

SOSYAL MEDYA KISKANÇLIĞI VE ŞİDDET EĞİLİMİ ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİNİN İNCELENMESİ¹

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ÖZ

Sosyal medya günümüzde bireylerin bilgiye ulaşma ve iletişim kurma amaçlarının ötesinde yeni arkadaşlıklar ve romantik ilişkiler edindiği ve romantik ilişkilerini yaşadığı bir alan haline gelmiştir. Ancak sosyal medya platformları aynı zamanda yanlış anlamalar, güvensizlikler ve duygusal gerilimler gibi potansiyel riskleri de içermektedir. Sosyal medya kıskançlığı, sosyal medya uygulamaları kullanıcılarının gördükleri içerikler karşısında yaşadıkları kıskançlık duygusuyla tanımlanmaktadır. Özellikle genç kuşağın sosyal medya kullanımı ve gelişen davranışsal süreçler dijital teknolojilerin şiddeti bünyesinde barındırmasını beraberinde getirmiştir. Sosyal medya kıskançlığıyla meydana gelen duygusal gerilimler, bireylerde şiddet eğilimlerinin ortaya çıkmasına neden olabilmektedir. Bu araştırma, sosyal medya kıskançlığı ile şiddet eğilimi arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek amacıyla nicel ve ilişkisel tarama modeli ile yürütülmüştür. Çalışmaya, yaşları 18–30 arasında değişen ve günlük en az iki saatini sosyal medya kullanımına ayıran, son iki yıl içerisinde romantik ilişki deneyimi olan 273 üniversite öğrencisi katılmıştır. Veri toplama aracı olarak Romantik İlişkilerde Sosyal Medya Kıskançlığı Ölçeği ile Şiddet Eğilimleri Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada Pearson korelasyon analizi, bağımsız örneklem t-testi, ANOVA ve çoklu doğrusal regresyon analizleri yapılmıştır. Analiz sonucuna göre sosyal medya kıskançlığı ile şiddet eğilimi arasında güçlü ve pozitif ilişki olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca kadınların sosyal medya kıskançlığı düzeylerinin erkeklerden yüksek olduğu belirlenmiştir. Buna karşılık erkeklerin şiddet eğilimi puanlarının kadınlara kıyasla daha yüksek olduğu bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Şiddet, Şiddet Eğilimi, Sosyal Medya Kıskançlığı.

Jel Kodları: I31, D91, Z13.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA JEALOUSY AND VIOLENT TENDENCIES

ABSTRACT

Social media has become a space where individuals not only access information and communicate but also establish and maintain romantic relationships. However, these platforms also involve risks such as misunderstandings, distrust, and emotional tension. Social media jealousy refers to the feelings of jealousy triggered by the content users encounter online and may contribute to the emergence of violent tendencies. This study aimed to examine the relationship between social media jealousy and violent tendencies through a quantitative relational survey design. The sample consisted of 273 university students aged 18–30 who used social media at least two hours daily and had been in a romantic relationship within the past two years. Data was collected using the social media Jealousy in Romantic Relationships Scale and the Violence Tendency Scale. Pearson correlation, independent samples t-test, ANOVA, and multiple regression analyses were conducted. Results showed a strong positive relationship between social media jealousy and violent tendencies. Additionally, women reported higher social media jealousy than men, while men scored higher on violent tendencies.

Keywords: Social Media, Violence, Tendency to Violence, Social Media Jealousy.

JEL Codes: I31, D91, Z13.

INTRODUCTION

Today, the integration of digital technologies into daily life has significantly reshaped how individuals communicate and maintain relationships. Social media platforms have become prominent environments where users share their personal experiences, emotions, and romantic relationships. While these platforms facilitate social interaction, they also expose individuals to idealized portrayals of others' lives, which can foster negative emotional states such as jealousy, inadequacy, and comparison (Festinger, 1954; Kovan, 2023; Vaillancourt et al., 2024).

Social comparison theory posits that individuals tend to evaluate themselves in relation to others, and exposure to idealized online content may intensify feelings of envy and jealousy. In this context, social media jealousy—defined as the negative emotional response triggered by perceived threats to romantic relationships through online interactions—has become an emerging psychosocial issue, particularly among young adults (Muisse et al., 2009; Utz & Beukeboom, 2011). Previous studies have suggested that social media jealousy may lead to behavioral outcomes such as controlling, suspicious, and intrusive behaviors within romantic relationships. However, less attention has been given to how these emotional reactions may be associated with violent tendencies, a more serious behavioral manifestation of jealousy and insecurity.

In societies like Turkey, where social media use is widespread among young adults, understanding how social media jealousy translates into violent tendencies carries significant social and psychological importance. Addressing this issue may provide insight into the underlying mechanisms of aggression and relational conflict in digital contexts.

Research Problem and Aims

Although jealousy is a well-established construct in the literature, its manifestation through social media platforms and its potential behavioral consequences, such as violence, have not been adequately examined. The present study seeks to fill this gap by exploring how social media jealousy and its sub-dimensions predict violent tendencies among young adults in Turkey. This study aims to determine the relationship between social media jealousy and violent tendencies among young adults and to investigate whether jealousy-related attitudes on social media predict individuals' violent behavioral tendencies.

Research Questions

Is there a significant relationship between social media jealousy and violent tendencies among young adults?

Do the sub-dimensions of social media jealousy (restrictive controlling attitude, suspicious monitoring attitude, and respect/trust in the social media domain) significantly predict violent tendencies?

Are there significant differences in social media jealousy and violent tendencies based on gender or relationship status?

Hypotheses

H1: There is a positive and significant relationship between social media jealousy and violent tendencies.

H2: The sub-dimensions of social media jealousy — restrictive controlling attitude, suspicious monitoring attitude, and respect/trust in the social media domain — significantly predict violent tendencies.

H3: Women's levels of social media jealousy are significantly higher than those of men.

H4: Men's violent tendency scores are significantly higher than those of women.

Methodological Overview

To address these questions, the study employed a correlational survey model within the quantitative research paradigm. Data were collected from young adults through standardized self-report scales, including the Social Media Jealousy Scale in Romantic Relationships (Demirtaş et al., 2016) and the Violence Tendencies Scale (Göka et al., 1995). Statistical analyses—such as descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, independent samples t-tests, and multiple regression—were used to examine relationships between variables and to test predictive effects.

1. FRAMEWORK

1.1. Social Media Jealousy

Social media has become a space where individuals not only access information and communicate but also form new friendships, develop romantic relationships, and experience romantic relationships (Elkatmış, 2024). Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter) are the most widely used platforms. These platforms enable couples to share their daily lives, special moments, and feelings. At the same time, these platforms increase the visibility of relationships through photo and video sharing, story posts, location notifications, and online interactions (Bouffard et al., 2022; Hallinan & Brubaker, 2021).

While social media platforms offer important opportunities for building bonds, strengthening communication, and creating shared memories between partners, they also carry potential risks such as misunderstandings, mistrust, and emotional tension (Vaillancourt et al., 2024).

Social media envy is a concept that entered the literature with the emergence of social media applications at the end of the last century. This concept is defined as the feeling of envy experienced by users of social media applications, which have reached a wider audience with the availability of

smartphones to individual users, when they see the content shared by others (Tandoc et al., 2015). Social media envy refers to negative emotional responses toward others' idealized lifestyles or achievements, particularly within interpersonal and romantic contexts. Therefore, Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory provides an important framework for explaining the dynamics of social media envy from a psychological perspective.

Social Comparison Theory claims that individuals tend to compare themselves with others to evaluate their own opinions, abilities, and behaviors. Accordingly, when objective criteria are unclear, people turn to social comparisons to evaluate themselves. These comparisons can be upward or downward (Festinger, 1954).

Conversely, upward comparison, comparing oneself to those who are better off, can lead to feelings of motivation or inadequacy, while downward comparison can serve to maintain or increase self-esteem (Collins, 1996; Wills, 1981). The theory encompasses not only cognitive evaluation processes but also emotional outcomes; for example, the successes of others can generate envy or inspiration (Suls & Wills, 2024).

Today, social media platforms have significantly increased individuals' opportunities for comparison. Accordingly, this has made the effects of social comparison on self-perception and psychological well-being more visible (Güler et al., 2022). On the one hand, it is known that social comparison processes are shaped by factors such as cultural context, personality traits, and the individual's perceived social distance (Vogel et al., 2014).

Social comparison processes have become a significant trigger for negative emotional responses, such as envy, with the increase in social media platforms and the widespread use of social media. On social media, individuals are often exposed to idealized snapshots of others' lives (Güler et al., 2022). This situation can intensify upward social comparisons and increase feelings of envy (Appel et al., 2016). In the same vein, the comparison mechanisms predicted in Festinger's (1954) theory appear to have become more constant and visible in the social media environment. Especially in individuals with sensitive self-esteem, jealousy has been found to be associated with both a decrease in self-esteem and a decrease in life satisfaction (Krasnova et al., 2013).

A study has shown that individuals with low self-esteem tend to create an idealized image of themselves on social media, particularly when compared to individuals with high self-esteem. The same study also found that these individuals are more prone to certain emotions, such as jealousy stemming from social media (Utz & Beukeboom, 2011).

Social media jealousy is a multidimensional phenomenon with a wide repertoire. For instance, social media jealousy seen in romantic relationships is characterized by excessive interest and excessive control behaviors toward the partner's online activities. This situation can sometimes cause tension in relationships. Furthermore, it can turn into violence between partners (Emond et al., 2023).

A controlling attitude, characterized by restrictions, and a suspicious attitude characterized by vigilance are highlighted as two important phenomena of social media jealousy (Utz & Beukeboom, 2011). More specific definitions of social media jealousy can also be found on social media platforms. For example, in a study, researchers drew attention to the jealousy behavior created by Facebook use in romantic relationships, referring to it as “Facebook jealousy” (Muise et al., 2009).

In a study, the mediating role of communication skills in the relationship between social media jealousy and life satisfaction was examined in 445 individuals aged 18-31 who were in romantic relationships. The findings showed that social media jealousy negatively predicted life satisfaction and that communication skills were a significant mediating variable in this relationship. The study emphasizes the importance of communication skills in understanding the effects of social media interactions on emotional experiences and life satisfaction (Kovan, 2023).

In a study which is also longitudinal, the relationship between social media jealousy and intimate partner violence in youths' romantic relationships was examined over a one-year period in two different samples. It was found that the relationship between social media jealousy and partner violence is bidirectional over time. Additionally, the same study found a significant relationship between individuals' violent behavior and their partner's online jealousy (Emond et al., 2023).

In another points, in a study which is also qualitative conducted with 55 adolescents aged 15-18, it was found that situations such as sharing photos or messaging with others online were cited as sources of jealousy and caused problems in relationships (Van Ouytsel et al., 2019). Besides that, social media platforms were also found to cause retrospective romantic jealousy (Frampton & Fox, 2018). In one study, it was reported that some partners were bothered by each other's social media history and described this as a jealousy-like feeling (Robards & Lincoln, 2016).

Another study executed with married individuals within the framework of Facebook jealousy observed a strong negative relationship between Facebook jealousy and trust. This study found that as marital satisfaction, happiness levels, and trust decreased, Facebook jealousy increased. In addition, it was found that as feelings of loneliness increased, Facebook jealousy also increased (Tiryaki & Karakuş, 2018).

Ultimately, studies show that individuals' personal dynamics play an important role in their attitudes toward social media. Likewise, it has also been exhibited that social media usage, in conjunction with individual dynamics, influences various aspects of individuals' lives, including relationship satisfaction, partner relationships, and interpersonal communication (Muscanell & Guadagno, 2016; Van Ouytsel et al., 2019).

1.2. Tendency To Violence

Violence tendency is defined as a psychological predisposition that expresses an individual's potential to harm themselves or others (J. Anderson et al., 2018; DeWall et al., 2011; Huesmann, 2018).

Anderson and Bushman (2002) conceptualized violent tendencies as “psychological readiness to engage in any behavior intended to harm another individual.”

Furthermore, researchers accentuate that violent tendencies are not limited to outward behavior, but are complex structures that also include cognitive, emotional, and physiological components. Researchers such as Berkowitz, (1993) and (C. Anderson & Bushman, 2002) note that violent tendencies arise from the interaction of situational triggers, personal predispositions, and social-cultural factors. This tendency encompasses a broad spectrum of behaviors, ranging from overt physical aggression to verbal abuse, passive-aggressive behaviors, and indirect forms of harm, and can be shaped by the cumulative effect of various risk factors throughout an individual's life cycle (Loeber & Hay, 1997).

Not to mention that some studies underline that childhood experiences play a critical role in the development of violent tendencies. For instance, research based on Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory has shown that children learn violent behaviors by observing them. According to this theory, children can add aggressive behaviors to their own behavioral repertoire by modeling the aggressive behaviors of their parents, peers, or characters they see in the media. Children who observe that these models are rewarded for violent behavior or are not punished for it develop cognitive schemas and behavioral scenarios that increase the likelihood of exhibiting such behaviors in similar situations. A study by Huesmann and colleagues (2003) demonstrated that exposure to violence in childhood increases the likelihood of violent tendencies in adulthood (Bandura & Walters, 1977; Huesmann, 2018).

Over and above that, it is known that genetic factors also play a role in violent tendencies. Caspi and colleagues (2002) emphasize that a series of variations in the monoamine oxidase A (MAOA) gene significantly increases the risk of antisocial behavior and violent tendencies, especially in individuals who have been subjected to abuse during childhood (Caspi et al., 2002).

It is known that structural and functional abnormalities in the prefrontal cortex are an important factor in violent tendencies. Decreased activity in the orbitofrontal and dorsolateral regions can lead to impairments in impulse control and decision-making processes (Davidson et al., 2000). Irregular connections between increased amygdala activity and the prefrontal cortex can cause impairments in the mechanisms that regulate threat perception and emotional responses (Blair, 2016). Additionally, imbalances in neurotransmitter systems, particularly changes in serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine levels, play an important role in the emergence of aggressive behavior (Siever, 2008).

Additionally, it is comprehended that violent tendencies also have psychological and psychiatric backgrounds. Personality pathologies such as antisocial personality disorder, borderline personality disorder, and narcissistic personality disorder are associated with violent behavior due to lack of empathy, impulsiveness, and low tolerance for frustration (Fountoulakis et al., 2008).

Individuals experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), particularly war veterans and those who have experienced childhood trauma, may exhibit violent behavior due to symptoms of

hyperarousal and re-experiencing (Sullivan & Elbogen, 2014). In addition, substance use disorders, psychotic disorders, and mood disorders can increase the risk of violence due to impaired judgment, changes perception, and difficulties in regulating emotions (Fazel et al., 2009).

In recent years, with the spread of digital technologies, violence has also become a topic of discussion in relation to digital technologies. For example, in a study investigating the effects of exposure to violent media content on violent tendencies, it was found that, contrary to the widespread belief that violent video games increase aggressive behavior in young people, this relationship is weak. In addition, it was stated that other risk factors have a stronger effect (Kara et al., 2022).

To sum up, it is evident that violent tendencies are closely related not only to individual and biopsychosocial factors but also to social media usage practices. Individuals prone to violence perceive their partners' online interactions as more threatening in the social media environment, which intensifies their feelings of jealousy and paves the way for controlling, monitoring, and restrictive behaviors. Therefore, social media jealousy can be considered a concrete manifestation of violent tendencies in the digital context. This situation reveals that jealousy and violent behavior in romantic relationships feed into each other, pointing to an important risk factor for maintaining healthy relationships in the digital age (Emond et al., 2023; Tandon et al., 2021).

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Model

In this research, a correlational survey design was used to examine the relationships between the study variables. The study examined the effect of social media jealousy and its sub-dimensions on violent tendencies. In this regard, the relationships between social media jealousy and violent tendencies were revealed through correlation analyses, intergroup differences were tested using independent sample t-tests, and predictive effects were evaluated using multiple regression analysis.

The research model has a cross-sectional structure; data was collected at a single point in time, and in this respect, the study provides a snapshot assessment of the participants' current situations. The study does not aim to directly explain the cause-and-effect relationships between variables but rather to reveal the level and significance of the statistical relationships between them. Therefore, descriptive statistics, correlation, group comparisons, and regression techniques were used together to understand the contribution of social media jealousy to violent tendencies in romantic relationships. As a result, both the mutual relationships between variables and the factors influencing violent tendencies were systematically evaluated.

2.2. Statistical Analysis

The data obtained in the study were analyzed using the SPSS 30.0 program. First, descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) were calculated for the demographic characteristics (age, gender, relationship status, social media platforms used) of the individuals

participating in the study. Subsequently, Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships between variables, and linear relationships between age, social media jealousy subdimensions, and violent tendencies were evaluated. An independent samples t-test was applied to determine the effects of two-category independent variables such as gender and relationship status on social media jealousy and violent tendencies. Additionally, additional t-test analyses were conducted to examine whether the subdimensions of the social media jealousy scale showed significant differences within themselves.

In this study, multiple linear regression analysis was performed to evaluate the predictive role of social media jealousy on violent tendencies. In this analysis, the three subscales of the social media envy scale (restrictive controlling attitude, suspicious monitoring attitude, and respect and trust in the social media domain) were included as independent variables, while the total score for violent tendencies was included as the dependent variable in the model. The significance of the regression model was evaluated using an ANOVA test, and the explanatory power of the model was reported using R^2 and adjusted R^2 values. Additionally, to determine whether there was a problem of multicollinearity among the variables in the regression analysis, the variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance values were examined, and the obtained values were found to be within acceptable limits.

2.3. Tools

The Social Media Jealousy Scale in Romantic Relationships was developed by Demirtaş, Madran, and Çakılcı (2016). The five-point Likert scale aims to measure jealousy behaviors that arise on social media in the context of romantic relationships. It consists of 15 items across three subscales: restrictive controlling attitude, suspicious monitoring attitude, and respect and trust in the social media domain. As a result of validity and reliability studies, the scale's Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be .83.

The Violence Tendencies Scale (VTS) was developed by Göka, Bayat, and Türkçapar (1995). The scale was designed to determine individuals' violent tendencies and consists of 20 items. Participants are asked to rate each item on a four-point scale ranging from “not at all appropriate” to “very appropriate.” High scores on the scale indicate that the individual has a high tendency toward violence. According to the scoring system, scores between 1 and 20 are classified as “very low,” between 21 and 40 as “low,” between 41 and 60 as “moderate,” and between 61 and 80 as “very high” violent tendencies (Turkish Prime Ministry Family Research Institute, 1998). In the reliability study of the scale, the Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be .88.

2.4. Participants

The sample of the study consists of university students aged between 18 and 30. All participants were selected from individuals who have spent at least two hours daily on social media for the past six months. The study included individuals who had been in a romantic relationship within the past two

years or who had been in a romantic relationship for the past six months. This included marriages, engagements, and dating relationships. Participants were divided into two groups for analysis purposes: those in relationships and those not in relationships.

2.5. Ethical Processes

This study was conducted with the approval of the Ethics Committee, decision number 25/05/17.

3. FINDINGS

A total of 273 university students participated in the study. Of the participants, 125 were female (45.8%) and 148 were male (54.2%). The average age of the participants was 25.8 (SD = 1.7), indicating that the sample was concentrated in the young adult age group.

When examining data related to social media usage, it was observed that the most frequently used social media platforms among participants were Instagram (48.7%, the highest), TikTok, Snapchat, and Facebook (2.4%, the lowest).

Participants' average daily social media usage time was reported to be 3.4 hours (SD = 1.6). This finding, as noted in previous studies, highlights that university students spend a significant portion of their day online.

Table 1. Correlation Between Age, Social Media Jealousy Sub-Dimensions, and Violence

	Tendency					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Age	—	.088	.045	.052	.116	.143*
2. Restrictive Controlling Attitude		—	-.558**	.330**	.491**	.223**
3. Skeptical Observer Attitude			—	.100	.185**	.079
4. Respect and Trust in social media				—	.844**	.615**
5. Social media Total Score					—	.617**
6. Total Violence Tendency Score						—

Note. $p < .05$, $p < .01$ (2-tailed).

According to the results of the correlation analysis, a positive and low-level significant relationship was found between age and violent tendencies ($r = .143$, $p < .05$). This finding shows that as age increases, individuals' violent tendencies rise slightly. A negative and moderately strong correlation was observed between restrictive controlling attitude and suspicious monitoring attitude, which are subdimensions of social media jealousy ($r = -.558$, $p < .01$). However, restrictive controlling attitude showed a positive and significant relationship with respect and trust in the social media domain ($r = .330$, $p < .01$). Additionally, positive and significant relationships were found between restrictive controlling attitudes and social media total scores ($r = .491$, $p < .01$) and violent tendencies ($r = .223$, p

< .01). These findings reveal that controlling attitudes in the social media environment are associated with both general social media jealousy levels and violent tendencies (Table 1).

A low but significant relationship was observed between suspicious surveillance attitude and social media total score ($r = .185, p < .01$). This suggests that surveillance tendencies may slightly increase general social media jealousy. A very strong correlation was found between respect and trust in the social media domain and the total social media score ($r = .844, p < .01$). This finding indicates that the total social media envy score is largely influenced by this sub-dimension. Additionally, a high correlation was found between respect and trust in the social media domain and violent tendencies ($r = .615, p < .01$). This suggests that this dimension of social media envy may be a factor that increases violent tendencies. Finally, a positive and strong relationship was found between the total social media score and violent tendencies ($r = .617, p < .01$). This finding indicates that an increase in social media envy significantly elevates violent tendencies (Table 1).

Table 2. Regression Analysis Predicting Total Violence Tendency Score

Model	B	SE B	β	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
	22.475	5.516	—	4.074	.000	—	—
Restrictive Controlling Attitude	0.311	0.117	.158	2.667	.008	.615	1.625
Skeptical Observer Attitude	0.451	0.179	.148	2.522	.012	.682	1.466
Respect and Trust in social media	0.944	0.079	.588	11.875	.000	.883	1.132

Note. Significant at $p < .01$.

According to the results of the regression analysis, it was found that the three subdimensions of the social media jealousy scale together significantly predicted the total score for violent tendencies, $R = .644, R^2 = .415, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .409, F(3, 270) = 63.87, p < .001$. The model explains approximately 41% of the total variance in violent tendencies, indicating a strong overall effect of the predictor variables (Table 2).

When predictive variables were shown that, respect and trust in social media emerged as the strongest predictor ($B = 0.944, SE = 0.079, \beta = .588, t = 11.875, p < .001$). This finding indicates that as respect and trust toward the social media domain decreases, violence tendency scores increase significantly. The Restrictive Controlling Attitude Subscale is also a crucial predictor of violent tendencies ($B = 0.311, SE = 0.117, \beta = .158, t = 2.667, p = .008$). Accordingly, as the tendency to exert control over one's partner through social media use increases, so do violent tendencies. Similarly, the Suspicious Surveillance Attitude Subscale is also a significant predictor ($B = 0.451, SE = 0.179, \beta = .148, t = 2.522, p = .012$). This result suggests that constantly monitoring the partner's social media activities and adopting a suspicious approach may increase the tendency toward violence (Table 2).

When examining the multicollinearity diagnostic statistics for the predictor variables in the model, it was observed that the tolerance values ranged from .615 to .883, while the VIF values ranged from 1.13 to 1.62. These values are within acceptable limits (tolerance > .10, VIF < 5), indicating that there is no multicollinearity issue in the model and that the coefficients can be reliably interpreted.

Table 3. Independent Samples t-Test Results for Social Media Jealousy and Violence Tendency Scores by Gender and Relationship Status

	Group	Average	SS	t	sd	p
Social Media Jealousy	Women	52.40	8.25	2.54	198	.012
	Men	49.10	7.95			
Tendency to violence	Women	36.75	6.10	-3.12	198	.002
	Men	39.80	5.95			
Social Media Jealousy (Relationship Status)	Yes	51.20	8.05	1.15	198	.252
	No	50.00	8.40			

Note. Significant at $p < .01$.

According to the results of the independent sample t-test, when social media jealousy scores were compared in terms of gender, women (Mean = 52.40, SD = 8.25) were found to have significantly higher scores than men (Mean = 49.10, SD = 7.95), $t(198) = 2.54$, $p = .012$. This result indicates a significant difference between gender and social media jealousy. In other words, the women who participated in the study were found to have higher levels of jealousy in social media environments than men (Table 2).

When violence tendency scores were examined according to the gender variable, it was observed that men (Mean = 39.80, SD = 5.95) scored significantly higher than women (Mean = 36.75, SD = 6.10), $t(198) = -3.12$, $p = .002$. This finding indicates that men's levels of violence tendencies are statistically significantly higher than women's. Accordingly, it was observed that the levels of propensity toward violent behavior or thoughts among men participating in the study were higher than those among women (Table 2).

When social media jealousy scores were examined according to relationship status, there was no statistically significant difference between the scores of participants in a relationship (Mean = 51.20, SD = 8.05) and those not in a relationship (Mean = 50.00, SD = 8.40), $t(198) = 1.15$, $p = .252$. This result indicates that individuals' levels of social media jealousy did not change significantly based on whether they were in a relationship or not, meaning that there was no significant relationship between relationship status and social media jealousy (Table 2).

The results of the t-test analyses revealed statistically significant differences in all variables. Significant differences were observed in the variables of interpersonal controlled attitude ($t(271) = 12.94, p < .001$), skeptical monitoring attitude ($t(271) = -25.00, p < .001$), and respect for the social media domain ($t(271) = 6.84, p < .001$). Although the social media total score ($t(271) = 2.38, p = .019$) had a lower t-value, it still showed a statistically significant difference. A significant difference was also found in the total violence tendency score ($t(271) = 4.96, p < .001$). These results indicate that there are significant differences between the groups studied in terms of social media use and violence tendency.

Table 4. ANOVA Results for the Regression Model Predicting Total Violence Tendency Score

	(SS)	sd	(MS)	F	p
Regression	19717.699	3	6572.566	63.870	< .001
Residual	27784.538	270	102.906	—	—
Total	47502.237	273	—	—	—

Note. Significant at $p < .01$.

The ANOVA revealed that the regression model was statistically significant, $F(3, 270) = 63.870, p < .001$. This result indicates that the subscales of the social media jealousy scale together explain a significant portion of the variation in violence tendency scores. The regression model explains 41% of the variance in total violence tendency scores ($R^2 = .415$), indicating a moderate-to-high level of explanatory power. Therefore, the combined effect of the predictor variables is based on a strong and meaningful network of relationships rather than random chance (Table 4).

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study indicate that individuals' propensity for violence increases slightly with age ($r = .143, p < .05$), which aligns with previous research showing higher aggression and anger levels among young adults aged 18–29 compared to older populations (Micciolo et al., 2022; Zimprich & Mascherek, 2012). Our sample, aged 18–30 with a mean age of 25.8, demonstrates a subtle increase in violent tendencies with age, consistent with these prior findings.

Regarding the sub-dimensions of social media jealousy, a significant positive relationship was observed between restrictive controlling attitudes and violent tendencies ($r = .223, p < .01$). Furthermore, restrictive control attitudes were strongly correlated with overall social media jealousy ($r = .491, p < .01$), suggesting that controlling behaviors in online contexts are associated with both higher general jealousy levels and elevated violent tendencies. Regression analysis confirmed that controlling behaviors directed toward partners through social media significantly predict violent tendencies ($\beta = .158, p < .01$), in line with earlier research emphasizing the link between control and aggression in romantic contexts (Fikkers et al., 2017).

Similarly, suspicious monitoring behaviors were positively associated with both social media jealousy ($r = .185, p < .01$) and violent tendencies ($r = .185, p < .01$). This supports previous studies indicating that surveillance behaviors and suspicion in relationships can exacerbate both jealousy and aggression, particularly among individuals prone to social anxiety (Elphinston & Noller, 2011; Thompson et al., 2023). These findings underscore the role of monitoring behaviors as potential risk factors for relational conflict and violent outcomes in the context of social media.

The dimension of respect and trust in social media emerged as a critical protective factor. High levels of respect and trust were strongly associated with lower violent tendencies ($r = .615, p < .01$) and moderated social media jealousy ($r = .844, p < .01$). Regression analysis confirmed that respect and trust is the strongest predictor of violent tendencies ($\beta = .588, p < .001$). This highlights that a lack of trust and respect in online interactions is a substantial contributor to aggression, corroborating previous findings linking insecurity and jealousy to partner violence in young adults' romantic relationships (Abbasi et al., 2025; Emond et al., 2023; Kyegombe et al., 2022; Van Ouytsel et al., 2019).

Overall, the results indicate that social media jealousy, particularly expressed through controlling and suspicious behaviors, is closely associated with violent tendencies among young adults. Conversely, trust and respect in the social media domain serve as protective factors that can mitigate these risks. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the psychosocial mechanisms underlying jealousy and aggression in digital romantic contexts, highlighting the importance of fostering trust and transparent communication in online environments.

5. CONCLUSION

In light of this, it could be said that this study suggests that social media jealousy is a significant predictor of violent tendencies in young adults' romantic relationships. Controlling and suspicious behaviors exacerbate the risk, while respect and trust act as protective factors. Accordingly, the findings reveals the importance of addressing social media-related jealousy in interventions aimed at preventing relational conflict and aggression. Future research should explore longitudinal designs to examine causality, consider broader cultural contexts, and investigate potential strategies to enhance trust and reduce online jealousy in romantic partnerships.

The results of this study further suggest that digital environments influence not only communication patterns but also individuals' emotional regulation processes. Among young adults, who increasingly maintain romantic relationships through social media, issues such as trust, boundary-setting, and privacy have become central to relational well-being. In this context, social media jealousy is closely related to self-concept, self-esteem, and relationship satisfaction. Therefore, the present findings contribute not only to understanding individual behavioral tendencies but also to comprehending the evolving dynamics of romantic relationships in the digital age.

Finally, the findings have practical essential implications such as psychological counseling, therapy, and digital media literacy programs. Preventive interventions aimed at promoting trust-based communication skills, defining digital boundaries, and fostering awareness about the emotional risks of online interactions could help reduce social media-related conflict and aggression. Subsequent studies could examine the cognitive mechanisms underlying social media jealousy—such as perceived threat, control beliefs, or self-regulation capacities—and explore its neuropsychological and cross-cultural dimensions. Such efforts would provide a more comprehensive framework for promoting emotional well-being and healthy relational dynamics in digital environments.

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