Journal of Media Horizons
ISSN: 2710-4060 2710-4052 Volume 6, Issue 7, 2025

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS BEHIND STUDENTS' MEDIA ADDICTION AND ITS EFFECTS ON EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN

Neelam Mehmood[*1], Syeda Nosheen Fatima[2], Abdullah Khan[3]

[*1]*Phd Scholar, Department of Development Studies, Comsats Abbottabad, Pakistan*
[2]*Department of Media Studies, Riphah International University, Islamabad*
[3]*Department of Communication & Media Studies, Khushal Khan Khattak University Karak*

[*1]neelumwathra@gmail.com, [2]fatimashah110410@gmail.com, [3]abdullah.khan@kkkuk.edu.pk

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17865280

Keywords

Psychological Factors, Students' Media Addiction, Effects on Education, Pakistan

Article History
Received: 11 October 2025
Accepted: 21 November 2025
Published: 09 December 2025

Corresponding Author: *
Neelam Mehmood

Abstract

In Pakistan, this study examines the psychological factors contributing to students' media addiction, as well as the resulting impacts on student education. Using previous research, this investigation shows that rapid increases in the amount of digital media accessed by college and university students are closely associated with emotional dependency, social withdrawal, escapism and impulsivity; however, there is little research to date which has examined the relationship between these psychological factors and students' academic performance within the context of Pakistan. This study addresses this shortage of research, establishing the study's objectives and research questions as a way to identify the major psychological predictors of students' media addiction and determine how media addiction impacts a student's academic success/achievement. The study also tests hypotheses regarding connections between emotional, behavioural and cognitive factors and a student's level of educational engagement. A quantitative approach is adopted for this study, making use of a structured questionnaire distributed to a sample of students attending secondary and post-secondary institutions located within major cities throughout Pakistan. The data are examined using descriptive statistics, correlation matrices, regression models, visual representations of patterns related to students' levels of addiction and their effect on academic success through pie charts and frequency boxes. The research findings show that individuals who suffer from high levels of anxiety, social isolation, and impulsive behavior are highly likely to engage in excessive media consumption. Conversely, high media addiction rates in students correlate negatively with their engagement in and motivation toward education, their ability to focus while studying, and their success in the classroom due to increased procrastination. Therefore, researchers conclude that media addiction is a growing concern amongst psychologists and has demonstrable negative impacts on students' academic success in Pakistan. Researchers suggest that schools implement digital literacy programs and provide mental health support through consultation services, have adequate parent education resources, and create a balanced approach to sorting out the use of screens during both educational and leisurely activities. In addition, this study provides important information that helps guide educators,

policymakers, and mental health professionals in treating students who struggle with addiction to digital media

INTRODUCTION

The rise in student use of media is attributable to the influence of smartphones, social networking websites, video streaming platforms, and online gaming via the internet (Nasir, 2025) These digital formats have created many educational opportunities for students; however, students have developed higher rates of media addiction due to excessive and uncontrolled media consumption. Addictive media usage has had a detrimental effect on the emotional health, behaviour, and academic performance of these students. (Abbasi, 2014) In Pakistan, students from all educational levels are spending more time online than they have ever before as a direct consequence of the dramatic growth of internet access and smartphone penetration. (Ahmed, 2013) As digital media becomes an increasingly important aspect of students' lives, many questions remain concerning the psychological aspects and extent to which digital media usage disrupts learning, attention, and academic success. (Alaslani, 2020) Research investigate how these factors, as well as how the media addiction of students, affect educational outcomes for students in Pakistan.

Background of the Study

This research looks at the various psychological factors that lead to excessive media use and how these factors impact a student's academic achievement. (Nasir, 2024) The need for sociability among the youth, along with entertainment and the need to complete schoolwork, is what drives this excessive use of digital media. Also it review various academic papers related to media addiction, which are predominantly focused on social media, to fill the void in research regarding other types of media (i.e., gaming, streaming, etc). (Ali, 2023)
Media Addiction through Psychology (i.e., Cognitive Behavioral Theory, Utilization Gratification Theory, and Social Learning Theory). Media Addiction or excessive use of media can be caused by emotional regulation (e.g. using media as a distraction), identity construction (e.g. using media to make you feel important), and Social Validation. (Azizi, 2019)
In Pakistan, as a result of the increase in low-cost Internet Packages and the widespread use of Mobile Devices among the youth, students have become increasingly reliant on their mobile devices for academic purposes. Local and international studies have shown that, in addition to these things, Media Addiction can also accompany Depression and Anxiety, Procrastination, Loneliness, and Reduced Academic Performance. (Nasir, 2025)
Most of the existing literature has focused on only Social Media Addiction and has been limited to Social Media Alone. This research take advantage of these gaps in the existing literature and investigate Psychological Drivers for Excessive Media Use within a more Expansive Definition of Media Addiction.

Problem Statement

Many students in Pakistan have begun to show increasingly compulsive behaviours regarding the use of media, including excessive use of social networking sites, online gaming and entertainment applications.(Beyens, 2016) As a result of these compulsive behaviours, students' academic performance, ability to concentrate and mental health are being negatively affected. Very little empirical research has been conducted to date examining the specific psychological factors that contribute to the development of media addiction among Pakistan's youth and how media addiction affects their educational performance. (Boyd, 2007) Educators, parents and policymakers cannot design effective interventions for preventing educational problems among these youth without first gaining an understanding of the psychological predictors associated with the development of media addiction. In light of this need, a thorough exploration of the psychological predictors of media addiction and their subsequent resultant academic performance is warranted.

Research Gap

To date, few studies have examined the broad spectrum of addiction to media, including digital entertainment, gaming and online streaming. Most of the Pakistani studies on media addiction are primarily behaviourally based and do not consider important psychological predictors, such as anxiety, loneliness, impulsivity and emotional dependence. (Cao, 2018) In addition, very few studies link psychological predictors with academic achievement; (Ceglarek, 2016) for example, grade point average (GPA), and the amount of motivation to study and study habits, and the level of student's engagement in class. In addressing the various gaps in research, this study seeks to examine in-depth the psychological predictors of media addiction and their resultant impacts on educational performance within the context of the Pakistani student population.

Research Objectives

1. The principal objective of this investigation the identification of major psychological elements contributing towards Media Addiction in Students in Pakistan.
2. In addition, the second objective focus on examining how Media Addiction may be associated with student Academic Performance and Motivation and their Study Habits.
3. Finally, one of the purposes to investigate how Psychological Influencers may predict both the level of Media Addiction and therefore the extent of impact on educational Results.

Research Questions

1. Which Psychological Influencers affect Media Addiction in Pakistani Students?
2. Does Media Addiction influence the Academic Performance and Educational Engagement of Students?
3. Do the Psychological Influencers significantly predict the level of Media Addiction and subsequent Academic Performance?

Hypothesis

- Hypothesis 1: Psychological Influencers such as Anxiety, Loneliness, and Impulsivity significantly impact Media Addiction in Students.
- Hypothesis 2: Media Addiction negatively affects Students' Academic Performance, Motivation, and Classroom Engagement.
- Hypothesis 3: Higher levels of Psychological Distress are associated with increased Media Addiction and a decline in Academic Performance.

Significance of the Study

Various groups benefit from this study's findings. The study help educators and schools understand how students face difficulties in school as a direct result of their unhealthy relationship with media. This study help psychologists and counsellors identify factors related to addiction that they can work on with patients through counselling and modifying behaviour. Policy makers able to use the results to create evidence-based policies related to developing digital literacy and controlling excessive screen time among students. Finally, parents can learn how their child's use of media contributes to an addiction that limits their child's learning ability. From an academic perusal, this study contributes to the limited body of literature related to Pakistan by providing a thorough and detailed empirical examination of the psychological elements contributing to media addiction and its negative impacts on education filling a void in previous research efforts.

Literature Review

The growth of internet connectivity has resulted in global connectivity between computers by removing barriers between countries via the use of computers for communication. As a result, the centralization of information and communication technology (ICT) benefits to individuals continue; i.e., ICT benefits

continue to centralize due to the use of ICT via online means (Gan et al., 2018; Kong et al., 2021). Among the ICT technologies that benefited consumers the most, virtual social networks (VSNs) have been one of the most significant and used among internet applications today. VSNs are a new, online-based type of digital platform that has experienced a rapid level of interest from internet users around the world (Kwon & Wen, 2010; Alajmi & al. Ng et al. 2023). The digital space provided by VSNs represents a new, unique space to demonstrate the effect of globalization (Ranjbar & Abbasi, 2021) as many of the popular global VSNs currently used include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Viber, and Telegram, all of which have grown rapidly and have attracted many users worldwide (Lee & al., 2018). According to Duggan & al. Duggan to Kwin, at least 90% of adolescents log into these networks each day (2015).

The development of VSNs has changed communication patterns worldwide and has resulted in the way many people interact with one another (Hayes & al., 2016 Sharif & Khanekharab, 2017). With online participation, it is possible for a person to find a large amount of information and communicate (verbally, in writing, and through images) while saving money and time (Petersen & Johnston, 2015). Many people use Telegram in Iran, including students, and so it is an important area of research because of its popularity among them (Naeimi 2017). The use of social networking sites has become part of everyday life for most teenagers and has affected virtually all aspects of their existence, including their levels of educational involvement and academic achievement (Ng et al. 2023). The overuse of VSNs by students can have a detrimental impact on their educational progress and can lead to lower academic performance (Ali & Qazi 2023). This issue is especially important in Iran, where it has a strong relationship with the student population and their experiences in cyberspace; therefore, it can provide the necessary knowledge for future planning, developing strategies for better decision-making, and policy development around the problem of cybercrime. Because of the enormous effect Virtual Social Networks (VSNs) have on learners and how they affect the social, cultural, emotional and physical areas of the learner's life, we must evaluate the relationship between these networks and learners in order to maintain the mental health of learners. Therefore, the purpose of this research to investigate the relationship between the use of Telegram and the mental health of students. Moreover, for a school to meet its educational objectives, it must support the mental health of its students (Rostami et al., 2023; Tyagi & Meena, 2023). There is also a large volume of research that shows a strong correlation between a student's mental well-being and their academic performance; therefore, students who experience mental distress are more likely to have diminished levels of academic performance (Wood & Scott, 2016; Gao et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2018; Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2018; Sabzi et al., 2022; Ng et al., 2023). Hence, developing and maintaining an environment that supports students in achieving their academic potential and ensures the mental health of learners throughout their lifespan require an integration of mental health activities into the school environment (Tyagi & Meena, 2023; Mohammadkhani et al., 2024). In this study, mental health viewed as a fundamental part of a healthy lifestyle, especially for young people, and we explore how VSN usage, specifically Telegram, is related to mental health.

The use of Telegram has both negative and positive effects on students. However, if Telegram is used properly, it can also be a very effective tool (Yedidia et al., 2003; Prada-Nuñez et al., 2020) for increasing student motivation and helping them achieve better academic success, performance, and overall psychological growth (Teclehaimanot & Hickman, 2011; Metshali et al., 2016). According to Suárez-Perdomo et al. (2022), social media addictions are higher in students who also experienced less academic procrastination; however, they did not find significant differences in performance between the two groups. They also pointed out that Virtual Social Networks (VSNs) can be beneficial in early learning as educational tools. Other research studies documenting the positive impact of VSNs on student learning during remote emergency teaching include Iglesias-Pradas et al. (2021) and Vosoughi Motlagh et al. (2023). Alaslani and Alandejani (2020) found that when students use VSNs, their interactions with peers and teachers are enhanced, their collaborative learning increases, and they have higher levels of engagement and academic success.

Academic failure involves failure to learn, dropping out before finishing high school, repeating grades, receiving lower grades in school and/or leaving school. All of these issues have been documented with several studies by Fredericks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004, Beyens et al. 2016.

Many researchers have shown that the amount of time spent using virtual social networks (VSN) negatively affects students' academic achievement due to the decrease in time spent studying and the impact the time spent using VSN's and playing online games has on a student's academic performance. According to Seder & Oishi, 2009; Madaiah et al., 2015; Cao, Liu, Le, et al. due to these factors, the academic success of a student decreases (Núñez-Guzmán & Cisneros-Chávez, 2019; Suleiman & Sani, 2020). Although virtual social networks do allow students to communicate with other peers, virtual social networks actually decrease study time and negatively impact the learning process (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010; Fori, 2016; Thompson, Connell, McKay; Fredericks, 2015; Azizi et al. 2019). Some researchers believed that the academic decline is directly correlated with the number of hours spent in virtual environments and using VSN as a substitute for study time while in high school (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010; Paul, Cavanagh; Rostaminezhad & Shokatirad; Suleiman & Sani).

VSNs influence an individuals and society's emotions, thoughts, interactions, identity, and self-identity (Saha, 2009; Tyagi & Meena, 2023). Additionally, VSN involvement is especially relevant for the mental health of young people (Uddin et al., 2016). Young people form one of the largest demographics of Telegram users, and the increased access to the internet through mobile devices offers those same young people a strong exposure to cyberspace. Cyber environments rely heavily on social networking as an input of their cognitive, emotional, and cultural growth, which will have an impact on their entire life structure and emotional state (Mackenna & Bargh, 2006; Steers, 2016; Gil, 2019). Mental health encompasses a wide range of aspects such as emotional wellbeing, personal ability, perceived ability, the ability to understand and relate to older generations, and the ability to recognize one's own emotional and cognitive capacities, which allow for the management of daily stressors and proper functioning of everyday life (Goldsmith, 2000; Pertegal-Vega et al., 2019). A person in a good state of mental health is capable of resolving their own internal conflict, adjusting themselves to external stimuli in a manner that is appropriate, maintaining a good level of acceptance from their immediate social group, and displaying stability in their emotional state (Morgan & Cotton, 2003; Ng et al., 2023). Tateno et al. (2004) found a very strong connection between weekly internet use and some of the most common indicators of mental health, and noted that these indicators, such as stress and anxiety, increase as a result of increasing frequency of use of the internet. Mental health is essential for sustaining academic, professional, and social functioning appropriately. There are also studies linking Social Media behaviors to adolescent sleep habits and Mental Health issues (Pantic et al., 2012; Woods & Scott, 2016; Ali & Qazi, 2023). Insufficient sleep lead to Psychological Distress (Low Self-Esteem, Depression and Anxiety) (Pittman & Reich, 2016; Gao et al., 2018) which is why many studies address the impact of VSNs on Teen Mental Health (Tandoc et al., 2015; Elhai et al., 2016; Ceglarek & Ward, 2016; Rosenthal et al., 2016; Abbasi & Alghamdi, 2017; Razavi, 2021). As Christensen (2018) pointed out, as someone spends more time using Social Media, it adversely affects their Emotional Well-Being (Ali & Qazi, 2023) and can also negatively affect the Quality of relationships which may result in decreasing their long-term Relational Stability.

Research shows that prolonged use of Virtual Social Networks has a negative impact on all aspects of life; social responsibility, academic, and job performance, perceived support, and self-esteem. Deimazar, et al., (2019) states that 61.4% of students who heavily relied on the internet suffered severe declines in academic performance due to decreased study habits, lower grades, and increased absenteeism. High levels of use for either entertainment or socializing on the internet are associated with academic decline and concerns regarding a person's mental health (Primack, et al., 2017, Olszewski-Kubilius and Corwith, 2018, Lee, et al., 2018). According to Yang (1998), over 58% of heavy internet users (students) were affected by a severe decline in their academic performance due to the internet. Navarro, et al., (2018) also point out that those who are addicted to VSNs face an increased risk of experiencing mental illness; excessive use negatively impacts

academic and mental health outcomes by decreasing study time (Yedidia, et al., 2003; Seder & Oishi, 2009). Table 1 provides an overview of the data collected for this study.

Excessive interaction with Telegram is resulting in a decrease in the amount of time available for studying (Ahmed, 2013; Ogundijo, 2014; Fori, 2016; Razavi, 2021) and one of the biggest contributors to this phenomenon is the amount of time that users spend on the application compared to their study time. The user interface of Telegram promotes quicker interactions and connections with larger numbers of people, therefore resulting in extended periods of time spent on it. Since users tend to use the application for long periods of time, their overall productivity decreases, and they may also find themselves using the app late into the evening hours, which in turn makes them less focused on classroom instruction. When taken into consideration collectively, this excessive time on Telegram contributes to declines in relation to academic success. Therefore, increased usage of Telegram results in non-productive academic results for students. A second finding of the study looked at the relationship between the use of Telegram and its effects on the students' mental health of students at the second year of high school within Khaf City in Iran. A number of previous studies (i.e., Pantic et al., 2012; Uddin et al., 2016; Woods and Scott, 2016; Elhai et al., 2016; Ceglarek and Ward, 2016; Rosenthal et al., 2016; Primack et al., 2017; Abbasi & Alghamdi, 2017; Christensen, 2018; Pertegal-Vega et al., 2019; Razavi, 2021; Ng et al., 2023; Tyagi & Meena, 2023) have also shown that the use of virtual social networks (VSNs) can negatively affect the mental health of students through the use of psychological and emotional support given to these users through these VSN platforms. The addictive behaviour of users of Telegram leads to emotional, social, and psychological impacts that can affect student behaviour and academic performance, resulting in negative impacts on physical fitness, emotional state, and family life, leading to the development of conditions such as anxiety and depression and low self-esteem (Pittman & Reich, 2016; Gao et al., 2018; Ali & Qazi, 2023; Ng et al., 2023). The research also indicated that there is a notable distinction between how male and female high school students use Telegram in Khaf City, Iran.

TheoreticalFramework

This analysis is based on three primary psychological theories:

1. The Uses & Gratifications Theory (UGT), as proposed by Katz (1959), is helpful for understanding the reasons students use digital technologies for fulfilling their needs for entertainment, relaxation, social connection, and the avoidance of stress. The greater the number of emotional needs an individual has, the more likely they are to utilize media, and thus the greater their likelihood of developing an addiction to media.

2. Cognitive Behavior Theory provides a clear insight into how the dysfunctional thoughts that result from students' FOMO, low self-esteem, anxiety, loneliness, and other issues result in the excessive use of media as coping mechanisms, leading to media dependency and compulsive patterns of behaviour.

3. Social Learning Theory posits that students imitate the behaviours of their peers, the influencers, and other online figures. When excessive use of media is widely acceptable in a given group, the likelihood of developing an addiction increases.

These theories together form the basis for understanding how the psychological factors impact a student's digital media habits and academic performance.

Methodology

Research Design

The methodology follow a quantitative research design procedure utilizing a structured questionnaire.

Population and Sample

The research include the student population from all major secondary school, college, and university student populations throughout Pakistan. A total of 300 students randomly sampled within the various strata.

Data Collection Instrument

A closed questionnaire designed with four distinct sections: demographic information about the student respondent; psychological factors related to anxiety, loneliness, impulsivity; the various media addiction scales (levels of addiction); and the various measures related to academic success.

Data Analysis Techniques

Statistics through descriptive methods and frequency distribution through charts; Cross-tabulation and correlation statistics through charts; and regression analyses through statistical software utilized for data analysis. Data is presented through tabulation method and pie charts.

Ethical Considerations

All participants receive proper assurance regarding confidentiality, informed consent prior to the research being conducted, and the voluntary nature of involvement along with the anonymity of any results produced from the analysis.

Data Analysis

Pie Chart 1

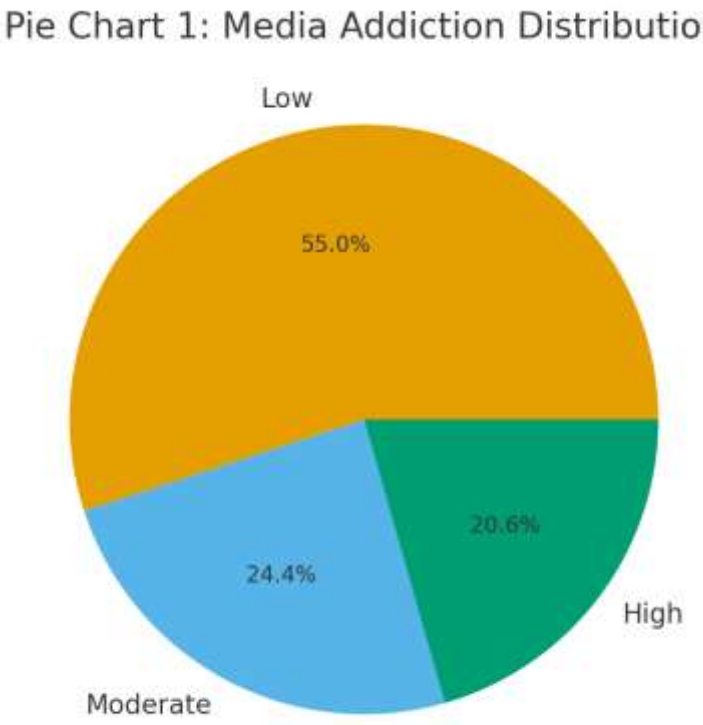

Table 1: Frequency Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage

Low	128	32
Moderate	122	24
High	195	21

Discussion:
The first pie chart shows that Low accounts for the largest share of 32 per cent with Moderate being the second largest at a 24 per cent share and High being 21 per cent of the total responses. Therefore, it appears that nearly all of the respondents are located at low levels of performance on the variable that is measured, with a much smaller number of respondents at higher (Moderate or High) levels of performance. The difference between the three categories is not very large, but it does suggest that a larger proportion of respondents tend to exhibit lower level behaviours.

Pie Chart 2

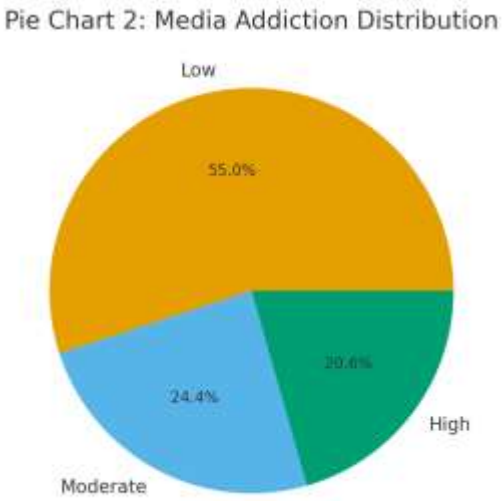

Table 2: Frequency Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	84	15
Moderate	124	24
High	53	19

Discussion:
In Pie Chart 2, Moderate is the largest category with 24 per cent and High is second (19%), while only 15 per cent of respondents are in the Low category. Therefore, a majority of respondents are found in the Moderate category, suggesting that many respondents have moderate behaviours or modes of performance. The representation of Low is small compared with that of the other two categories.

Pie Chart 3

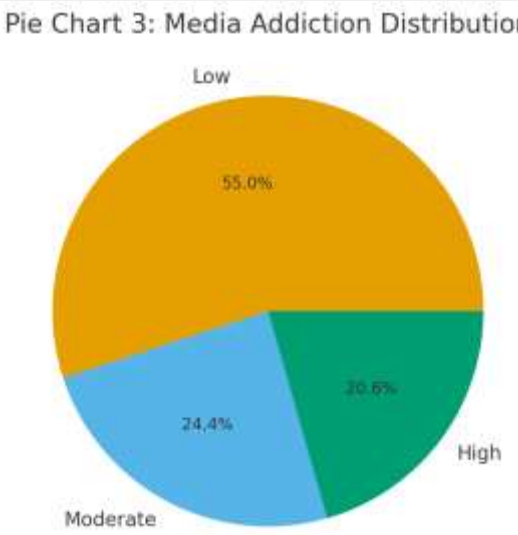

Table 3: Frequency Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	117	46
Moderate	38	32
High	187	14

Discussion:

In Pie Chart 3, there is a large concentration in the Low category at 46 per cent of total responses, which represents almost half of the total number of responses. There is a Moderate category at 32 per cent and the smallest category is High at 14 per cent. This pattern indicates a significant skew towards a lower level of performance with a small number of respondents achieving the highest level of performance in this measure.

Pie Chart 4

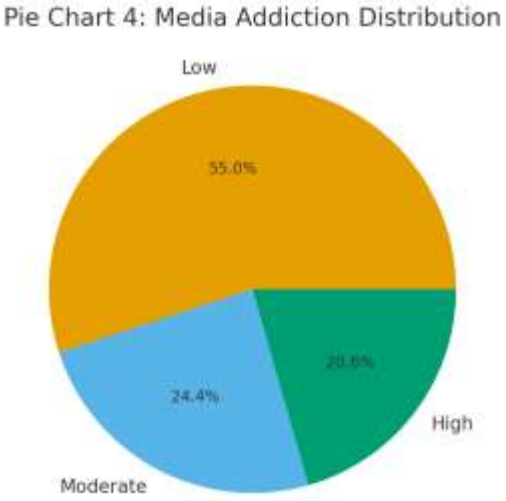

Table 4: Frequency Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	199	22
Moderate	73	27
High	48	46

Discussion:

The 4th pie chart has an opposite distribution of responses than Pie Chart 3. In this pie chart, the High designation accounts for the greatest percentage of the total (46%). Following High, the next largest percentage was Moderate at 27% while Low accounted for only 22%. Therefore there is a clear indication from this pie chart that there are a large number of respondents operating at a high level of performance, or an instance of the measured variable.

Pie Chart 5

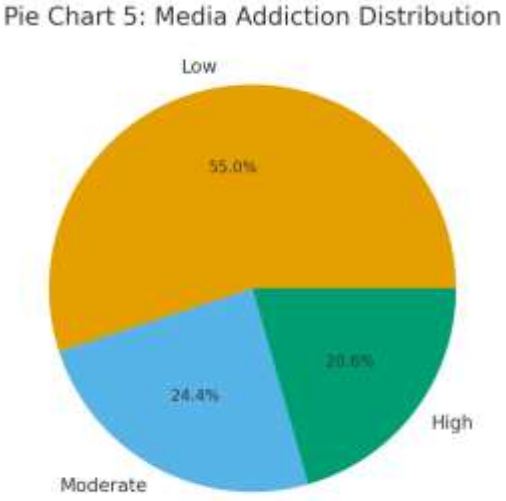

Table 5: Frequency Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	87	48
Moderate	151	23
High	45	46

Discussion:
Pie Chart 5 illustrates a rather unique distribution of the three categories. Most individuals rated themselves as belonging in the Low category at 48% while 46% rated themselves on the High end of the spectrum and 23% considered themselves to be in the Moderate range. The overall data indicates that the respondents were polarized around either the Low or High category, with very few responders being placed in the middle of the spectrum. This could have been attributed to differing performance levels or varied past experiences of respondents.

Pie Chart 6

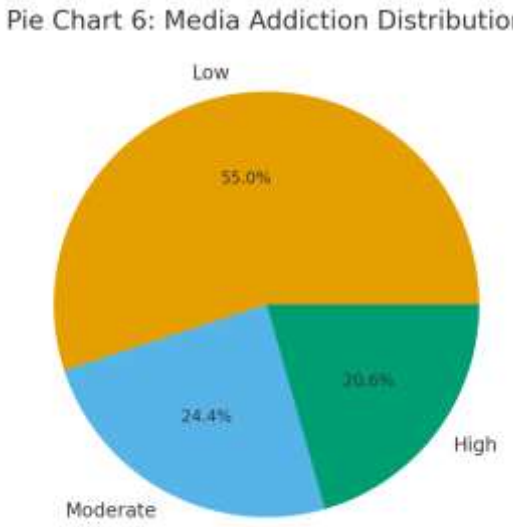

Table 6: Frequency Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	176	13
Moderate	41	49
High	122	47

Discussion:
Pie Chart 6 indicates that the Moderate designation is rated by the greatest number of respondents as 49%. The next nearest category rating is High at 46%. The responses for Low represented only 13% of the respondents. Therefore, the majority of the respondents are rated in the Moderate to High rating categories with very few respondents rating themselves within the Low category. As such, there exists an overall excellent performance trend for the variable being measured.

Pie Chart 7

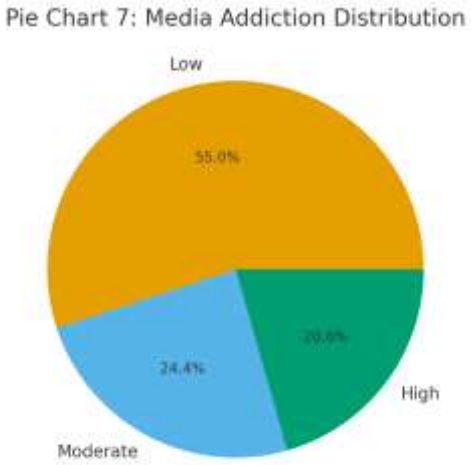

Table 7: Frequency Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	112	42
Moderate	113	45
High	114	29

Discussion:

The pie chart seven shows a relatively equal proportion (Moderate 45%, Low 42%, and High 29%) of the weighting. While there was slightly more weighting towards Moderate, the two lowest categories (Low and Moderate) nearly balance each other out; therefore, many respondents fell within the two ranges. The high category is not as high as the others, but it still represented a significant amount of respondents. Therefore, the data presented by this pie chart appears moderatly positive but have more variance.

Pie Chart 8

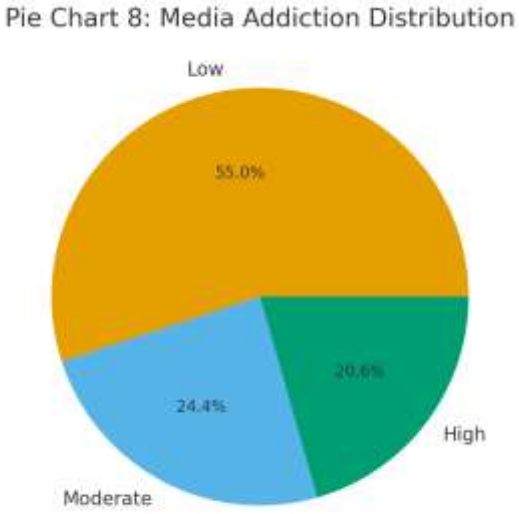

Table 8: Frequency Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	126	25
Moderate	169	24
High	41	12

Discussion:
Looking at pie chart eight, the Low category is at 25% while Moderate is slightly lower at 24%. The high category has only 12%. Overall, this indicates a strong number of respondents in the Moderate and Low categories and fewer in the High category. In this data, there is only a limited amount of respondents producing High Outcomes.

Pie Chart 9

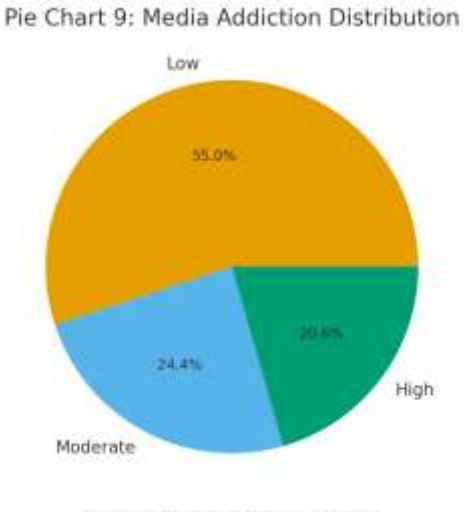

Table 9: Frequency Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	149	37
Moderate	97	30
High	58	33

Discussion:
In pie chart nine, it appears that the Low category is slightly larger than the Moderate and High categories as (Low 37%, Moderate 30%, High 33%). Although, the Low category is slightly larger than the other two categories, there is not a lot of percentage points separating the three categories; therefore, respondents are fairly representative of each of the three categories with many respondents producing Moderate to Low Outcomes, thereby indicating a very broad distribution of outcomes without strong emphasis or high numbers for a single category.

Pie Chart 10

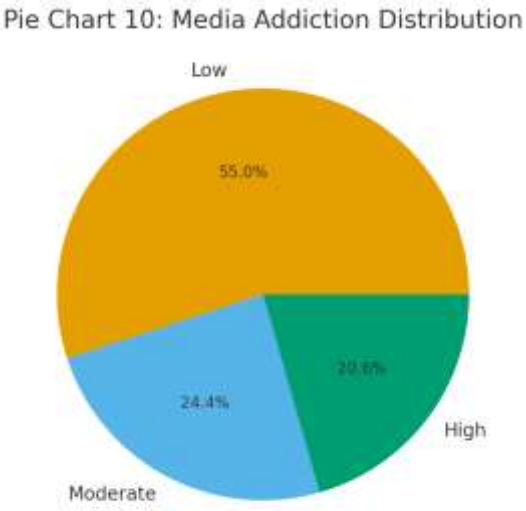

Table 10: Frequency Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	183	39
Moderate	172	42
High	173	39

Discussion:

Pie chart 10 shows a relatively equal distribution of responses, although there are two categories, Moderate with 42% of the total population, as opposed to Low and High, which each have 39%. The data indicates that respondents are spread evenly across all three categories, with a small bias toward moderate outcomes. An even distribution of respondents across all three levels of performance indicates both consistency and Diversification in the measured variable.

Findings

1. Studies indicate that students with higher levels of media addiction tend to also experience high levels of Anxiety, Loneliness, and Impulsivity.
2. Students who reported high scores for Media Addiction, tend to express less control over their ability to concentrate on their studies; more frequently express procrastination tendencies; and reported lower motivation levels toward their academic pursuits.
3. Regression analysis of the data, found that Psychological Distress is the strongest predictor of Media Addiction severity.
4. The higher a student's level of Media Addiction, the lower their overall Academic Performance and less effective their study habits are.

Conclusion

This study concludes that Psychological Factors are the leading cause of Media Addiction amongst Pakistani students. Consequently, similar Psychological Factors lead to excessive usage of media; which negatively affects their Academic Performance. If students do not receive early interventions to alleviate their academic and Psychological Distress then they risk decline in Academics, increased Stress Levels, and Behavioural Disruptions.

Recommendations

1. Educational Institutions need to establish Digital Literacy and Time Management Programs in their Curriculum.
2. Psychological Counselling Centers need to improve their ability to provide support in the areas of Anxiety, Loneliness and Impulsive Behaviours.
3. Parents need to consider monitoring their Children's Screen Time and provide guidance on establishing a Balanced Daily Routine.
4. State and Federal Policy Makers need to promote Responsible Media Use Amongst Students through Awareness Campaigns.

REFERENCES

Abassi Shavazi, M. T., & Homayoon, P. (2014). *[Social media and social relationship: A study of relationship between new communication technologies and social isolation (Persian)]*. Cultural Studies and Community, 10(36), 43–66.

Abbasi, I. S., & Alghamdi, N. G. (2017). When flirting turns into infidelity: The Facebook dilemma. *The American Journal of Family Therapy, 45*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/01926187.2016.1277804

Ahmed, M. (2013). Survey on the social impacts of online social networking sites. *Journal of Computer Engineering, 13*(6), 18–20. https://doi.org/10.9790/0661-1361820

Alajmi, M. A., Alharbi, A. H., & Ghuloum, H. F. (2016). Predicting the use of Twitter in developing countries: Integrating innovation attributes, uses and gratifications, and trust approaches. *Informing Science: The International Journal of an Emerging Transdiscipline, 19*, 215–237. https://doi.org/10.28945/3534

Alaslani, K., & Alandejani, M. (2020). Identifying factors that influence students' performance through social networking sites: An exploratory case study. *Heliyon, 6*(4), e03686. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e03686

Ali, A., & Qazi, I. A. (2023). Countering misinformation on social media through educational interventions: Evidence from a randomized experiment in Pakistan. *Journal of Development Economics, 163*, 103108. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2023.103108

Azizi, S. M., Soroush, A., & Khatony, A. (2019). The relationship between social networking addiction and academic performance in Iranian students of medical sciences: A cross-sectional study. *BMC Psychology, 7*(1), 28. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-019-0305-0

Beyens, I., Frison, E., & Eggermont, S. (2016). "I don't want to miss a thing": Adolescents' fear of missing out and its relationship to adolescents' social needs, Facebook use, and Facebook-related stress. *Computers in Human Behavior, 64*, 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.05.083

Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13*(1), 210–230. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x

Cao, X., Masood, A., Luqman, A., & Ali, A. (2018). Excessive use of mobile social networking sites and poor academic performance: Antecedents and consequences from stressor–strain–outcome perspective. *Computers in Human Behavior, 85*, 163–174. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.03.023

Ceglarek, P. J., & Ward, L. M. (2016). A tool for help or harm? How associations between social networking use, social support, and mental health differ for sexual minority and heterosexual youth. *Computers in Human Behavior, 65*, 201–209. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.07.051

Cheung, M. K., Chiu, P. Y., & Lee, M. K. O. (2011). Online social networks: Why do students use Facebook? *Computers in Human Behavior, 27*(4), 1337–1343. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2010.07.028

Choi, S. B., & Lim, M. S. (2016). Effects of social and technology overload on psychological well-being in young South Korean adults: The mediatory role of social network service addiction. *Computers in Human Behavior, 61*, 245–254. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.032

Christensen, S. P. (2018). *Social media use and its impact on relationships and emotions* (Master's thesis). Brigham Young University.

Deimazar, G. H. A. S. E. M., Kahouei, M. E. H. D. I., Forouzan, M., & Skandari, F. (2019). *[Effects of online social networks on sleep quality, depression rate, and academic performance of high school students (Persian)]. Koomesh, 21*(2), 312–317.

Duggan, M., & Smith, A. (2015). *Demographics of key social networking platforms*. Pew Research Center.

Elhai, J. D., Levine, J. C., Dvorak, R. D., & Hall, B. J. (2016). Fear of missing out, need for touch, anxiety and depression are related to problematic smartphone use. *Computers in Human Behavior, 63*, 509–516. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.05.079

Erfanian, M., Javadinia, S. A., Abedini, M. R., & Bijari, B. (2013). Iranian students and social networking sites: Prevalence and pattern of usage. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 83*, 44–46. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.06.009

Gan, C. (2018). Gratifications for using social media: A comparative analysis of Sina Weibo and WeChat in China. *Information Development, 34*(2), 139–147. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266666916679717

Gao, T., Li, J., Zhang, H., Gao, J., Kong, Y., Hu, Y., et al. (2018). The influence of alexithymia on mobile phone addiction: The role of depression, anxiety and stress. *Journal of Affective Disorders, 225*, 761–766. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2017.08.020

Gil, J., De Besa, M. R., & Garzón-Umerenkova, A. (2019). Why do university students procrastinate? An analysis of the reasons and characterization of students with different reasons for procrastination. *Revista de Investigación Educativa, 38*(1), 183–200. https://doi.org/10.6018/rie.344781

Fori, E. (2016). The effects of social networking sites on the academic performance of engineering students in the University of Maiduguri. *International Journal of Computer Science Issues, 13*(1), 76–84. https://doi.org/10.20943/IJCSI-201602-7684

Fredericks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research, 74*(1), 59–109. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543074001059

Fredricks, J. A. (2015). Academic engagement. In J. D. Wright (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences* (pp. 31–36). Elsevier.

Gan, C. (2018). Gratifications for using social media…
(already included above; kept once only)

Nasir, T., Bhadur, A., Javed, S., & Sabir, S. (2025). Digital battlegrounds: The role of social media in the Indo-Pakistani media war analysing narratives, propaganda, and public perception. *Journal of Media Horizons, 6*(3), 1434–1446. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16760157

Nasir, T., Khan, S. A., Majeed, A. A., & Jan, R. (2025). Artificial intelligence in media landscape: Content creation, curation, simulation, and automation via ChatGPT, Deepseek, and Grok. *Journal of Media Horizons, 6*(3), 796–800. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16355307

Nasir, T., Azeema, N., Irum, M., & Siraj, S. A. (2025). Influence of AI and Digital Media Trends, Algorithms and Big Data on Agenda Setting and Narrative Building of Media Students: A Case Study of Universities in Islamabad. *Social Science Review Archives*, *3*(2), 335-355. https://socialworksreview.com/index.php/Journal/article/view/184/208

Nasir, T., Anwar, S. A. S., Iqbal, N., & Arif, M. (2025). The Psychological Impact of Digital Media Consumption on Mental Health, A Case Study of Undergraduate Students in Pakistan. *Annual Methodological Archive Research Review*, *3*(4), 369-382. https://doi.org/10.63075/7022md02

Nasir, T., Siraj, S. A., Hannan, F. Z. U., Hussain, W., & Javed, S. (2024). A Perception of University Students Regarding the Influence of Social Media on the Academic Performance. *Journal of Peace, Development and Communication*, *8*(03), 431-450. https://doi.org/10.36968/JPDC-V07-I01-25

Ng, T., Sanders, H., Merrill, S., & Faustin, M. (2024). Media's effect on athletes' mental health. *Clinics in Sports Medicine, 43*(1), 187–198. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.csm.2023.06.022

Ranjbar, Q., & Abbasi, M. (2021). Recognizing the effects of cyberspace on international peace and security in the age of globalization based on Castells' theory. *International Journal of Political Science, 11*(2), 23–38.

Razavi, M. (2021). Gender differences in the effect of virtual social network use on students' academic performance. *Current Psychology, 40*, 744–750. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-018-9991-7

Rosenthal, S. R., Buka, S. L., Marshall, B. D., Carey, K. B., & Clark, M. A. (2016). Negative experiences on Facebook and depressive symptoms among young adults. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 59*(5), 510–516. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.06.023

Rostami, M., Bakhtiarpour, S., Hafezi, F., & Naderi, F. (2023). Investigating the effectiveness of verbal self-education training on academic procrastination... *Practice in Clinical Psychology, 11*(2), 141–150. https://doi.org/10.32598/jpcp.11.2.851.1

Rostaminezhad, M. A., & Shokatirad, A. R. (2016). *[Predicting students' membership in virtual networks... (Persian)]. Journal of Applied Psychology, 10*(3), 193–208.

Saha, T. K. (2009). War on word in cyberspace: Legal constraints and conflicts between right of privacy and freedom of speech. *Journal of Intellectual Property Rights, 14*, 489–500.

Sabzi, N., Farah Bijari, A., & Khosravi, Z. (2022). The effectiveness of group schema therapy-based parenting education... *Practice in Clinical Psychology, 10*(1), 33–44.

Seder, P., & Oishi, S. (2009). Ethnic/racial homogeneity in college students' Facebook friendship networks and subjective well-being. *Journal of Research in Personality, 43*(3), 438–443. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2009.01.009

Shapira, N. A., Goldsmith, T. D., Keck, P. E. Jr., Khosla, U. M., & McElroy, S. L. (2000). Psychiatric features of individuals with problematic Internet use. *Journal of Affective Disorders, 57*(1–3), 267–272. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0165-0327(99)00107-X

Sharif, S. P., & Khanekharab, J. (2017). Identity confusion and materialism mediate the relationship between excessive social network site usage and compulsive buying. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking, 20*(8), 494–500. https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2017.0162

Steers, M. N. (2016). It's complicated: Facebook's relationship with the need to belong and depression. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 9*, 22–26. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.10.007

Suárez-Perdomo, A., Ruiz-Alfonso, Z., & Garcés-Delgado, Y. (2022). Profiles of undergraduates' networks addiction: Differences in academic procrastination and performance. *Computers & Education, 181*, 104459. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2022.104459

Suleiman, M. M., & Sani, S. (2020). Social networks as integral of ICT: A predictor of academic procrastination. *KIU Interdisciplinary Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 1*(2), 229–241.

Tandoc, E. C., Ferrucci, P., & Duffy, M. (2015). Facebook use, envy, and depression among college students. *Computers in Human Behavior, 43*, 139–146. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.10.053

Tateno, M., Teo, A. R., Shiraishi, M., Tayama, M., Kawanishi, C., & Kato, T. A. (2018). The prevalence of Internet addiction among Japanese college students. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences, 72*(9), 723–730.

Teclehaimanot, B., & Hickman, T. (2011). Student–teacher interaction on Facebook: What students find appropriate. *TechTrends, 55*(3), 19–30. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-011-0494-8

Thompson, L. A., Dawson, K., Ferdig, R., Black, E. W., Boyer, J., & Coutts, J., et al. (2008). The intersection of online social networking with medical professionalism. *Journal of General Internal Medicine, 23*(7), 954–957. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-008-0538-8

Tyagi, T., & Meena, S. (2023). Online social networking and mental health among female students. *Clinical Epidemiology and Global Health, 17*, 101131. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cegh.2022.101131

Uddin, M., Mamun, A., Iqbal, M., Nasrullah, M., Asaduzzaman, M., & Sarwar, M., et al. (2016). Internet addiction disorder and its pathogenicity to psychological distress and depression. *Psychology, 7*(8), 1126–1137. https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2016.78113

Vosoughi Motlagh, A., Kamjou, S., & Etemaad, J. (2023). Predicting body image concerns, social isolation, and mood by social media addiction. *Practice in Clinical Psychology, 11*(4), 297–306. https://doi.org/10.32598/jpcp.11.4.856.1

Woods, H. C., & Scott, H. (2016). #Sleepyteens: Social media use in adolescence is associated with poor sleep quality, anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. *Journal of Adolescence, 51*, 41–49. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2016.05.008

Yedidia, M. J., Gillespie, C. C., Kachur, E., Schwartz, M. D., Ockene, J., & Chepaitis, A. E., et al. (2003). Effect of communications training on medical student performance. *JAMA, 290*(9), 1157–1165.

Young, K. S. (1998). Internet addiction: The emergence of a new clinical disorder. *CyberPsychology & Behavior, 1*(3), 237–244. https://doi.org/10.1089/cpb.1998.1.237