

# Cognitive Drive Shapes Media Consumption Patterns among Academics in Pakistan

Naeem Ullah Tariq<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad Yousaf<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PhD Scholar, Centre for Media and Communication Studies, University of Gujrat, Pakistan.

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Centre for Media and Communication Studies, University of Gujrat, Pakistan.

Correspondence: [m.yousaf@uog.edu.pk](mailto:m.yousaf@uog.edu.pk)<sup>2</sup>

## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study investigates how cognitive drives influence media consumption patterns among mass communication academics in Pakistan. Employing Uses and Gratifications theory as a conceptual framework, the research examines the ways in which intellectual curiosity, professional development needs, and social interaction motives drive media usage within the academic community.

**Research Design:** This study has adopted a cross-sectional research design to collect data from 160 respondents through an online survey questionnaire. Target population for this study is academics from different universities in Pakistan specializing in media-related fields. Media academics include professors, associate professors, assistant professor and lecturers involved in teaching, research, and academic activities on media studies, journalism, communication, and related disciplines. Target population is comprised of academicians from various universities located throughout Pakistan from different regions, provinces, and cities across the country.

**Findings:** The findings reveals that in Pakistan, electronic news media is primarily used by media academics for cognitive needs because they are more interested in acquiring new information and knowledge rather than satisfying other emotional or social needs. Conversely, print media, despite its declining readership, remains heavily focused on information acquisition, highlighting its minimized role in addressing emotional or social needs. Online news media reinforced this trend, with cognitive needs driving consumption far more than affective or escapist motives for media academics in Pakistan.

**Conclusion:** This study concludes that the need for information and knowledge make most people resort to electronic news media. Print would be of greater relevance to those mainly seeking informational content. The results support the premise that what drives most people to online media is cognitive gratification; affective and escapism motives.

**Keywords:** Gratifications Sought, Consumption Needs, Cognitive Drives, Media Academics.

## Article History

Received:  
July 12, 2024

Revised:  
August 24, 2024

Accepted:  
August 27, 2024

Published:  
September 30, 2024

## 1. INTRODUCTION

We live in the media saturated world (Okocha et al, 2023; Yousaf, 2023; Williams, 2003). In this age of mediated realities, media shapes our understanding of the social world regarding defining issues and their attributes (Yousaf et al., 2023), constructing reality regarding conflicts (Yousaf et al., 2020; Lee & Maslong, 2005), representation of nations (Ji et al., 2016) and adherence to health threats (Iftikhar & Yousaf, 2021).

Hence, consumption of media has multiplied in this current age mediated by a media ecology environment. This has led to the increasing interest of researchers on the relationship between the cognitive drives and media consumption habits particularly with the academic context. So, understanding these factors from a country like Pakistan, which is moving rapidly in its educational scenarios, can give understanding into how media academics engage with media and the effect it has on their journey as professionals and individuals.

Cognitive drives such as curiosity, critical thinking, and the quest for knowledge also shape how people consume media. Earlier research has shown that these cognitive drives influence the consumption-based media across a variety of demographic variables. An example of this is the past research that indicated how the academic professional consumes to find scholarly information that comes in handy for research and teaching purposes. Such needs become determinants of what an academic prefers to use and thus become the basis for consuming specific resources like journals, educational platforms, and peer-reviewed articles while shunning them from other resources (Carpenter et al., 2023; Mantai & Marrone, 2023). This is very interesting to study in the context of Pakistan by taking into account distinct socio-cultural and institutional variables. According to Siddique et al. (2023), there are specific challenges faced by Pakistani media academics. These include limited exposure to global academic resources and different levels of digital literacy among them. Thus, these factors eventually impact their media consumptions but led them towards available locally and other alternative platforms serving their specific academic needs.

On top of this, research reveals that Pakistani academic cognitive drives are more or so the mixtures of most traditional values alongside modern educational demands. This duality influences the media consumption of Pakistani media academics in a different way than other parts of the world. For instance, preference for traditional print media as opposed to friendly usage of digital platforms signifies cognitive drive towards familiar and perceived reliable information source (Shoukat et al., 2024; Siddiqui et al., 2024). The study will assess such patterns to attempt to deepen understanding of cognitive needs and restrictions and their influence on media engagement in an academic context particular to Pakistan.

International studies about the influence of cognitive media-use patterns in academia on knowledge and professional development are presented in Rubin (2009b) wherein it highlighted the factors such as in-house needs because academic needs should involve these two things most specifically in the context of research and teaching. Because academics always give priority to scholarly articles, research databases, and educational resources rather than focusing on a form of entertainment, they have developed media consumption patterns that accrue to needs related to information seeking and intellectual engagement.

For the media academic, media consumption is usually meant for confined and specific areas of information related to their fields. Based on Kioussis (2002), gratifications expected through media usage almost always align with the side of acquiring deeper knowledge and keeping pace with recent change in one's domain. A study by Karatas et al. (2019), provided support to this contention by finding that the bulk of media used by academic professionals consists of such outlets that provide high-quality peer-reviewed content and scholarly discussion, serving intellectual and research-related needs.

U&G theory identifies the use of media to create personal and professional identities and development as a very important dimension. This has been marked as media which performs the task of persuading many academics, such as Bischof et al. (2022), for consolidating their professional identities and academic expertise. It is usually achieved through engaging in professional networks, academic forums, and

continuing educational platforms. In Pakistan, Siddique et al. (2023), further reveal that Media consumptions of academia are informed by the need to keep up with local educational needs against global academics, thus signifying a blend of traditional and modern practices. Integration and socialization among academics is another purpose fulfilled by the media. Such use of the media helps overcome geographical and institutional barriers in order to develop a sense of community and cooperation. McQuail (2010) states that the consumption of specific mass media creates networks for professional contacts and possibilities of collaboration. Such sharing, whether through blogs, online communities, or social networking sites such as Facebook, allows Pakistani universities. Riaz et al. (2016) observe academics' social spaces where they hang out with colleagues privately or with the rest of the world to share their research findings and academic discourse.

Certainly, academics spend a fair amount of time on various activities, such as information seeking, professional development, and activities for media consumption, such as for entertainment. Even academics pursue media content that is cognitively rejuvenating and relaxing, according to Sundar and Limperos (2013). The cultural content includes leisure academic documentaries which may be used for leisure reading that provides a temporary break from overwhelming scholarly activities. The literature on Uses and Gratifications theory completely describes the patterns of media consumption of academics studying in the area of mass communication studies in Pakistan. It addresses in those terms the cognitive drives with information seeking, professional identity, social interaction, and cognitive rejuvenation, which we expect will further enhance the understanding of how these kinds of necessities shaped media choices among academics of mass communication field in Pakistan. The review underscored the fact that above all, academics are actively involved in selecting the media aligned with their intellectual and professional needs, and this is affected mostly by local-global factors in their media consumption behavior. Therefore, the current study assesses what gratifications media academics seek in relation to their consumption habits.

Media roles have not been sufficiently evaluated as essential functions of the media, and the gratification of audiences has not received adequate analysis within the Pakistani context. All these factors hamper a large amount of research as well as a number of theoretical gaps regarding understanding of relations between media and audience (Blumler & Katz, 1974; Rubin, 2009). The research study is, therefore, imperative from the academic perspective for mass communication researchers; the questions which have remained forever unanswered about the functions that media perform and the gratifications sought by their consumers compel the inquiry. Filling the gap in knowledge base of the study, this investigation would advocate how perceptions of needs in media consumption are held and valued especially among media academics who present themselves as key stakeholders in shaping future media practitioners and scholars. Thus, current research extends gratification-need studies to media consumption patterns through electronic, print, and online media among academics in Pakistan.

### ***1.1. Problem Statement***

Media academics, being an audience dependent on knowledge, make use of different types of media—the electronic, print as well as online—to satisfy their inquisitiveness, information, and professional needs. But, not much is understood about the cognitive motivations in how they prefer these categories of media, particularly with the impetus that is being related to the use of online media. Electronic news media, immediate, while print media is regarded as being used for deeper cognition and reflection. The other major developments brought about by online media, besides interactivity and dynamism, include real-time research access, membership in professional networks, and collaborative learning contexts. The unique behavioral proclivity for media among academic audiences can be thus understood in terms of cognitive motivation but also includes social, habitual, or convenience-based motives for media production and education. This study fills the gap by investigating which cognitive motivations influence media consumption patterns in the academic community of Pakistan; in particular, how the growing significance of online media changes the scenario with regard to traditional electronic and print platforms.

## ***1.2. Significance of the Study***

Cognitive drive as a factor in the media consumption patterns warrants an exploration among the media academics of Pakistan since it would give insight into the difference in motivation among a knowledge-driven audience. It is important to mention that consumption of media for the purpose of intellectual enrichment, information, and professional development makes cognitive needs one of the important determinants for media use among them. This study would go on to add to the literature on media consumption patterns in other contexts, especially in educational and professional frameworks. Moreover, the findings could bring great implications for media producers as they would tend to design content that takes cognizance of the intellectual and informational needs of the academic audience. For instance, both (Kim & Rubin, 1997) found that print is still one of the most available, accessible, and immediate media types in an electronic world (Papacharissi, 2002). As online media continue to develop, they provide new venues for accessing dynamic and interactive platforms for cognition and social needs among media academics. Online platforms increasingly promote real-time access to research, peer dialogues, and multimedia resources that have become an impending influence on academic consumption of the media.

## ***1.3. Study Objectives***

To explore the cognitive motivations behind media consumptions among media academics in Pakistan, the following research objectives guide the study:

1. To understand media consumption patterns relating to cognitive motives among media academics in Pakistan
2. To assess how far cognitive motivations affect the choice and use of media among media academics compared to other motivations such as social, emotional, and habitual considerations.

## ***1.4. Hypotheses***

Based on the research objectives, the following hypotheses are created to test the investigation:

**H 1:** There is significant association with media consumption needs types and time spent with electronic news media consumption.

**H 2:** There is significant relationship between media consumption needs and readership of press with cognitive needs as the major driver and alongside other contributing factors.

**H 3:** Consumption patterns are significantly associated with specific consumption needs, pointing at the fact that audience engagement of online media is a result of purposeful motivations rather than random behavior.

## ***1.5. Theoretical Framework***

According to UGT, man is an active participant in media use whereby he/she makes intentional choices to gratify specific gratification needs (Blumler & Katz, 1974; Katz et al., 1973) For the academician, such cognitive needs would govern the consumption of: where does the need for a medium exist-acquisition of knowledge? Keeping in touch with events, aids communication between complex pieces of information while online adds to basically that immediacy that electronic information sources provide along with the interactive-expansive nature of the internet. They will turn to this particular medium for prompt provision of current information, digital research resources, and interaction between academic communities. The study demonstrate about the effect of such cognitive motivation on media selection. That is whether the academic selects a given media type based on immediacy originated in electronic news media, or whether the particular type, such as print media, will have heavens of depth and reflection attached to it, or if an online platform will offer added advantage- as dynamic and interactive opportunities.

## 2. RESEARCH DESIGN

In this regard, a cross-sectional research design has been developed using an online survey through Google Forms that collected responses from university media academics across different universities in Pakistan. According to (Babbie, 2020) the survey method enables researchers to efficiently collect responses from a wider pool of media academics across universities in Pakistan. This cross-sectional research design captures the current perceptions and their preferences among media academics regarding the functions of news media; attitudes and behaviors then become a snapshot at one point in time (Dillman et al., 2014). This design enables researchers to compare the responses based on different demographic categories such as age, gender, academic discipline, or years of experience in academia to explore variations in gratifications sought based on various characteristics of the participants (Fowler Jr, 2013). Compared to the longitudinal designs tracking changes in time for individuals over time, the costs associated with conducting cross-sectional designs are low and require less resource input, an all-important factor that makes them very attractive for research that has tight fiscal straits (Babbie, 2020). If proper sampling techniques are applied and a representative sample is obtained, the findings from the cross-sectional designs can be generalized to the whole population of media academics in Pakistan, hence enriching the external validity of the research findings (deVaus, 2001; Dillman et al., 2014). It is through this cross-sectional research design vis-a-vis where the researchers effectively explored the gratifications sought by media academics in Pakistan and, thus, provide critical insights into both scholarly and practical implications of the study field in this media context.

Target population for this study is academics from different universities in Pakistan specializing in media-related fields. Academics include professors, associate professors, assistant professor and lecturers involved in teaching, research, and academic activities on media studies, journalism, communication, and related disciplines. Target population is comprised of academicians from various universities located throughout Pakistan from different regions, provinces, and cities across the country.

Past studies showed that desired level of precision and confidence level determine sample size for research findings (Bryman, 2016). For instance, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) have proposed one of the most quoted formulae for sample size determinations in educational research and have 1 authorities. According to the research done by Saunders et al. (2009), constraints on resources will determine sample size, especially in terms of time, budget, and available personnel. Creating online form on Google was quite thorough for respondents across Pakistan about their responses. Eventually, from 38 educational institutions all over the country, a total of 160 completed questionnaires were obtained. It was quite intensive and demanding in terms of the perseverance and determination; hence, ensuring a quite diverse and representative sample could be attained. Responses could reflect a wide range of institutes which mean extensive geographical and institutional diversity within Pakistan's academic landscape. It really shows the commitment to rigor and inclusion for acquiring such a comprehensive dataset for the study.

Respondents are drawn from a diverse range of educational institutions across Pakistan, including universities located in major cities such as Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, and others. The distribution of respondents varies across institutions, with some institutions contributing a higher number of respondents compared to others. For example, National University of Modern Languages (NUML) contributed the largest percentage of respondents (26.3%), followed by Superior University, Lahore (11.3%), Punjab University, Lahore (5.6%), and others.

Ten thousand academicians in Pakistan who teach mass communication were the population of my study, a sample of 160 academicians out of 10,000 was taken (as per the data discussed by AMCAP (AMCAP<sup>1</sup>, personal communication, June 12, 2024), with a 95% confidence level and a  $\pm 7.7\%$  margin of error. A margin of error of  $\pm 8\%$  is acceptable with the confidence level of 95% in social sciences (Hunter, et al., 2014; Khieu, 2023; Mazzulla et al., 2024; ZOHO, 2022).

---

<sup>1</sup> Association of Media and Communication Academic Professionals

Given the logistical challenges of surveying a large population, a sample size of 160 is considered pragmatic and feasible within the available resources (Hair, 2009). Studies in various disciplines have underscored the importance of statistical power in detecting meaningful effects or relationships (Cohen, 1988). While a sample size of 160 offers sufficient statistical power for detecting moderate to large effects, it is essential to consider the specific objectives and hypotheses of the study (Faul et al., 2007). Population heterogeneity may require larger sample sizes if diversity is needed (Lakens, 2022)., while homogeneity on key characteristics may allow smaller sample size to give valid representations (Kish, 1965). Meta-analysis and systematic reviews provide evidence for the meaning of sample sizes in different contexts of research (Borenstein et al., 2021). Synthesizing the data across studies allows for the evaluation of variation in sample sizes and the impact that has on research validity and generalizability (Ioannidis et al., 2014). The sampling procedure used in the study was convenience sampling, where the researcher depended on those willing and capable of completing an online Google Form survey. A period for data collection was set between 25-6-2023 to 24-12-2024, with an encouragement that participants should fill out the survey when they want to. The duration for data collection was determined by factors such as participant availability and the period of the study.

On the first stage, the researcher inspected the collected data for completeness, accuracy, and consistency. He addressed missing or erroneous responses to entertain the level of measurement of the variables that is essential for deciding which inferential statistics to be used (Mahmood & Yousaf, 2024). On the second stage descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were conducted while using the SPSS.

### 3. RESULTS

Table 1. Association between Electronic Media Consumption and Gratification Needs

Gratification needs	Consumption of Electronic News Media (on every day)						Total
	0 to 1hrs	1+ 2 hrs.	2+ 3 hrs.	3+ 4 hrs.	> 4 hrs.	N/A	
Personal Integrative needs (to gain credibility, confidence, self-esteem, & status)	3 1.9%	2 1.3%	1 0.6%	1 0.6%	1 0.6%	1 0.6%	9 5.6%
Cognitive Needs (for information, knowledge, & understanding)	<b>60 37.5%</b>	<b>30 18.8%</b>	<b>20 12.5%</b>	<b>3 1.9%</b>	<b>6 3.8%</b>	<b>10 6.3%</b>	<b>129 80.6%</b>
Affective Needs (for personal pleasure or emotional satisfaction)	2 1.3%	1 0.6%	2 1.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	5 3.1%
Escapism (to relieve from tension & stress)	1 0.6%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	2 1.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4 2.5%
Social Integrative Needs	1 0.6%	6 3.8%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	4 2.5%	1 0.6%	13 8.1%
Total	67 41.9%	40 25.0%	24 15.0%	6 3.8%	11 6.9%	12 7.5%	160 100.0%

$\chi^2(20, N = 160) = 49.454, p < .001$ .

The table 1 shows that a large number of academics used electronic news outlets to satisfy their cognitive needs (information, knowledge, and understanding). These findings are maintained throughout all periods, with 37.5% of respondents using 0 to 1 hour for this purpose while 18.8% do so from one to two hours each day. The most academics engage with electronic news because it serves their informational needs. The survey showed that just 5.6% of respondents read electronic news for personal integrative needs which include issues such as trustworthiness, self-assurance, self-worth, and social position while 1.9% do so within an hour or less. In addition, an insignificant number (3.1%) of them were motivated by wanting to feel something towards these media; no specific time period was preferred over others in this respect. Merely, 2.5% of those who answered the question use electronic news media as a way out (we can relieve tension and not experience stress), and it happens at different points in time. However, 8.1% of the academics surveyed reported that they turned to electronic news media to fulfill their need for social integration, with the highest proportion spending between 1 and 2 hours on such media every day (3.8%). A relationship existed as indicated by Chi-square test between the perceived consumption of electronic news media and media consumption needs,  $\chi^2(20, N = 160) = 49.454, p < .001$ . There is statistical significance between the type of media consumption needs and time spent consuming electronic news media.

Table 2: Association between Print Media Consumption and Gratification Needs

Gratifications needs	Consumption of Print News Media (on every day)						Total
	0 to 1hrs	1+ 2 hrs.	2+ 3 hrs.	3+ 4 hrs.	> 4 hrs.	N/A	
Personal Integrative needs (to gain credibility, confidence, self-esteem, & status)	5 3.1%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	2 1.3%	9 5.6%
Cognitive Needs (for information, knowledge, & understanding)	<b>83</b> <b>51.9%</b>	<b>11</b> <b>6.9%</b>	<b>4</b> <b>2.5%</b>	<b>0</b> <b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b> <b>0.0%</b>	<b>31</b> <b>19.4%</b>	<b>129</b> <b>80.6%</b>
Affective Needs (for personal pleasure or emotional satisfaction)	2 1.3%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 1.3%	5 3.1%
Escapism (to relieve from tension & stress)	1 0.6%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 1.3%	4 2.5%
Social Integrative Needs	7 4.4%	2 1.3%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	3 1.9%	13 8.1%
Total	98 61.3%	14 8.8%	6 3.8%	1 0.6%	1 0.6%	40 25.0%	160 100.0%

$\chi^2(20, N = 160) = 39.920, p = .005$

Table 2 explores a connection among media usage requirements as well as the likely intake of print news media. Most of the respondents (80.6%) satisfy their cognitive needs (information, understanding, and knowledge) by consuming print news media. The highest percentage is 51.9%, who read from 0 to 1 hour per day while smaller percentages take more hours. Just 5.6% of academics who answered the survey read

any print materials for their own sake and for data credibility, assurance (confidence), self-worth, and power gain purposes because obviously it boosts their respective areas among them. Only a small proportion within this group spends no time at all or one hour only on print media daily (3.1%). An even smaller proportion (3.1%) use print media due to the personal joy or emotional experience they derive from it but over very short period durations across various periods. Some people tend to take a back seat when it comes to reading newspapers and magazines, meaning that only 2.5% of them use printed media as an avenue for forgetting their troubled lifestyles. In addition, engagement levels are generally low throughout all durations of time. When surveyed, approximately 8.1% of academics indicated they read newspapers for social integration-based reasons with most reading sessions lasting just between 0×1 hours (4.4%). In other words, the significance level of  $p = .005$  along with chi-square values of  $(20, N=160) = 39.920$  show there exists a significant relationship between media consumption needs and print news media consumption. This means that when a person has different needs for consuming different types of media they tend to use different amount of print media for reading the news.

Table 3: Association between Online Media Consumption and Gratification Needs

Gratification needs	Consumption of Online News Media (on every day)						Total
	0 to 1hrs	1+ 2 hrs	2+ 3 hrs	3+ 4 hrs	> 4 hrs	N/A	
Personal Integrative needs (to gain credibility, confidence, self-esteem, & status)	0	3	0	1	5	0	9
	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.6%	3.1%	0.0%	5.6%
Cognitive Needs (for information, knowledge, & understanding)	<b>25</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>129</b>
	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>28.8%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>80.6%</b>
Affective Needs (for personal pleasure or emotional satisfaction)	2	0	3	0	0	0	5
	1.3%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%
Escapism (to relieve from tension & stress)	1	0	2	0	1	0	4
	0.6%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	2.5%
Social Integrative Needs	2	1	1	5	4	0	13
	1.3%	0.6%	0.6%	3.1%	2.5%	0.0%	8.1%
Total	30	50	33	18	26	3	160
	18.8%	31.3%	20.6%	11.3%	16.3%	1.9%	100.0%

$\chi^2(20, N = 160) = 40.509, p = .004$

Media consumption requirements and projected utilization of online news media were examined through the cross-tabulation (table 3). The findings show that the majority of participants (80.6%) used online news media mainly for "Cognitive Needs" (information, knowledge, understanding), while the largest percentage consumed it for one or two hours per day (28.8%) at most. On the other hand, there are low proportions in these other consumption patterns such as "Personal Integrative Needs" (5.6%), "Affective Needs" (3.1%), "Escapism" (2.5%) and "Social Integrative Needs" (8.1%). The most indicative factor is seen in the significance of the chi-square test,  $\chi^2(20, N = 160) = 40.509, p = .004$ , which shows that statistically significant relationship exists between media consumption needs and the estimated consumption of online news media.



#### 4. DISCUSSION

The results of this research suggest that cognitive needs are the main reasons why people use electronic news media, which agrees with previous studies on media consumption behavior. Most of the respondents in this study (37.5%) access electronic news media for a maximum of one hour every day to satisfy their need for understanding, information and knowledge. This corresponds to the uses and gratifications theory, which posits that people actively choose the media content for themselves on the basis of their informational and educational needs. It has been found by (Huang, 2019) and Lee and Ma (2012) that digital news platforms are very good at satisfying what users want, particularly in terms of news consumption ability to supply timely and relevant information.

Previous research has always shown that cognitive demands are the main reasons for consuming electronic news media. For instance, Sundar and Limperos (2013) noted that the informational content of news media was crucial in shaping users' daily dredges of information particularly where access to real-time-updates or breaking news was a necessity. In line with this, the current study validated similar tendencies where cognitive satisfaction is prioritized by academics while engaging with electronic news media platforms. This also supports earlier studies that found lower levels of participation in other consumption needs such as personal integrative (5.6%), affective (3.1%) and escapism (2.5%). The best platforms for fulfilling these personal integrative needs of self-esteem and social status are often social media networks instead of news media.

This trend is supported by research from Sundar and Limperos (2013), which found that Facebook and Instagram-type platforms are typically utilized for social validation and self-presentation purposes while news media primarily fulfills the role of providing information. Contrasting this, the lower consumption of goods for emotional and thrilling relations affirms that the internet news media is not for fun and would not satisfy emotional needs. A study conducted in 2004 by Nabi and Krcmar (2004) showed that media intended as a source of entertainment, e.g. streaming services, and videos fulfill affective and recreational requirements better than e-news. Thus, it is no wonder that a few of those questioned utilize electronic news media with this aim. It is interesting to observe that 8.1% of the respondents consume electronic news media as a way of meeting their social integrative needs with a small concentration (3.8%) within 1+ to 2 hours daily. As observed in research done by Papacharissi (2002), social integrative needs, which include keeping up with friends and talking about what is happening have been found to serve as a secondary but important rationale for news consumption. But, alternative types of electronic contact like social media web pages and messaging applications satisfy these uniting requirements more entirely. The significant association between media consumption needs and the time spent consuming electronic news media is confirmed by the chi-square test results  $\chi^2(20, N = 160) = 49.454, p < .001$ , which approves the hypothesis 1. This suggests that different types of media content attract distinct audiences based on their consumption motivations.

The results of the study on the consumption of print media confirm the Uses and Gratifications theory, which suggests that people consciously select certain content to satisfy their unique wants. For instance, cognitive needs take precedence when it comes to print media consumption, followed by smaller groups with personal integrative needs, social integrative needs, affective needs and those seeking escape. Prior research is consistent with the fact that 80.6% of respondents use print news media to satisfy cognitive needs (information, knowledge and understanding). This is because they have always valued print media in that regard thanks to its in-depth coverage, investigative reporting and detailed analysis which are preferred by people looking for reliable and general information (table 2). Even during the age of the Internet, print media is still an authentic ally for consumers concerned about quality and veracity of information (Flavián & Gurrea, 2006; Prior, 2007).

The fact that most respondents (51.9%) spend only 0 to 1 hour on print media every day is consistent with similar trends today where time spent on traditional print newspapers has been declining. This transition has seen both easier access to digital news and altered ways of reading, an observation made by Berglez

and Gearing (2021), who recorded the movement from print to online as a result of readers looking for faster, simpler methods of getting information. The previous studies are also consistent with the fact that a smaller proportion of respondents consume print media for personal integrative needs (5.6%), affective needs (3.1%) and escapism (2.5%). Unlike digital platforms and entertainment-oriented media where self-presentation or emotional gratification is more prevalent, print media does not really lend itself to this. According to Papacharissi (2002) and Quan-Haase and Young (2014), effective Internet platforms for such purposes are usually more interactive and visually appealing, hence able to satisfy the self-esteem, social validation and escape needs than print media. Furthermore, the static nature of print media makes it difficult for emotionally satisfied individuals to read it or find it appealing in any way.

Print news is consumed by approximately 8.1% of respondents in order to satisfy social integrative needs but for not more than 1 hour daily. Historically, there has been print media used for social integrative needs whereby individuals engaged in conversations or remained relevant in the society. Still, digital platforms that allow for instant sharing and discussion have diminished this role. The research done by Ruggiero (2000) indicates that although traditional print media is less effective in real-time social interaction compared to digital formats, it still serves people valuing thoughtful and reflective content engagement. Results of the chi-square test  $\chi^2(20, N = 160) = 39.920, p = .005$  show that there is a significant relationship between media consumption needs and analog press read. This the same as what the uses and gratifications framework suggests when it says that varying needs result in diverse ways of engaging with the media. The association implies that even though cognitive needs are the most prominent, there are other drivers sometimes contributing to print media consumption. The findings confirms the hypothesis 2.

A substantial link discovered between media consumption needs and online news media consumption is consistent with the uses and gratifications theory that stipulates that people actively choose media according to their own particular needs (table 3). The “cognitive needs,” which makes up an awesome 80.6% of online news consumption, are also in line with earlier studies that point to online digital platforms as the key sources of information and channels for understanding current affairs globally (Lee & Ma, 2012). People are more likely to satisfy their information needs using the internet due to its unprecedented accessibility that is ever updated (Peters et al., 2006). This implies that they have to be informed quickly in order to fit into today’s world where change takes place too fast. Thus, this current study reveals that 28.8% of respondents read one or more up to two hours of online news daily, confirming that people seek for online information just intending to keep themselves updated in rapid paced environments.

According to prior research, Rubin and Rubin (2009) the lower engagement for emotional needs (3.1%) and escapism (2.5%) is consistent with their fulfilment by entertainment or social media platforms rather than news media. In certain niche areas of interest, some users may get emotional satisfaction by following news but generally online news media serves a cognitive engagement purpose. Compared with previous studies showing that these demands are largely satisfied via professional or social networking sites (Brandtzæg & Heim, 2009), the finding that only 5.6% of the participants use online information for personal integrative purposes (credibility, confidence, self-esteem) is unexpected. The research indicates that social integrative needs (8.1%) do hold some importance, as highlighted by studies showing that online news is used to connect with people and discuss topics in local areas (Gil de Zúñiga, 2012). The fact that the chi-square is significantly high,  $\chi^2(20, N = 160) = 40.509, p = .004$ , reinforces the idea that media consumption patterns are not random but are connected to specific consumption needs, which approves the hypothesis 3. This corresponds with recent studies indicating that online news consuming patterns are determined by the necessity for instant and reliable information (Dvorkin, 2021).

## 5. CONCLUSION

In this, the results make it apparent to those in the journalism industry how significant it is to create news content that matches the main cognitive requirements of the users and at the same time attempting other

characteristics that will address emotional or social integration needs. This study upholds the idea that most people use electronic news media to seek information and knowledge. But by means of entertainment, neediness, as well as for self-concept representation, for interpersonal reasons and affective fulfillment these motivations affect consumption in lesser extent than the first ones do. To enhance their audience base, media houses may find it worthwhile to develop ways through which they can draw in individuals who consume media for different reasons or with varying motives altogether.

Although there has been an overall drop in print media readership, its role is still shifting to deal with the changing environments of different forms of media. It is also clear that there are people who read for these reasons only: while it is true that other needs lead to less interest in printed materials, this lack of response shows how little they are used for anything other than acquiring information. The increasing disinterest by people looking for knowledge confirms previous studies finding print more necessary than ever before as knowledge seeking people grow apart from all other alternative systems which are more interactive and access more variety of content including emotion-based, communal and entertainment types of consumption.

The results support the notion of cognitive gratification being the main purpose for which people use most online newspapers; affective and escapism motives are almost insignificant in this respect. This study enhances our knowledge in terms of online media usage behavior by showing us how various desires dictate the amount of time we spend on browsing news websites. Further investigations can delve into these trends among different social categories so as to determine any contrasts according to age, learning level or cultural background.

### ***5.1 Limitations and Future Directions***

The study indeed brings some valuable insights, but it has its limitations. One of them is the size of the sample, especially for some types of media, like print. This sample size limits the generalizability of findings. Besides, the study is majorly on media academics; therefore, it may not give an overall picture of the media consumption of the general population. Such limitations could be addressed through future studies that would consider larger and more diverse samples. In addition, qualitative methods can be used to complement quantitative analysis for more in-depth insight into individuals' media consumption behavior and motives for gratification.

### ***5.2 Recommendations***

This study, though providing good insights into the functions of news media sought by media academics in Pakistan, also holds promise for future exploration. Future research might focus on how the relationships between various variables in this study operate and how cultural, societal, and technological factors mediate the gratifications individuals seek from news media use.

### **Acknowledgements**

None.


### **Conflict of Interest**


Authors declared NO conflict of interest.

### **Funding Source**

The authors received NO funding to conduct this study.

### **ORCID iDs**

Naeem Ullah Tariq<sup>1</sup>  <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-7713-3971>

Muhammad Yousaf<sup>2</sup>  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3203-2966>

## REFERENCES

- Babbie, E. R. (2020). *The practice of social research*. Cengage AU.
- Berglez, P., & Gearing, A. (2021). *The Panama and Paradise Papers : The Rise of a Global Fourth Estate The Panama and Paradise Papers : The Rise of a Global Fourth Estate*. January 2018.
- Bischof, D., Cohen, G., Cohen, S., Foos, F., Kuhn, P. M., Nanou, K., Visalvanich, N., & Vivyan, N. (2022). Advantages, Challenges and Limitations of Audit Experiments with Constituents. *Political Studies Review*, 20(2), 192–200. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14789299211037865>
- Blumler, J. G., & Katz, E. (1974). *The Uses of Mass Communications: Current Perspectives on Gratifications Research*. *Sage Annual Reviews of Communication Research Volume III*.
- Borenstein, M., Hedges, L. V., Higgins, J. P. T., & Rothstein, H. R. (2021). *Introduction to meta-analysis*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Brandtzaeg, P. B., & Heim, J. (2009). Why people use social networking sites. *Lecture Notes in Computer Science (Including Subseries Lecture Notes in Artificial Intelligence and Lecture Notes in Bioinformatics)*, 5621 LNCS, 143–152. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-02774-1\\_16](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-02774-1_16)
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods*. Oxford university press.
- Carpenter, J. P., Shelton, C. C., & Schroeder, S. E. (2023). The education influencer: A new player in the educator professional landscape. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 55(5), 749–764.
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*. 2nd edn Lawrence Erlbaum: Hillsdale. NJ.
- De Vaus, D. (2001). Research design in social research.
- Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). *Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Dvorkin, J. (2021). *Trusting the News in a Digital Age: Toward a "New" News Literacy*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Lang, A.-G., & Buchner, A. (2007). G\* Power 3: A flexible statistical power analysis program for the social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences. *Behavior Research Methods*, 39(2), 175–191.
- Flavián, C., & Gurrea, R. (2006). The choice of digital newspapers: influence of reader goals and user experience. *Internet Research*, 16(3), 231–247. <https://doi.org/10.1108/10662240610673673>
- Fowler Jr, F. J. (2013). *Survey research methods*. Sage publications.
- Gil de Zúñiga, H. (2012). Social Media Use for News and Individuals' Social Capital, Civic Engagement and Political Participation. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(3), 319–336. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2012.01574.x>
- Hair, J. F. (2009). *Multivariate data analysis*.
- Huang, J. (2019). *2018 China-United States Trade War: Framing Analysis of Online News Coverage in the United States and China as portrayed by the New York Times and the People's Daily*. 76.
- Hunter, I., Haining Ede, G., & Whiddett, R. (2014). Increased electronic information sharing by sexual health services: Confidentiality and consent. *Health Informatics Journal*, 20(1), 3–12.
- Iftikhar, M., & Yousaf, M. (2021). The impact of climate change coverage on public adherence towards health threat: An empirical validation of the health belief model. *Sir Syed Journal of Education and Social Research*, 4(2), 402–413. <https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol4-iss2-2021> (402–413)

- Ioannidis, J. P. A., Munafo, M. R., Fusar-Poli, P., Nosek, B. A., & David, S. P. (2014). Publication and other reporting biases in cognitive sciences: detection, prevalence, and prevention. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 18(5), 235–241.
- Ji, D., Hu, Z., & Muhammad, Y. (2016). Neighboring Competitor? Indian Image in Chinese Media. *Global Media and China*, 1(3), 234–250. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2059436416668186>
- Karatas, J. C., Meiser, B., McMahon, C., Strong, K. A., Hill, W., Roberts, C., & Kelly, P. (2019). *Psychological adjustment, knowledge and unmet information needs in women undergoing PGD*. 25(6), 1481–1489. <https://doi.org/10.1093/humrep/deq086>
- Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1973). Uses and gratifications research. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 37(4), 509–523.
- Khieu, T. L. (2023). *The prevalence of undiagnosed hyperglycemia in middle-aged and older adults and its associated risk factors in Ba Vi district, Viet Nam* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Kim, J., & Rubin, A. M. (1997). The variable influence of audience activity on media effects. *Communication Research*, 24(2), 107–135.
- Kiousis, S. (2002). Interactivity: a concept explication. *New Media & Society*, 4(3), 355–383.
- Kish, L. (1965). *Survey sampling*.
- Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30(3), 607–610.
- Lakens, D. (2022). Sample Size Justification. *Collabra: Psychology*, 8(1). <https://doi.org/10.1525/collabra.33267>
- Lee, S. T., & Maslog, C. C. (2005). War or peace journalism? Asian newspaper coverage of conflicts. *Journal of Communication*, 55(2), 311–329. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2005.tb02674.x
- Lee, C. S., & Ma, L. (2012). News sharing in social media: The effect of gratifications and prior experience. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(2), 331–339. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2011.10.002>
- Mahmood, N., & Yousaf, M. (2024). *Making sense of statistical analysis: A researcher's handbook of data analysis using IBM SPSS*. National Book Foundation.
- Mantai, L., & Marrone, M. (2023). Academic career progression from early career researcher to professor: what can we learn from job ads. *Studies in Higher Education*, 48(6), 797–812.
- Mazzulla, G., Eboli, L., & Forciniti, C. (2024). Do women perceive pedestrian path attractiveness differently from men?. *Transportation research part A: policy and practice*, 179, 103890.
- McQuail, D. (2010). *McQuail's mass communication theory*. Sage publications.
- Nabi, R. L., & Krcmar, M. (2004). Conceptualizing Media Enjoyment as Attitude: Implications for Mass Media Effects Research. *Communication Theory*, 14(4), 288–310. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2004.tb00316.x>
- Okocha, D. O., Yousaf, M., & Onobe, M. J. (Eds.). (2023). *Handbook of Research on Deconstructing Culture and Communication in the Global South*. IGI Global.
- Papacharissi, Z. (2002). The virtual sphere: The internet as a public sphere. *New Media and Society*, 4(1), 9–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614440222226244>
- Peters, O., Rickes, M., Jöckel, S., Criegern, C. von, & Deursen, A. van. (2006). Explaining and analyzing audiences: A social cognitive approach to selectivity and media use. *Comm*, 31(3), 279–308. <https://doi.org/10.1515/COMMUN.2006.019>

- Prior, M. (2007). *Post-broadcast democracy: How media choice increases inequality in political involvement and polarizes elections*. Cambridge University Press.
- Quan-Haase, A., & Young, A. L. (2014). The uses and gratifications (U&G) approach as a lens for studying social media practice. *The Handbook of Media and Mass Communication Theory*, 269–286.
- Riaz, S., Aksar, I. A., & Pasha, S. A. (2016). Social Media And Women: A Gratification Analysis. *The Women-Annual Research Journal of Gender Studies*, 8(8).
- Rubin, A. M. (2009a). Uses-and-gratifications perspective on media effects. In *Media effects* (pp. 181–200). Routledge.
- Rubin, A. M. (2009b). Uses and gratifications. *The SAGE Handbook of Media Processes and Effects*, 147–159.
- Rubin, A. M., & Rubin, A. M. (2009). *Television uses and gratifications : The interactions of viewing patterns and motivations Television Uses and Gratifications : The Interactions of Viewing Patterns and Motivations*. April 2013, 37–41.
- Ruggiero, T. E. (2000). Uses and gratifications theory in the 21st century. *Mass Communication & Society*, 3(1), 3–37.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research methods for business students*. Pearson education.
- Shoukat, R., Ismayil, I., Huang, Q., Oubibi, M., Younas, M., & Munir, R. (2024). A comparative analysis of blended learning and traditional instruction: Effects on academic motivation and learning outcomes. *PloS One*, 19(3), e0298220.
- Siddique, M., Siddique, A., & Khan, E. A. (2023). Academic optimism and teachers' commitment: an associational study of Pakistani teachers. *Journal of Educational Research and Social Sciences Review (JERSSR)*, 3(1), 178–188.
- Siddiqui, K. A., Asad, M. M., & Rind, A. A. (2024). Learners' attitudes toward language education based on cultural identities: global citizenship agenda in higher education institutions of Pakistan. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JARHE-01-2024-0034>
- Sundar, S. S., & Limperos, A. M. (2013a). Uses and grats 2.0: New gratifications for new media. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 57(4), 504–525.
- Sundar, S. S., & Limperos, A. M. (2013b). Uses and Grats 2.0: New Gratifications for New Media. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 57(4), 504–525. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2013.845827>
- Yousaf, M. (2023). Mass Media in Pakistan: Historical Evolution, Challenges, and Prospects. In D. O. Okocha, M. Yousaf, M., & M. J. Onobe (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Deconstructing Culture and Communication in the Global South* (pp. 21-35). IGI Global.
- Yousaf, M., Hu, Z., & Raza, S. H. (2023). News media exposure and community consensus on terrorism in a developing country: First and second level agenda-setting effects. *Media Watch*, 14(1), 33–57. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09760911221130818>
- Yousaf, M., Rahman, B. H., & Yousaf, Z. (2020). Constructing reality: Framing of the Kashmir conflict in dictatorial and democratic regimes in the Pakistani English Press. *Media Watch*, 11(3), 401-415. <https://doi.org/10.15655 /mw/2020/v11i3/203045>
- Williams, K. (2003). *Understanding Media Theory*. Bloomsbury Publishing.