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Incorporating the Globalization Paradigm: Effects of Digital Media Usage on Gratification

Abstract: *The pervasive influence of digital platforms has seamlessly integrated digital media platforms like WhatsApp into the daily routines of individuals, particularly the youth and students. By conducting an in-depth survey across a diverse cross-section of university students, the study aims to unravel the intricate patterns and multifaceted nature of digital media engagement and its repercussions on various dimensions of pleasure. The study involves into the spectrum of information categories that students interact with, the frequency of their interactions, and the emotional and psychological outcomes stemming from these engagements. The study confines its focus to four prominent public sector universities in Sindh province: Shah Abdul Latif University in Khairpur Mir's, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University in Nawabshah, Sindh Madrasatul Islam University in Karachi, and the University of Sindh in Jamshoro. The outcomes of this study bear the potential to offer valuable insights to policymakers and shedding light on the benefits and potential pitfalls associated with digital media engagement among students.*

Key Words: Globalization Paradigm, Digital Media, Gratification, Whatsapp, Youth, Students

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Introduction

There are billions of individuals all over the globe that use digital media platforms on a daily basis, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. Digital media is a facet of contemporary life that is quickly growing and becoming more widespread. The use of digital media has completely altered the ways in which individuals connect with one another, exchange information, and develop relationships. Additionally, it has developed into a significant source of news and entertainment, in addition to serving as a forum for political debate and activity. The

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usage of digital media has been linked to a variety of consequences, both favorable and harmful, according to study that was conducted not too long ago. On the one hand, the usage of digital media may provide users digital support, boost their digital capital, and improve their level of civic involvement (Joinson, A. 2008). On the other side, research has shown that using digital media may lead to a decline in one's sense of well-being, as well as a reduction in attention resources and an increase in feelings of isolation and anxiety (Tosun, L. P. 2012).

There is still a lot that we don't know about the repercussions of using digital media, despite the fact that its influence in society is only expanding. For instance, there hasn't been a lot of study done on the effects of digital media on young people, despite the fact that they make up the largest demographic of regular users of these platforms (Perrin, 2016). In addition, there is a lack of study on the impacts of digital media usage on physical and mental health, despite rising worry about the potential bad consequences of these platforms on users. This is despite the fact that there is growing concern about the possible negative effects of these platforms on users.

It is very necessary, considering the significance of digital media in today's world, to get a deeper understanding of the impacts that it has on both people and communities. The purpose of this thesis is to make a contribution to this knowledge by investigating the connection between college students' usage of digital media and the levels of enjoyment they experience as a result of this use. It was also noted by PTA that the digital media user's ratio in Pakistan is around 56.37 out of 100%. According to global digital insights reports (2020) on the use of digital media sites in Pakistan, 46.00 million out of the world's 4.20 billion in statistics are from Pakistan. In addition, (Golder & et al. 2007) brought to light the fact that the use of digital media apps has become an integral element of an individual's day-to-day existence, to an extent that is much greater than that of the conventional life style (Gross, E. 2004). The majority of people nowadays are sharing and interacting with their family, friends, and professionals about their likes and dislikes, opinions, ideologies, and political affiliations. This is mostly attributable to the widespread use of digital networking sites.

The uses and gratification theory highlights its own active role as follows: The consumers have choices and preferences to get information, entertainment, awareness, advertising, and opinion formation from any Media fraternity to stratified, which can affect an active audience in either a positive or negative way (Katz, 1973). I will concentrate much of my attention on the ways in which people use digital media to get information, present themselves, have fun, and communicate with one another. In the contemporary age of postmodernism, the use of digital media platforms has been a prevalent practice for individuals seeking to get up-to-date information pertaining to current events and societal issues (Joinson, A. 2008). The prevalence of digital media use among university students has seen a notable surge in recent years, prompting much study and discourse over its influence on their daily lives. The enjoyment derived from digital media use has emerged as a notable component of interest among students. The impact of using digital media for the purpose of obtaining pleasure may have both favorable and unfavorable outcomes.

From a favorable perspective, digital media platforms have the potential to foster a feeling of inclusion and interpersonal engagement among students, while also serving as a medium for self-representation and interpersonal interaction. Moreover, digital media platforms may serve as a kind of leisure and a mechanism for alleviating tension among students. Nevertheless, an overabundance of digital media use might result in adverse outcomes. As an example, it is plausible that students may develop a dependency on digital media platforms, resulting in the allocation of excessive time towards its use. This behavior has the potential to negatively impact academic achievements, compromise physical well-being, and diminish proficiency in interpersonal

communication. Moreover, the use of digital media platforms might also be linked to diminished self-esteem, depressive symptoms, and heightened anxiety levels, as individuals engage in digital comparisons with the well-constructed portrayals of others' lives shown on these platforms (Elphinston, R. A., & Noller, P. 2011).

It is worth noting that digital media has the potential to make valuable contributions as an educational instrument. The aspects of environment connection and digitalizing within digital media platforms facilitate the exchange of knowledge and communication among users. This strong component supports collaborative learning via discussions and information sharing. Therefore, considering these advantages, university students may get significant benefits from using digital media as users. It can serve as a valuable instrument for information seeking, entertainment, self-presentation, and digital engagement Junco, et. al (2010) & Kaplan, A. et. al (2010).

Significance of Study

This research aims to identify the challenges and concerns related to the utilization and satisfaction of current technological breakthroughs, with a specific focus on the popularity of digital media. The study seeks to solve the information gap about the use and gratification of digital media in Higher Education institutions located in Sindh. Most of Media and communication experts, researchers, and Scholars had worked over the uses and gratification in the use of print and electronic Media, also few of them had done work on it internationally. But no any scholarly work has been done to explore the

use and gratification theory in the use of digital Media among students of public sector universities of Sindh province. In this regard, researcher has planned to bring new trends, ways, skill development for using SNS, for creativity purpose, sharing knowledge, analysis the ongoing issues and fully aware of current scenario of state as well as the world affairs. . As we know that the limited studies to revalidate the U&G Theory in relation to digital media had been researched since many decades. In this study we will have intended to apply the U&G Theory for assuming that how students are using of digital media and which needs they gratified.

Objectives of Study

1. To determine the effects of SNSs usage for information obtained.
2. To investigate the use of SNSs among students to obtain entertainment gratification.
3. To assess the choices and preferences of self- presentation on SNSs.
4. To identify the preference of SNSs application for digital interaction.
5. Determine the Relationship of information obtained, entertainment gratification, self- presentation and digital interaction on gratification obtained.

Research Questions

1. What is the use of SNSs for information seeking?
2. How students use SNSs for obtain entertainment gratification?
3. What are the choices and preferences of self- presentation

Conceptual Research Framework

Figure 1
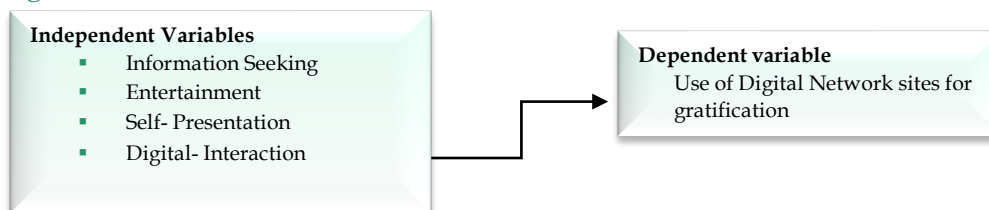
Theoretical Framework: Uses and Gratification

Digital media has become an integral part of people's lives and has revolutionized the way we communicate, interact, and access information. With the rise of various digital media platforms, it has become imperative to understand how individuals use and benefit from these platforms. The Uses and Gratification (U&G) theory is a communication theory that explains how individuals use media to satisfy their needs and wants. U&G theory posits that individuals actively seek out media to fulfill their psychological, digital, and personal needs. The theory proposes that individuals have an active role in seeking out media content that they find fulfilling and enjoyable, rather than being passive consumers of media content. This theory is applicable to digital media, as individuals actively seek out and engage with content on these platforms that they find fulfilling and enjoyable.

Literature Review

Over ten years ago, the world underwent a significant transformation as a result of the widespread use of information and communication technology. The advent of new media and technology has significantly transformed interpersonal interactions, communication patterns, as well as digital and political discourse. Numerous studies have been undertaken by experts in the fields of media and communication, political science, sociology, and international affairs, focusing on diverse facets of digital media use Salihu, Aisar et. al (2015), Santos et. al (2009), Shao, G., (2009).

. According to Golan, Arceneaux, and Soule (2019), the study conducted. Digital and social media apps such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, and several others are generally acknowledged for their significant impact on communication. These applications have introduced novel trends and modes of interaction via the use of digital advancements, additional

functionalities, and easily available services. The majority of their users are availing themselves of chances for digital connection with individuals from other parts of the globe, as well as actively seeking up-to-date information. Additionally, they get amusement from engaging with visual content, films, and humorous anecdotes (Kircaburun, K., & Griffiths, M. D. 2018).

Digital media platforms offer users the opportunity to create personalized profile pictures and share various details, such as preferences, political and religious beliefs. Additionally, these platforms facilitate digital interactions through features like video calls, voice messages, and text chats. Moreover, digital media sites provide a platform for online meetings, enabling individuals to engage in discussions on specific topics. Over time, there has been a development of new digital media programs that include complex functionality. Haque, J (2013) & Haridakis, P. (2009) conducted a study find that digital networking services are often used for the purpose of establishing and maintaining connections with family members. Maintaining communication and actively participating in discussions with family members is a motivating factor for establishing connections. Researchers have discovered that digital networking sites have become widely used platforms for individuals to gather, resulting in users using these platforms to suit their own objectives and aspirations (Luo, L., Wang, M., & Zhou, M. 2019). Individuals that use digital networking sites come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and possess unique personal motivations for engaging with these platforms, which are influenced by the demographic characteristics of the sites themselves.

The pervasive integration of digital media into our everyday routines has significantly transformed our modes of communication, information acquisition, and interpersonal engagement. In recent times, there has been an increasing scholarly focus on examining the influence of digital media on several facets of society, including human welfare,

interpersonal connections, and political dynamics. The advent of digital media has brought about a significant transformation in the manner in which individuals engage in communication and get access to information. According to Slater and Tiggemann (2018), the platform in question has achieved a pervasive presence, facilitating global connections among individuals, communities, and organizations (p. 113). Digital media has become a potent instrument for molding political discourse and exerting influence on public opinion. The scholarly community has extensively examined and deliberated over the influence it has on political engagement (Galston, 2017, p. 1754). According to Rosen, Carrier, and Cheever (2016), digital media has the capacity to have both beneficial and bad influences on individuals' lives. On one hand, it enhances connectedness and cooperation among users. On the other hand, it also serves as a platform for the dissemination of false information and the perpetration of cyber bullying.

The use of digital media has emerged as a pivotal component within the context of romantic interactions among adolescents. According to Muise, Christofides, and Desmarais (2015), the impact of greater use of technology on relationships may be both advantageous and disadvantageous. On one hand, it might result in heightened feelings of jealously and conflict. On the other hand, it can provide enhanced communication and foster stronger bonds between those involved in the relationship (Parker, H. A., & Patrick, D. L. 2019). The aforementioned quotations serve to exemplify the divergent viewpoints of several writers about the influence exerted by digital media. The impact of digital media on communication and societal dynamics is evident, as it has fundamentally transformed the manner in which individuals engage and connect with one another. Moreover, it has emerged as a potent instrument for influencing and molding societal structures in many manners. Additional investigation is required in order to get a comprehensive comprehension of the intricate correlation between digital media and many facets of individual well-being.

Research Methodology

The research aims to investigate the impact of digital media (WhatsApp) utilization on the gratification attained by four universities students in Sindh. The study will explore how these platforms influence students' psychological, digital, and educational gratifications. The research will employ a mixed-methods approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Research Design

The research will utilize a sequential explanatory design, where quantitative data will be collected first, followed by qualitative data collection. This approach allows for the triangulation of data to enhance the overall understanding of the research problem.

Sampling

Quantitative Phase: A stratified random sampling technique will be used to select a representative sample of university students from different disciplines and academic levels in Karachi. The sample size will be determined using appropriate statistical methods.

Qualitative Phase: Purposive sampling will be employed to select participants for in-depth interviews. Participants will be chosen based on their digital media usage patterns and the diversity of experiences.

Data Collection

Quantitative Phase: A structured questionnaire will be developed to collect data on students' digital media usage, gratification levels, and demographic information. Likert-scale items will be used to measure variables.

Qualitative Phase: In-depth interviews will be conducted with a subset of participants from the quantitative phase. Semi-structured interview guides will be used to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and the impact of digital media on their gratification.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Phase: Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis will be used to analyze quantitative data. Statistical software will be used for data analysis.

Qualitative Phase: Thematic analysis will be conducted on qualitative data from interviews. Open coding, categorization, and pattern recognition will be used to identify key themes related to gratification and digital media usage.

Findings & Discussion
Table 1

Correlation between different variables

Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	What are average hours of your active digital media use per day?	To what extent do you feel satisfied with your favorite digital site?
What are average hours of your active digital media use per day?	1	-.041
		.264
	734	734
To what extent do you feel gratification with your favorite digital site?	-.041	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Whatsapp

WhatsApp is a commonly used instant messaging application that has gained significant popularity among individuals around. The application has emerged as a significant element in our everyday existence, exerting a profound influence on our modes of communication and interpersonal engagement. The primary objective of this literature review is to critically analyze the impact of WhatsApp utilization on diverse domains, including digital conduct, psychological well-being, and scholastic achievement subsequent to the year 2017. This examination will be based on contemporary research investigations conducted in this particular area of study.

Digital Behavior

Research findings have shown that the use of Research findings have shown that the use of WhatsApp has the potential to influence digital behavior, specifically with regards to interpersonal interaction and the capacity for empathy. According to a research conducted by Al-Salman et al. (2018), increased use of WhatsApp among university students was associated with a decline in face-to-face contact and a reduction in empathetic behavior towards others. The authors argue that this phenomenon might be attributed to the inherent characteristics of the application, which facilitate communication in a way that is characterized by isolation and individualism.

In a research conducted by Kim and Lee (2011), it was shown that there exists a positive correlation between the use of WhatsApp and both digital support, as well as feelings of loneliness and digital anxiety. The authors believe that this phenomenon may arise due to the expansive communicative capabilities afforded by WhatsApp, which allow users to engage with a substantial network of individuals. However, this platform concurrently engenders a feeling of isolation since it precludes in-person interactions with others.

The use of WhatsApp among university students may potentially have an influence on

their digital conduct. According to the findings of a research conducted by Zafar and Kim (2017), those who engaged in regular use of WhatsApp exhibited a decline in their propensity for engaging in face-to-face contact, as well as a drop in their levels of empathy towards others. In a research conducted by Barati and Ahmadvand (2017), it was shown that students who engaged in higher frequency of WhatsApp use reported experiencing heightened feelings of isolation and loneliness in comparison to their counterparts who utilized the application less often.

Mental Health

The use of WhatsApp has been associated with mental health consequences, including stress, anxiety, and depression. According to a research conducted by Ahmad et al. (2018), those who used WhatsApp more regularly exhibited elevated levels of stress, anxiety, and depression in comparison to their counterparts who utilized the application less frequently. The authors argue that this phenomenon may be attributed to the application's propensity to engender a perpetual need for connectedness and attentiveness, hence inducing sensations of tension and worry.

The use of WhatsApp has been ass'ciated with a range of mental health issues among university students. Chen et al. (2018) conducted a research which revealed a positive correlation between excessive use of WhatsApp and heightened manifestations of sadness, anxiety, and stress. In a research conducted by Adib-Hajbaghery et al. (2019), it was observed that students who engaged in more regular use of WhatsApp showed elevated levels of stress, anxiety, and depression in comparison to their counterparts who utilized the application less often.

Academic Performance

Extensive research has been conducted on the influence of WhatsApp use on academic performance, revealing that an excessive amount of usage might have a detrimental effect on students' scores. According to a

research conducted by Al-Salman et al. (2019), it was observed that university students who allocated a greater amount of time using WhatsApp had comparatively inferior academic performance in contrast to their counterparts who devoted less time to the application. The authors propose that this phenomenon may be attributed to the potential distraction posed by the use of WhatsApp, which therefore diminishes the available time for engaging in scholarly pursuits and academic endeavors.

Research findings indicate that an excessive use of WhatsApp has been shown to have a detrimental effect on the academic performance of university students. According to the findings of a research conducted by Aljaber and Al-Gahtani (2018), there was a negative correlation seen between the amount of time students spent using WhatsApp and their academic performance, with those who allocated more time to the application reporting poorer grades in comparison to their counterparts who spent less time engaging with the platform. In a separate investigation conducted by Ahmad et al. (2019), it was observed that students who exhibited higher levels of addiction to WhatsApp had a worse level of academic achievement in comparison to their counterparts who displayed lower levels of addiction.

Globalization and Digital Media: Shaping a Connected World

Globalization and digital media are two intertwined phenomena that have significantly transformed the way information, culture, and ideas circulate across the globe Tong et. al (2008). The advent of digital technologies and the widespread use of the internet have led to an unprecedented level of interconnectedness among people, cultures, and economies. This has given rise to a new era where information flows freely across borders, transcending physical boundaries and reshaping societies in profound ways Siddike, et. al (2015).

The Digital Revolution and Global Connectivity

The digital revolution, marked by the proliferation of smartphones, high-speed internet, digital media platforms, and online content, has facilitated the rapid dissemination of information to a global audience. This has led to the democratization of information-sharing, allowing individuals from various corners of the world to create, share, and access content with unprecedented ease. This has not only revolutionized how news is reported but has also given individuals the power to amplify their voices, share personal stories, and engage in discussions on a global scale. Stone et. al ([1999](#)).

Cultural Exchange and Hybridization

Digital media has become a melting pot of cultures, as people from diverse backgrounds interact online and engage in cultural exchange. Digital media platforms, video-sharing websites, and streaming services have made it possible for individuals to experience music, films, literature, and art from different parts of the world. This has led to the hybridization of cultures, where elements of one culture blend with those of another, giving rise to new and dynamic cultural expressions.

Challenges and Opportunities

While globalization and digital media have brought about numerous opportunities for learning, collaboration, and cultural enrichment, they have also posed several challenges. One of the prominent challenges is the digital divide, where access to digital technologies and the internet is unequal across regions and socio-economic groups. This divide can exacerbate existing inequalities and limit the potential benefits of globalization for marginalized communities.

Economic Impact and New Marketplaces

Globalization and digital media have transformed the way businesses operate and market their products. E-commerce, online advertising, and digital platforms have opened up new avenues for companies to reach consumers worldwide. Small businesses and entrepreneurs can now access global markets with relatively low entry barriers, leveling the playing field to some extent. However, this shift has also disrupted traditional business models and labor markets, leading to debates about job displacement and regulatory concerns.

Shaping Political Discourse and Activism

Digital media has played a crucial role in shaping political discourse and activism around the world. Digital media platforms have enabled grassroots movements, protests, and campaigns to gain international attention and support. However, they have also been weaponized for spreading propaganda, disinformation, and facilitating online harassment. The influence of digital media on political landscapes underscores its potential to shape public opinion and challenge established power structures.

Conclusion

Globalization and digital media are inseparable forces that have reshaped the world in profound ways. They have connected individuals, cultures, and economies on an unprecedented scale, offering both opportunities and challenges. As these forces continue to evolve, societies must work collectively to ensure that the benefits of globalization and digital media are maximized while addressing the disparities and risks they can introduce (Raghavendra, et. al ([2018](#)), Ridout, B., & Campbell, A. ([2014](#)), Ruggiero, T. E. ([2000](#)).

This requires thoughtful policies, digital literacy initiatives, and a commitment to fostering a globally connected but responsibly engaged world. By employing a mixed-methods approach, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of WhatsApp and Twitter utilization on the gratification attained by university students in Karachi. The findings will shed light on the complex interplay between digital media usage and students' psychological,

digital, and educational gratifications Underwood, J. D., Kerlin, L., & Farrington-Flint, L. (2011).

This research endeavors to delve into the intricate relationship between the utilization of digital media platforms, specifically WhatsApp and Twitter, and the gratification experienced by university students in Karachi. By adopting a mixed-methods approach, we aimed to gain a holistic understanding of the multifaceted impact of these platforms on various dimensions of gratification. Through the quantitative phase, we sought to quantify the extent of digital media usage among university students and discern the correlations between usage patterns and different forms of gratification. The findings from this phase illuminated the prevalence of these platforms in the lives of students and shed light on the significant associations between digital media activities and psychological, digital, and educational gratifications. The regression analysis further revealed nuanced insights into the factors influencing the level of gratification derived from WhatsApp Wellman B and Gulia M. (1999).

Complementing the quantitative findings, the qualitative phase offered a deeper exploration of students' personal experiences, perceptions, and emotions concerning their digital media usage. Through in-depth interviews, we unearthed a spectrum of narratives, uncovering both positive and negative implications of digital media engagement. Themes that emerged from the qualitative analysis enriched our understanding of how these platforms contribute to self-expression, interpersonal connections, information dissemination, and even potential detriments such as time management challenges and digital comparison. However, the research encountered limitations in terms of generalizability due to its focus on a specific demographic and geographical area. The rapidly evolving nature of digital media also poses a challenge in terms of the relevance of our findings over time Vogel, E. A., Rose, J. P., Roberts, L. R., & Eckles, K. (2014).

Despite these limitations, the research carries significance for educational institutions, policymakers, and students themselves. It underscores the need for a balanced and informed approach to digital media usage, considering its potential to both enhance and impede various facets of student life. In essence, this study has brought to light the intricate interplay between digital media platforms, such as WhatsApp and Twitter, and the gratification experienced by university students Wang, Y., & Wang, Y. (2017).

By amalgamating quantitative trends with qualitative insights, we have woven a comprehensive narrative that aids in comprehending the dynamics of these digital platforms in the lives of young adults. It is our hope that these findings will guide individuals and institutions in harnessing the positive aspects while mitigating the challenges posed by the omnipresence of digital media in the modern educational landscape.

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