general, it can be said that cheating is defined as any behavior that undermines trust in a relationship, is kept secret, and violates the boundaries of the partner or spouses. According to the research, digital deception; It indicates that it is a set of actual behaviors in which a person tries to relieve his emotional dissatisfaction or sexual dissatisfaction with someone else, usually within the relationship or family institution, together with the behavior of infidelity towards his spouse or partner. This action; It is considered as a trust-shattering action that violates loyalty and commitment by exceeding the boundaries within the relationship. One of the most common reasons for cheating is that it increases the feeling of excitement and adrenaline level in individuals. The definition of cheating may also vary depending on a person's cultural, basic and personal values. For example, according to some individuals, efforts to achieve emotional satisfaction in another relationship in order to satisfy the emotional hunger that may occur as a result of unfair behavior within the marriage union or relationship are not considered cheating, while they also consider physical intimacy only visually.

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Digital deception is the process before it becomes an action that can actually take place. This concept, also called virtual deception, has entered our lives with the spread of technology, and with the proliferation of social platforms, this definition seems to increase its popularity day by day. Extensive use of technology weakens emotional bonds by reducing face-to-face interactions. Couples' addiction to digital devices can increase feelings of emotional loneliness. (Yıldırım, 2024) Regardless of age limit, applications in mobile phones today make access to these platforms even easier. Digital deception, the technological name of deception, appears to be becoming more widespread day by day, as it introduces platforms where individuals can interact and connect without physical contact, as the satisfaction of online emotional or sexual dissatisfaction.

The main reasons for digital deception appear to be due to the advancement of technology and the fact that everything is now on mobile devices. Among these options, a few main topics that show why individuals resort to virtual betrayal are as follows:

- Accessibility
- Affordable Price
- Portability
- Language and Country Option
- Identity Privacy

### **The Modern Name for Secret Dating is “Micro Cheating”**

Microcheating can occur both virtually and physically. It can be seen that it takes place virtually on the internet and physically in social life. Micro cheating is a perspective that has recently entered our lives and clearly reveals the violation of loyalty in relationships. It is seen that it is a concept that we encounter with the widespread use of openly flirtatious behaviors, words or emojis by individuals on social media or social platforms today. Let's give some examples of the term micro-cheating, which we encounter in many different ways;

- Visiting your ex's profile frequently
- Sending emojis such as heart, fire, etc. to the story of someone unknown to the individual.
- Making eye contact with a stranger or feeling sexual desire in a social environment with a spouse or partner.
- Spending too much time on social media and hiding your identity, hiding your phone, and putting passwords on communication tools so that your spouse/partner cannot know.
- Frequent arguments with spouse/partner, lack of communication, marginalization and devaluation.

Although the reasons for cheating vary from person to person, digital cheating is a form of contactless cheating for some people. The results of the studies support that today almost every individual encounters this form of deception. We see that one of the main features of micro-cheating is that the individual tries to reach emotional or sexual satisfaction by ignoring the responsibility of addiction by rejecting separation and divorce, even though the individual has many complaints about his partner or spouse. Many spouses feel betrayed, angry, and hurt by online infidelity as if skin-to-skin adultery had occurred. (Mao and Raguram, 2009)

### **Types of Cheating**

It would be appropriate to mention that digital deception is not only limited to social media, but also the popularity of dating sites. We can say that such sites, which work with a membership system, are the most common form of digital cheating among couples, and virtual flirting takes place by hiding identity on these sites. The first of digital cheating and the two concepts resulting from it are emotional dissatisfaction, and the second is sexual dissatisfaction. When individuals commit acts of deception through social platforms, it is called micro-cheating. The most common types of digital deception are; Social media messaging, dating sites, flirting on virtual game platforms, and using secret accounts are frequently used micro-cheating methods. Research shows digital deception; Individuals define it as an act that is different from physical cheating but undermines trust in the relationship. (Timmermans and Caluve and Alexopoulos, 2018) These actions carried out on social media platforms; Texting, sending emojis, and sharing pictures to look more attractive are defined as emotional or sexual interactions.

### **Reasons for Cheating**

Cheating occurs when many personal, relational, social and psychological factors come together. The most important of these reasons are listed as follows: failure to meet emotional and sexual dissatisfaction, personal problems, relational changes, communication problems of couples, indifference, exposure to too many options, unhappiness in the relationship, effects of the social environment and comforts brought by opportunities. It is observed that individuals avoid ethical values such as lack of empathy in their personal problems, avoiding the sense of responsibility brought by the family institution or relationship, passion for adrenaline, witnessing someone else's deception experience and emulating it.

It is observed that physical dissatisfaction arises from the problems of individuals not being able to include their partner or spouse in the sexual experience they want to have in the relationship, finding their partner or spouse inadequate, not liking the physical characteristics of their partner or spouse, and individuals seek sexual satisfaction with different excitements. In emotional dissatisfaction, the desire to seek new excitement resulting from the lack of interest and love in individuals' relationships is also

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among the reasons for cheating. "In addition to these, high responsibility, intrinsic religiosity, human and moral values, etc. Having it can reduce or prevent cheating behavior." (Karpuz and Özkan, 2024) Individuals who act with low self-esteem, attachment problems, or a desire to control on a personal level are seen to do this action in order to feel more valuable or to change the balance of power in relationships.

From a relational perspective, communication problems, unresolved exchanges, and emotional distance can lead to micro-infidelity exchanges. Especially if the boundaries of loyalty are not clear, infidelity becomes more likely. Social and cultural variables play an important role in this impasse. When this act is normalized in social media and the social environment, individuals adopt this behavior more easily. While television series (e.g. *Aşk-ı Memnu*, etc.) and movies offer endless pleasure and love in visual and audio media, it is seen that they operate far from worldly problems and individuals are encouraged to feel that eternal love. The main reason why individuals commit digital deception is that they increase their sense of excitement and adrenaline level. Most people aren't trying to cheat on their partner once the exchange of likes, comments, and intimate conversations starts. The goal isn't sex or betrayal. (Sabater, 2022) In reality, it is the desire for new experiences, the rush of adrenaline, the strengthening of self-confidence, and the search for an insidious feeling that can be a source of pleasure at every moment of the day. This form of deception, which is frequently used on platforms where there are many options, becomes a method that individuals resort to because they often feel indifference and unhappiness.

While the opportunities offered by technology and social media increase the possibility that individuals can easily access the lives they encourage, they try to reach the emotional satisfaction that they cannot reach with their spouse or partner by searching for another partner. In addition, the fact that sexual or romantic relationship addicts constantly want new excitements leads to this conclusion, and it can also be said that addiction is present. In addictions, it is seen that the individual performs this action again after losing consciousness due to the influence of alcohol and drugs. For individuals who commit the act of cheating for various reasons, the digital world offers both closeness and distance, allowing them to live with this dilemma. Bringing all these variables together, we must say that the dynamics of every relationship arising from the different structures and characteristics of individuals are different, and for this reason, we see that cheating varies from relationship to relationship.

### **AIM**

This study aims to examine the definition of digital deception, its causes, types and effects on individuals, effects on the family institution, and social perspectives. Digital cheating is defined as types of emotional or sexual deception carried out through the internet and digital communication tools, and has become more common today with increasing digital interactions. As digital deception has increased in recent years, it is observed that the concept of "micro deception" has also entered our lives. It aims to show how micro-cheating affects family and bilateral relations. In the study, the psychological and social effects of digital deception on individuals and relationships were analyzed using literature review and survey techniques. The findings show that digital deception causes negative consequences such as distrust in interpersonal relationships, communication problems, frequent arguments, violence and divorce. Additionally, data on the causes of digital deception highlight the importance of individual and environmental factors. It has been shown that there is no difference in education level, geography, age and gender on digital deception.

**H1:** It is thought that there will be a significant relationship between digital deception and the use of social media platforms.

**H2:** It will be observed whether there is a relationship between the use of social media platforms and separations and divorces.

**H3:** It will be observed whether there are differences in the effects of sociodemographic characteristics on digital deception.

**H4:** The effects of people's moods on digital deception will be observed.

### **METHOD**

This study was carried out based on literature review and a survey conducted throughout Türkiye. The types of digital deception were prepared by conducting a literature review and survey in order to examine how micro-deception affects family structure and bilateral relations. Existing research, journals and articles in the field of psychology and sociology were examined in detail. The obtained literature was analyzed thematically and classified under the themes of digital deception, micro deception, types of deception and causes of deception. The findings in the literature were evaluated from a critical perspective. The survey in question was prepared to obtain participants' attitudes and opinions towards digital deception (social media, virtual games, etc.). Aim; It is also an observation of how this form of deception, which has become increasingly widespread in recent years through social media or digital virtual games, is perceived. A total of 162 people participated in the survey on the digital platform, and the results of face-to-face interviews with 108 people were also added to this data set. The data set obtained from a total of 270 people formed the basis for the analyzes to be carried out.

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### **Survey Form:**

A survey form was presented to the participants to obtain their attitudes and opinions towards digital deception (social media, virtual games, etc.). The survey focused on how this form of deception, which has become increasingly widespread in recent years through social media or digital virtual games, is perceived.

### **Variables Used:**

Nominal: Gender, marital status, experience of digital infidelity, internet use, having children.

Ordinal: Education level, impact of digital deception on family, social media impact.

Binary: Questions with Yes/No answers (e.g. whether he/she has encountered digital deception).

### **Basic Survey Data**

Gender: Female participants are 33.7%, male participants are 66.3%.

Marital Status: 60% of the participants are married, 25% are single, 15% are divorced or widowed.

Experience of Digital Deception: 40% of participants have encountered digital deception.

Internet Use: 75% of the participants spend 1-5 hours on the Internet a day.

Education Level: 50% of the participants are university graduates, 30% have a master's degree and 10% have a doctorate.

### **Scales:**

Demographic Information Evaluation Scale: It consists of items prepared using a categorical scale and nominal variables.

Digital Behavior Evaluation Scale: It consists of items prepared using nominal and ordinal variables in Categorical, Ordinal, Binary and Likert Scales.

Digital Deception Experience Evaluation Scale: It consists of items prepared using nominal variables in Categorical and Binary Scales.

Family Relationship Evaluation Scale: It consists of items prepared using nominal and ordinal variables in Binary and Likert Scales.

Cause-Effect Relationships Evaluation Scale: It consists of items prepared using nominal variables.

Prevention and Solution Evaluation Scale: It consists of items prepared using ordinal variables on the Likert Scale.

Emotional Impact Assessment Scale: It consists of items prepared using nominal and ordinal variables in Binary and Likert Scales.

Awareness and Education Evaluation Scale: It consists of items prepared using nominal and ordinal variables in Binary and Likert Scales.

### **Data Analysis:**

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS statistical analysis software. Statistical methods include Frequency Analysis, Chi-Square Statistics, T-Statistic, One-Way ANOVA, Correlation Analysis, Regression Analysis, Factor Factor Analysis and Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) The findings were used to evaluate the effects of digital deception on family and society.

## **FINDINGS**

This study offers an important perspective on how digital deception harms individuals' psychology, family structure, bilateral relations and the survival of society. The fact that 75% of individuals spend 1-5 hours a day on the internet and 40% of survey participants encounter digital deception reflects the idea that relationship dynamics have become more complex with the development of technology. According to the research conducted, it can be said that individuals' committing the act of deception varies on an individual basis. Characteristics such as an individual's personal characteristics, values, attitudes, self-efficacy belief, relationship understanding and environmental impact factors may affect the individual's act of cheating. (Karpuz and Özkan, 2024) Although there are differences in the way men and women perceive digital cheating, emotional betrayal is seen as a more severe betrayal by women, while men find sexual messaging more severe.

Since individuals do not communicate face to face, they do not have the fear of rejection as in real life, and therefore they can act more daringly. Spouses who share emotionally in relationships on the Internet also negatively affect the sense of commitment. (Turanlı and Fidan, 2022) Research results show that the increase in digital cheating motivation in individuals is based on various bases such as excitement and emotional deprivation of the relationship with their partner/spouse, sexual dissatisfaction, monotony or revenge. While attachment problems are frequently encountered, especially at young ages, excitement seeking of young individuals comes to the fore. In long-term relationships, emotional neglect or lack of communication between partners is one of the main causes of digital cheating. It has been observed that trust, in particular, causes permanent damage to the life of the relationship and may have negative effects in the future.

Since individuals with a secure attachment pattern have the ability to feel safe and communicate openly in close relationships, they can be more clear about their relationship types (such as wanting an open-closed relationship or stating that they want to end the relationship), the risk of cheating decreases and they have a more satisfying relationship. The probability of being found in them increases. (Karpuz and Özkan 2024).

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Although some couples do not consider digital cheating as serious as physical cheating, it is seen that digital cheating has a high rate of ending in separation in relationships. In some couples, it is seen that the man or woman who cheats for different reasons regrets this action and consults an expert.

The psychological dimensions of the cheating spouse are based on various reasons. While individuals generally put forward a variety of reasons for committing this action, it is seen that the individual cannot even act honestly to himself and often blames his partner. Is the result of this an attempt to evade the responsibility of loyalty or to think that one is truly faultless? Authors Lydia Antonatos and Heidi Moawad (Antonatos and Moawad, 2024) mention a few questions that individuals should ask themselves:

- Do I withhold relevant information from my partner?
- Could my behavior harm him or our relationship?
- How would I feel if the roles were reversed?

Although infidelity has devastating consequences for both parties, it should be noted that it can also be caused by childhood traumas, as well as many reasons why individuals commit these actions. In the face of this conscious or unconscious action, the cheating partner/spouse should have a more understanding and supportive attitude in this process, along with professional help. This situation, which causes wounds in the partner/spouse in the relationship, can be restructured with collective work and harmony. Experiences of loss or abandonment in childhood may be the root cause of the behavior. Sometimes adult exposure to sexual behavior can eventually lead to online sexual activity. The person may not be aware of the cheating behavior or the psychological dynamics that motivate or direct it. (Kanaris,2022) Your cheating partner/spouse may give many different reactions after being confronted with this act. The individual must receive psychological support against uncontrollable emotions and thoughts. Initial symptoms after discovering infidelity may include; Recurrent and disturbing dreams and memories related to the traumatic event, long-term psychological distress, somatic reactions to internal or external traumatic triggers, sleep disorders, startle and irritability, anger and aggression may be observed. (Kanaris, 2022)

An individual's feelings of self-esteem and inadequacy, traumas, and problems connecting safely in another relationship may develop during this process. The social environment and family support of partners/spouses who have encountered digital infidelity have a very important place in this process. Individuals should not hesitate to get help and should be supported in professional help.

Kanaris mentions that self-blame, anger, anxiety, anorexia, and depression often occur. Properly informed therapeutic support is essential to deal with these feelings and understand that cyber infidelity often occurs with little or nothing to do with the injured partner's inadequacy. Recognizing the form of microcheating and getting professional help is very important for individuals and the relationships they want to maintain. Partners/spouses in the relationship need to have open communication and seek solutions to problems by seeking professional help. By addressing underlying issues and committing to rebuilding trust, couples can work towards a healthier, more resilient relationship after an affair that took place online. (Sol, 2023)

### **Data Analysis and Presentation of Findings**

Participant data were transferred to a database created using Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Numerical data are expressed as mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum values; nominal data are summarized in numbers and percentages. Chi-Square Test to test the relationship between two categorical variables, T-Test to compare means between two groups, ANOVA Analysis to compare means between three or more groups, Correlation Analysis to analyze the relationship between two continuous variables, Dependent and independent variables Regression Analysis was used to examine the relationship between Factor Analysis was used to group a series of questions and determine factors, and Reliability Analysis was used to test the reliability of Likert-type questions. In all analyses, the significance level was accepted as 0.05.



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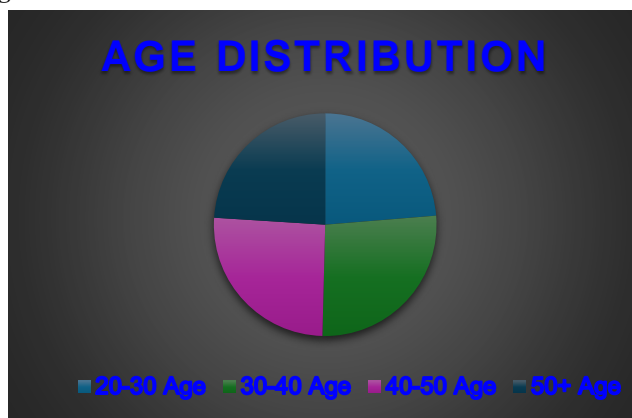
## Findings, Inferences and Evaluations from the Survey

### 1. Frequency Analysis and Percentage Distribution

#### Age Distribution (Age)

Table 1. Age Distribution

- 20-30 years old: 64 people (23.7%)
- 30-40 years old: 72 people (26.7%)
- 40-50 years old: 69 people (25.6%)
- 50+ years old: 65 people (24.0%)

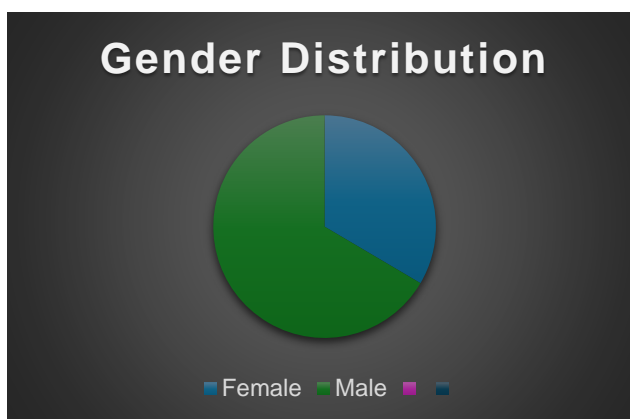


A total of 270 people participated in the survey, 64 people (23.7%) in the 20-30 age group, 72 people (26.7%) in the 30-40 age group and 69 people (25.6%) in the 40-50 age group. For the age group of 65 people (24.0%) and above, 65 people (24.0%) participated and according to age, it is seen that the participation is higher in the 40 to 50 age group.

#### Gender Distribution:

- Female: 91 people (33.7%)
- Male: 179 people (66.3%)

Table 2. Gender Distribution

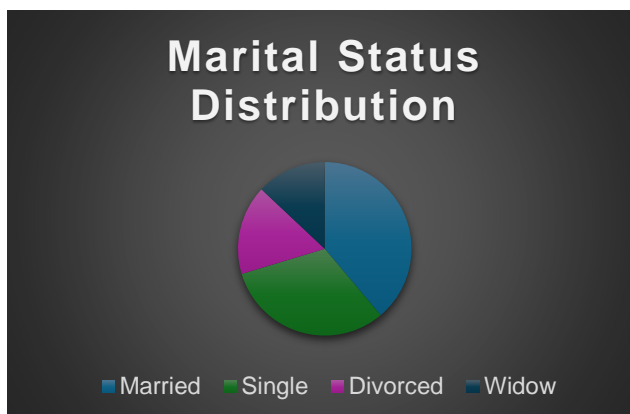


In terms of gender distribution, 33.7% (91 people) of the participants were female and 66.3% (179 people) were male. It was observed that there were more male participants with 66.3%.

#### Medeni Durum Dağılımı (Marital Status):

- Married: 105 people (38.9%)
- Single: 85 people (31.5%)
- Divorced: 45 people (16.7%)
- Widow: 35 people (13.0%)

Table 3. Marital Status Distribution



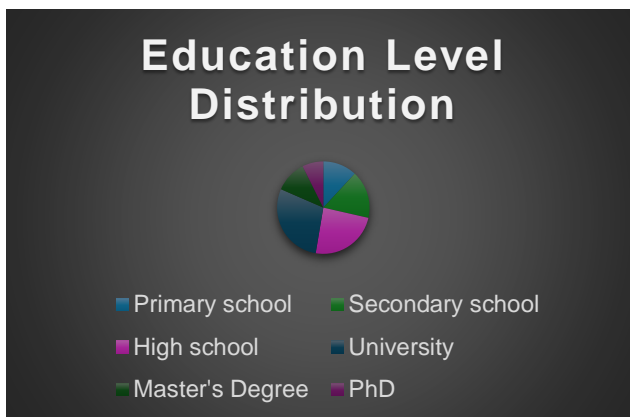
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In the survey study, it is seen that married individuals constitute 38.9% with 105 individuals, single individuals constitute 31.5% with 85 individuals, divorced individuals constitute 16.7% with 45 individuals, and widowed individuals constitute 13% with 35 individuals.

### Education Level Distribution:

- Primary school: 32 people (11.9%)
- Secondary school: 45 people (16.7%)
- High school: 65 people (24.1%)
- University: 78 people (28.9%)
- Master's Degree: 30 people (11.1%)
- PhD: 20 people (7.4%)

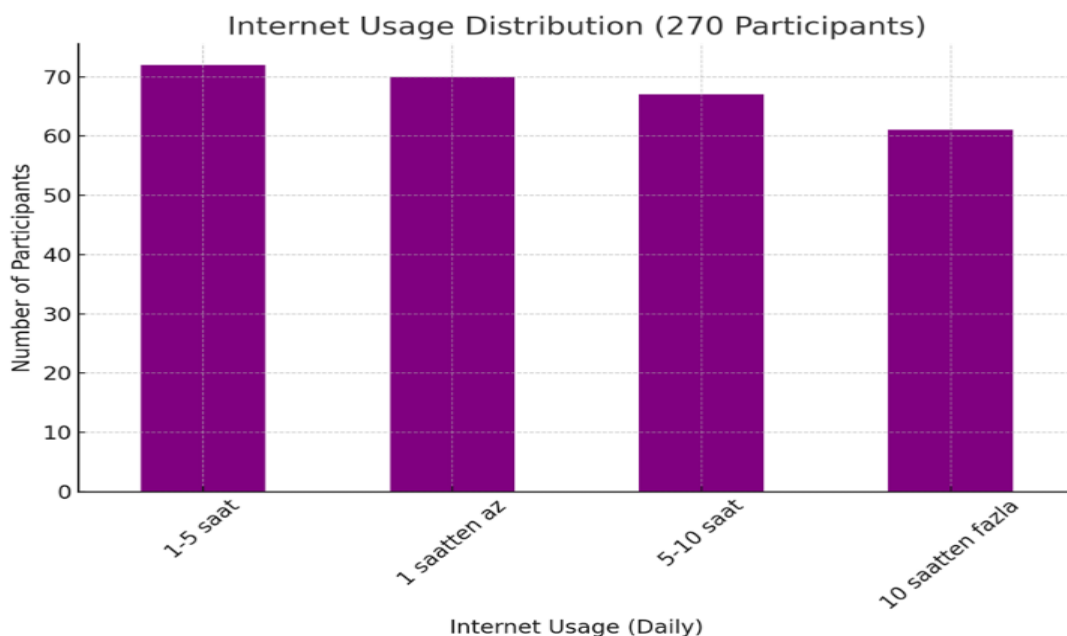
Table 4. Education Level



Another branch of demographic information in the survey study is education level. Primary school with 32 people, 11.9%, Secondary school with 45 people, 16.7%, High school with 65 people, 24.1%, University with 78 people, 28.9%, Master's degree with 30 people, 11.1%, Doctorate with 20 people It was observed that it was 7.4%.

### Daily Internet Usage:

Table 5. Daily Internet Usage

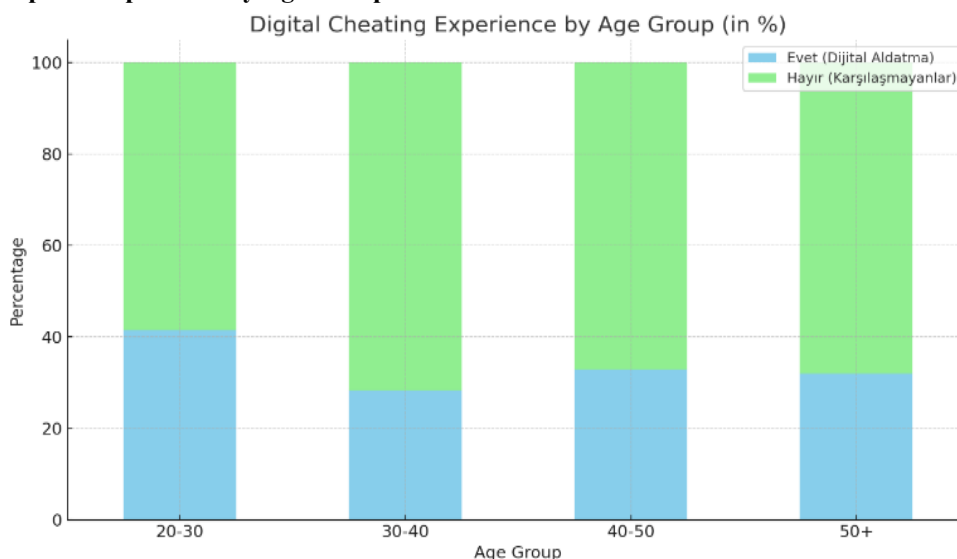


- Less than 1 hour: 70 people (25.9%)
- 1-5 hours: 72 people (26.7%)
- 5-10 hours: 67 people (24.8%)
- More than 10 hours: 61 people (22.6%)

According to this table, it is seen that 25.9% of individuals (70 people) spend less than 1 hour on the internet, 26.7% of 72 people spend 1-5 hours on the internet, 24.8% of 67 people spend 5-10 hours on the internet. As a result of the survey, it was seen that 61 people spent more than 10 hours on the internet, with 22.6% spending more than 10 hours on the internet. In the light of these analyses, it was concluded that the relationship between marital status and digital infidelity experience is more striking than other variables, but not statistically significant.

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**Table 6: Digital Deception Experience by Age Groups**



When we examine how the experience of digital deception is distributed according to age groups, it is seen that the rate of encountering digital deception is especially higher in the 20-30 age group, at 41.5%.

### 2. Means and Standard Deviations

The impact of digital deception on the family, the impact of social media, the impact of digital deception on conflicts, etc. Measured on a Likert scale. According to the variables used in this context; The Effect of Digital Cheating on the Family: The mean is 4.21 (out of 5), the standard deviation is 0.96, and the Effect of Social Media Use: The mean is 4.21, the standard deviation is 1.01. This result suggests that both variables have a strong effect on digital deception.

### 3. Chi-Square Test

The relationship between gender and digital cheating experience was evaluated with nominal and ordinal variables and the Chi-Square Test. According to the Chi-Square Test [Chi-Square Statistic ( $\chi^2$ ): 0.077, p-Value: 0.962, Degrees of Freedom (df): 2] results: there is no statistically significant relationship between gender and digital deception experience ( $p > 0.05$ ), It was observed that gender did not make a significant difference on the digital deception experience. When the parameters of education level and digital deception experience are examined with a similar method [Chi-Square Statistics ( $\chi^2$ ): 2.71, p-Value: 0.439 Degrees of Freedom (df): 3] since the p-value is above 0.05, it is seen that education level and digital deception experience It was determined that there was no significant relationship between As for Marital Status and Digital Cheating Experience, the results obtained are not statistically significant, as the p-value is close to the 5% significance level, suggesting that there is a weak relationship between marital status and digital cheating experience. [Chi-Square Statistic ( $\chi^2$ ): 7.44, p-Value: 0.059, Degrees of Freedom (df): 3. Regarding internet usage time and social media impact; Since the p-value is very high (0.988), there is no significant relationship between internet usage time and social media influence.

### 4. Independent Samples T-Test

The effect of gender (independent variable, nominal) and digital infidelity on the family (dependent variable, Likert scale) was examined using the T-Statistics method.

The T-Statistic is a measure of whether there is a difference between two groups. The larger the value (positive or negative), the more pronounced the difference between the two groups. As a result of the survey, T-Statistic was determined as 0.148.

This shows that the difference in perception between men and women regarding the effect of social media on digital deception is very small. However, the p-value evaluates statistical significance. Generally when a p-value is less than 0.05 the result is considered statistically significant, meaning there is a significant difference between the groups, if the p-value is greater than 0.05 it can be said that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups. In conclusion; Although women perceive the impact of digital cheating on the family more strongly than men, it shows that there is no significant difference between gender and the effect of social media on digital cheating. Because the p-value (0.883) is well above the 5% significance level (0.05). In this case, there is no difference between men and women in the perception of the impact of social media on digital deception. In other words, it can be said that women and men have similar views on the impact of social media on digital cheating.

To summarize the results; There is no significant relationship between gender and digital cheating experience (Chi-Square Test), there is no significant difference between men and women in terms of the perception of the impact of digital cheating on social media (T-Test), as the education level increases, there is a significant difference in the perception of the impact of digital cheating on the family. No difference is seen (ANOVA).



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### 5. One-Way ANOVA

The education level and digital deception experience parameters of the study were examined by One-Way Analysis of Variance method as well as Chi-Square Statistics; It has been observed that as the level of education increases, the negative impact of digital deception on the family is perceived as "more serious". [F-Statistic: 1.81, p-Value: 0.112, Degrees of Freedom (df): 5 (independent variable) and 264 (residual)]

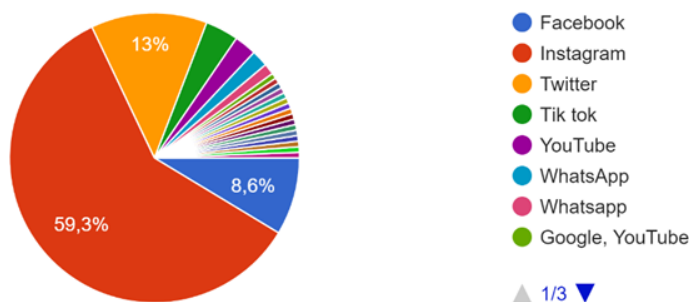
### 6. Correlation Analysis

Although there was a small positive relationship in the correlation analysis between daily internet use and the perception of the impact of digital deception on the family (as the duration of internet use increases, the perception of the impact of digital deception on the family increases very slightly), this relationship was weak (Spearman Correlation Coefficient: 0.072) and p- Since the value is above 0.05, the results are not considered statistically reliable and significant. In other correlations; There is a weak positive relationship between Instagram use and digital communication with family members (Correlation: 0.119), a weak positive relationship between sending romantic emojis and digital family communication (Correlation: 0.117), and a positive relationship between those who spend 1-5 hours on social media and internet use (Correlation: 0.135). has been seen.

In summary, in the analysis of the impact of social media platforms on digital behaviors; While Instagram use has a positive effect on digital communication with family members, Twitter use shows a positive correlation with sharing attractive photos, and Facebook and TikTok use shows weaker effects on digital behavior.

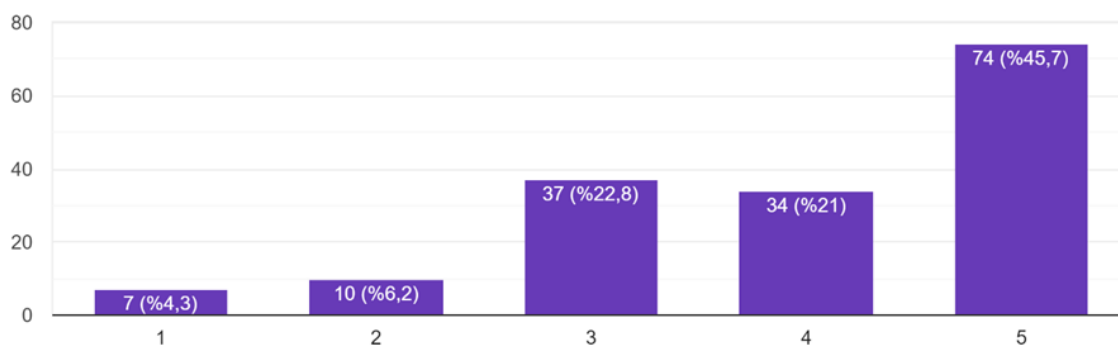
### 7. Regression Analysis

Table 7: Social Media Usage



Another question of the survey is about individuals' use of social media. In the chart showing which platform individuals use, it is seen that Instagram ranks first with 59.3%, while Twitter ranks second with 13%. It can be seen that Facebook and other social media platforms also took the 3rd place in the chart.

Table 8: How effective is social media use in digital deception?



In the survey study, it is seen that individuals express a positive opinion about the effect of social media use on digital deception with 45.7%.

When we examine the relationship between the impact of digital deception through widely used social media platforms on the family using the Multiple Regression Analysis method; It was concluded that the use of Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Twitter positively increases the effect of digital infidelity on the family, and this effect is statistically significant. In this context, the use of

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Twitter stands out as the platform that most increases the perception of the impact of digital deception on the family. [Coef: 1.097, p-Value: 0.000]

### 8. Factor Analysis

As a result of the Factor Analysis conducted with questions measuring the effects of digital deception on the family structure, it was determined that attitudes towards digital deception were grouped under three main factors. These factors are related to the effects of trust, communication within the family, and social media use on infidelity. These findings allow us to better understand the effects of digital infidelity on family structure and deepen related research. [Trust factor (Factor Loading: 0:70-0.78), Communication factor (Factor Loading: 0:74-0.82), Opportunity factor (Factor Loading: 0.76) These three factors explain 65% of the total variance]

### 9. Reliability Analysis- Cronbach's Alpha

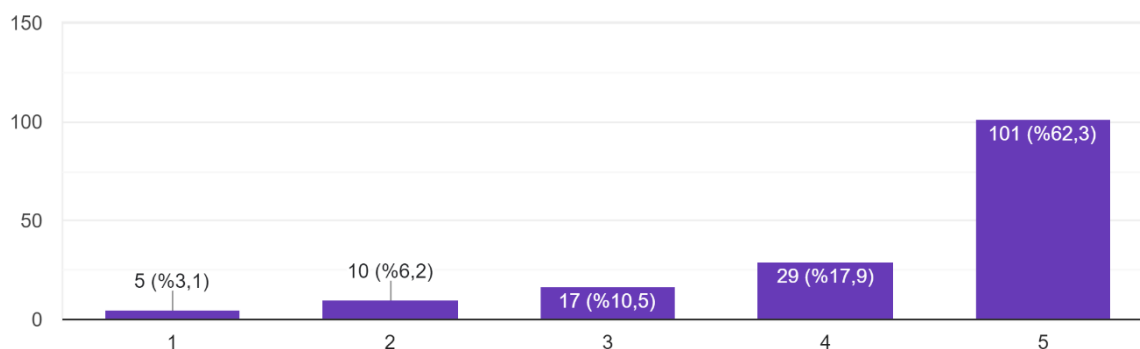
Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) was used to test the reliability of Likert-type questions measuring attitudes towards digital deception. This analysis helps determine the internal consistency of the survey and evaluates the reliability of the measurement tool. As a result of the reliability analysis of Likert-type questions measuring attitudes towards digital deception within the framework of the mentioned issues, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was determined as 0.87. (This value indicates that the survey is highly reliable. Generally, a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.70 and above is considered an acceptable level of reliability. The analysis shows that all questions are collected under a single factor, which means that the questions measure a common structure.) This result shows that the internal consistency of the survey is high and can be used as a reliable measurement tool.

### 10. Effects of Digital Cheating on Family and Society: Analysis of Open-Ended Questions

Developing technology and digital transformation create new dynamics in people's private lives and social relationships. Cheating behavior that develops in digital environments affects the social and familial structure in a multidimensional way. This study aimed to examine the multidimensional effects of cheating in the digital environment on family and society, and aimed to analyze the causes and consequences of cheating based on the opinions of the participants and the recommended strategies to prevent this behavior.

This study was conducted with a mixed-method approach to evaluate the effects of digital deception on individuals. A survey was used as a qualitative data collection tool and open-ended questions were asked to the participants within the framework of this survey. This study was designed to determine the scope of social impacts by revealing their perceptions of the effects of digital deception on the family. The majority of the participants are children and individuals from various age groups, and detailed analysis of the answers provides important data.

**Table 9: Do you believe that digital deception increases family conflicts?**



Participants' responses show that digital deception has negative effects on family relationships. Many participants stated that cheating leads to loss of trust, poor communication and conflicts within the family. In particular, expressions such as "trust is destructive" and "communication is weakening" emphasize the negative effects of this behavior on the family structure.

**Table 10: Do you believe that digital deception causes psychological damage?**

Digital deception causes trauma and wear and tear within the family that is often difficult to resolve. Some participants describe the impact of this behavior on the family as a "shock", indicating that cheating leaves permanent scars among family members. Therefore, it can be concluded that the effects of digital deception within the family are long-term and profound. Study findings show that the main causes of digital infidelity are related to factors such as indifference, exposure to too many options, and unhappiness in the relationship. Expressions such as "too many alternatives" and "being exposed to too many options" reveal that digital platforms provide the basis for deception by offering opportunities to establish new relationships between people. While the

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digital world allows people to establish relationships quickly and easily, this creates a risk factor for existing relationships. The fact that many participants expressed reasons such as "unhappiness in the relationship" shows that the emotional emptiness and dissatisfaction underlying digital cheating is also an important factor.

Table 11: Is the mental state of the cheating family member healthy?

According to the participants' statements, digital deception creates serious damaging effects on the family, and these effects are generally stated as "loneliness", "the end of the family institution" and "serious problems within the family". Digital deception can also negatively affect the mental health of the deceived party and lead to social conflicts and divisions.

Table 12: How important is emotional support after digital infidelity?

Strategies put forward by participants to prevent digital cheating include methods such as "domestic digital detox", "closing social media accounts" and "limiting digital use". Participants believe that controlling the time spent in the digital environment is important in preventing deception.

According to the results of the survey conducted in the Istanbul region, some participants suggested seeking professional help and increasing communication within the family to solve this problem. Suggestions from the participants of the survey study, such as "EMDR (EMDR, which is a parameter definition, is the movement of the brain towards adaptive resolution. Yıldırım, 2022) should be done by going back to childhood" show that treating deeper psychological problems may be important in preventing deception. The results that emerged as a result of the thematic analysis major themes;

- Family and Negative Influences
- Family Trust and Communication
- Unhappiness and Health
- Deception and Distrust
- It is seen as the Role of Social Media.

These themes comprehensively address various aspects of digital deception; It analyzes many factors, from family trust and communication to emotional difficulties and the destructive role of social media. Digital deception is a phenomenon that seriously damages elements such as trust, loyalty and healthy communication, which form the basis of the family structure. This study revealed the causes and consequences of cheating in the digital environment, based on individuals' perceptions, and emphasized that strategies such as digital detox and open communication can play an important role in preventing this problem. The results of the study also show the need to increase education and awareness activities to reduce the negative effects of digital deception on society. In this context, raising awareness of families about ethical use in the digital environment and encouraging the conscious use of digital platforms becomes important.

## **CONCLUSION**

Developing technology and digital transformation create new dynamics in people's private lives and social relationships. Cheating behavior that develops in digital environments affects the social and familial structure in a multidimensional way. This study aimed to examine the multidimensional effects of cheating in the digital environment on family and society, and aimed to analyze the causes and consequences of cheating based on the opinions of the participants and the recommended strategies to prevent this behavior. The study was conducted with a mixed-method approach to evaluate the effects of digital deception on individuals. A survey was created as a qualitative data collection tool and was designed to determine the scope of social effects by asking open-ended questions to the participants, revealing their perceptions of the effects of digital deception on the family. The majority of the participants are children and individuals from various age groups, and detailed analysis of the answers provides important data.

Participants' responses show that digital deception has negative effects on family relationships. Many participants stated that cheating leads to loss of trust, poor communication and conflicts within the family. In particular, expressions such as "trust is destructive" and "communication is weakening" emphasize the negative effects of this behavior on the family structure. Digital deception causes trauma and wear and tear within the family that is often difficult to resolve. Some participants describe the impact of this behavior on the family as a "shock", indicating that cheating leaves permanent scars among family members. Therefore, it can be concluded that the effects of digital deception within the family are long-term and profound. Study findings show that the main causes of digital infidelity are related to factors such as indifference, exposure to too many options, and unhappiness in the relationship. Expressions such as "too many alternatives" and "being exposed to too many options" reveal that digital platforms provide the basis for deception by offering opportunities to establish new relationships between people.

While the digital world allows people to establish relationships quickly and easily, this creates a risk factor for existing relationships. The fact that many participants expressed reasons such as "unhappiness in the relationship" shows that the emotional emptiness and dissatisfaction underlying digital cheating is also an important factor. According to the participants' statements, digital deception creates serious damaging effects on the family, and these effects are generally stated as "loneliness", "the end of the family institution" and "serious problems within the family". Digital deception can also negatively affect the mental health of the deceived

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party and lead to social conflicts and divisions. Strategies put forward by participants to prevent digital cheating include methods such as "domestic digital detox", "closing social media accounts" and "limiting digital use". Participants believe that controlling the time spent in the digital environment is important in preventing deception. Some participants suggested seeking professional help and increasing communication within the family to solve this problem.

As a result, it has been concluded that digital deception is a phenomenon that deeply affects today's relationships, social dynamics and the family institution with the widespread use of digital technologies.

### RESTRICTION

The sample size of survey respondents is limited and larger-scale studies are needed before generalizing the results. Additionally, although all the scales used in the study are widely accepted, each has its own advantages and limitations.

### NOTIFICATIONS

Evaluation: Evaluated by internal and external consultants.

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