

Narcissism, Social Media Usage, and Conspicuous Consumption in Young Adults

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In today's digital age, social media has become a powerful platform that not only shapes personal identity but also influences consumer behavior. Among young adults, the intertwining of personality traits with online activity has prompted growing interest in how digital self-presentation affects consumption patterns. A cross sectional study was undertaken to investigate the extent to which narcissism, and social media usage tend to influence conspicuous consumption in young adults, reflecting shifting sociocultural dynamics in the digital era. Specifically, it investigates if narcissistic traits influence social media usage and, subsequently, conspicuous consumption behaviors. Participants included 180 young adults, who actively engaged in various social media platforms. Narcissistic traits were measured using the Narcissistic Personality Inventory-16 (NPI-16), while social media usage and conspicuous consumption were assessed using the Social Media Use Integration Scale (Jenkins-Guarnieri et al., 2013) and the Conspicuous Consumption Scale (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004), respectively. The findings revealed a significant positive association between narcissism and conspicuous consumption, suggesting that individuals with higher narcissistic tendencies are more likely to engage in attention-seeking and status-driven consumption behaviors. It was found that women tend to have more narcissistic tendencies and conspicuous consumption compared to men. Social media usage appeared to mediate the relationship between narcissism and conspicuous consumption, indicating that narcissistic individuals may use social media platforms as a channel to express their identity through visible consumption. These insights offer valuable implications for marketers, psychologists, and policymakers seeking to understand the psychological drivers of consumer behavior in the age of social media. The study underscores the need for further research into personality-driven digital behaviors and their societal impact.

Keywords: narcissism, social media usage, conspicuous consumption, young adults, npi-16, digital behavior

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Introduction

In the contemporary digital landscape, the convergence of social media platforms and consumer culture has fundamentally transformed the dynamics of self-presentation, social interaction, and identity construction among young adults. Central to this transformation are the intertwined phenomena of narcissism and conspicuous consumption, which have garnered significant attention in scholarly discourse exploring the implications of online behaviors and societal trends. Narcissism, traditionally defined as a personality trait characterized by grandiosity, entitlement, and a constant need for admiration (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), has found a fertile breeding ground in the realm of social media. Platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok provide users with unprecedented opportunities to curate and broadcast idealized versions of themselves, fostering an environment where image and perception are paramount (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; Twenge & Campbell, 2009). This digital stage not only amplifies pre-existing narcissistic tendencies but also shapes new forms of self-enhancement and validation-seeking behaviors (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). Simultaneously, the concept of conspicuous consumption, originally coined by Thorstein Veblen (1899) to describe the public display of wealth and status through material possessions, has undergone a digital renaissance in the era of social media. Young adults, influenced by carefully curated feeds and aspirational influencers, engage in a form of digital conspicuous consumption where the showcasing of luxury goods, exotic travel destinations, and exclusive experiences serves as markers of social status and personal success (Belk, 1988; Otnes & McGrath, 2001). This virtual peacocking not only reinforces existing social hierarchies but also perpetuates a cycle of consumption-driven identity formation (Han, Nunes, & Dreze, 2010). The intersection of narcissism, social media usage patterns, and conspicuous consumption among young adults presents a complex tapestry of influences and motivations. Recent empirical studies have begun to unravel these dynamics, shedding light on how these behaviors intersect and mutually reinforce each other within the digital realm. For instance, research by Wang and Tchernev (2012) underscores the relationship between excessive social media use and narcissistic tendencies, suggesting that the constant exposure to idealized images and lifestyles may exacerbate self-enhancement behaviors.

Moreover, qualitative investigations have delved into the lived experiences and subjective perceptions of young adults navigating the pressures of social media and conspicuous consumption. In-depth

interviews and thematic analyses reveal nuanced insights into the motivations behind online behaviors, highlighting themes of social comparison, validation seeking, and identity performance (Stern, 2019; Wang & Sundar, 2020). These studies underscore the intricate ways in which digital platforms facilitate both self-expression and self-comparison, often blurring the lines between authentic identity and curated persona. This article contributes to the burgeoning literature by exploring the psychological and sociocultural dimensions of narcissism, social media engagement, and conspicuous consumption among young adults. Through a mixed-methods approach integrating qualitative interviews and thematic synthesis, the study seeks to elucidate how these intertwined phenomena shape perceptions of self, social interactions, and consumer behaviors in contemporary society. Theoretical frameworks drawn from psychology, sociology, and communication studies provide a robust foundation for understanding the complexities of digital behaviors among young adults. Psychological theories of narcissism highlight the role of online platforms as avenues for self-promotion and validation (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; Twenge & Campbell, 2009), while sociological perspectives on conspicuous consumption illuminate how digital spaces serve as arenas for status signaling and social comparison (Belk, 1988; Otnes & McGrath, 2001). Communication studies further emphasize the performative aspects of social media, where individuals strategically craft and manage their online personas to cultivate desired impressions among peers and followers (Marwick & Boyd, 2011; boyd, 2014). By examining the lived experiences and perceptions of young adults, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms driving digital behaviors and their implications for personal well-being and societal norms. This study explores how narcissism influences conspicuous consumption among young adults, with social media usage as a mediating factor. In the age of digital self-presentation, social media platforms amplify narcissistic behaviors and materialistic values, making it important to understand their impact on consumption patterns. The study acknowledges that while social media offers unprecedented opportunities for self-expression and connection, it also introduces unique challenges related to identity authenticity and psychological well-being (Kross et al., 2013; Verduyn et al., 2015).

In the context of Pakistan, research remains limited on how these global trends intersect with local cultural and religious norms. Pakistani youth are increasingly influenced by international consumer trends and social media aesthetics, often aspiring to lifestyles portrayed by influencers

and celebrities. However, these aspirations may conflict with cultural norms that value humility and collective identity. A few emerging studies in South Asian contexts suggest that materialism and digital narcissism are on the rise, yet local research is still sparse (Ali, Raza, & Puah, 2017; Mahmood & Farooq, 2020). This makes it imperative to explore the unique cultural factors that shape how Pakistani young adults use social media to construct identity, gain validation, and engage in conspicuous consumption.

While extensive international research has examined the interplay between narcissism, social media usage, and conspicuous consumption, limited empirical work exists within the cultural context of Pakistan. Much of the existing literature is based on Western sociocultural frameworks, which may not fully capture the values, identity constructs, and social pressures experienced by young adults in Pakistani society.

Although global studies highlight how social media promotes narcissistic self-presentation and consumption behaviors, few studies have explored how these dynamics manifest in non-Western, collectivistic cultures particularly those like Pakistan, where religious values, social expectations, and modesty norms may conflict with individualistic expressions of self and materialism.

Moreover, while Pakistani youth are rapidly becoming active participants in global digital and consumer trends, there is a significant gap in understanding how local cultural and psychological factors influence the relationship between narcissism, social media use, and conspicuous consumption. The existing South Asian literature provides only preliminary insights (e.g., Ali et al., 2017; Mahmood & Farooq, 2020), with no comprehensive studies that integrate these variables in a single model within the Pakistani context.

Rationale

In recent years, the increasing integration of digital technologies into daily life has significantly influenced individual behaviors, particularly among young adults. Social media platforms have evolved into powerful spaces for identity construction, self-presentation, and social comparison, often encouraging users to showcase idealized versions of their lives (Chua & Chang, 2016). This online environment fosters behaviors associated with narcissism, a personality trait characterized by self-enhancement, a need for admiration, and a tendency toward self-centeredness (Campbell & Foster, 2007). Narcissistic individuals often use social media to gain attention and validate their self-image through visible displays of success and material possessions (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008).

Conspicuous consumption the act of purchasing goods or services to publicly display wealth or status is increasingly mediated by social media use, which provides an ideal platform for such expressions (O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). Research suggests that narcissism is positively associated with conspicuous consumption, as both reflect a desire for social status and admiration (Lee & Seidle, 2012). Social media may act as a bridge between narcissistic traits and consumption behaviors, providing both the audience and the tools for constant self-promotion through material display (Jin & Ryu, 2020).

Given the pervasive influence of social media and the developmental significance of identity formation in young adulthood, it is critical to examine how narcissism and social media usage jointly influence conspicuous consumption. Understanding these relationships can provide valuable insights into modern consumer behavior and psychological well-being in a digital age.

Thus, this study addresses a critical research gap by:

- Investigating how narcissism contributes to conspicuous consumption behavior among Pakistani young adults;
- Examining the mediating role of social media usage in this relationship;
- Contextualizing findings within Pakistan’s unique cultural, religious, and societal norms, which are often underrepresented in mainstream psychological and consumer behavior research.

Aims of the Study

- To investigate the extent to which Narcissism tends to influence conspicuous consumption in young adults.
- Examine the mediating role of social media usage in narcissism and conspicuous consumption in young adults.

Hypotheses of the Study

- There is a significant positive relationship between narcissism and conspicuous consumption among young adults.
- Narcissism is positively associated with social media usage among young adults.
- Social media usage is positively associated with conspicuous consumption among young adults.
- Social media usage mediates the relationship between narcissism and conspicuous consumption in young adults.

Research Questions

- How do most young adults tend to report conspicuous consumption?

- How narcissism and social media usage do tend to affect conspicuous consumption?
- How socio-demographic factor do tends to contribute to Narcissism and conspicuous consumption in young adult.

Method

The present study employed a cross-sectional research design to examine the relationship between narcissism, social media usage, and conspicuous consumption among young adults. The study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, relevant standardized measures were identified and reviewed for their suitability and cultural relevance to the target population. In the second phase, data were collected through a structured survey using validated self-report instruments. The primary aim was to assess how narcissistic traits influence conspicuous consumption and to investigate whether social media usage mediates this relationship. This chapter outlines the research design, participants, instruments, procedure, and statistical techniques used to address the research objectives and test the proposed hypotheses.

Research Design

The Correlational research design was used to examine the extent to which Narcissism tends to affect conspicuous consumption in Young Adults. The sample size was determined using G*Power. The sample consisted of (N=180) Young Adults, women (n=90) and men (n=90). Participants were included using a strategic method Purposive sampling. The mean age of the participants was 22(ranging from 18-26).

Sampling Strategy

Participants were selected based on purposive sampling. The purposive sampling strategy (Patton, 1990) is a commonly used strategy in correlation research design, as it involves purposively selecting specific settings, events, and persons according to the need of the study. Participants qualifying the below-given criteria were included in the study.

- **Inclusion Criteria.** Those adults who are using social media for at least 6 hours or more per day and those who are shopping from branded stores.
- **Exclusion Criteria.** Those adults who have any psychological or physical disability.

Measures

The demographic information sheet was used to gather personal information. It included Age, Gender, Marital Status, Family Type, Siblings, Birth order, family background, Monthly income, earning persons in family and number of dependents on family income, how many

hours spend on social media per day and are you a brand conscious person etc.

Narcissistic Personality Inventory-16 (NPI-16). Ames et al. (2006) created the NPI-16, derived from a 40 item measure (Raskin & Terry, 1988); comprising 16 items. The NPI-16 is a short measure of subclinical narcissism that has shown meaningful face, internal, discriminant, and predictive validity. The NPI-16 score is calculated by averaging responses, with those consistent with narcissism coded as 1 and those inconsistent coded as 0. According to reliability and validity research conducted by Raskin and Hall, the NPI has strong construct validity and ecological validity. In the original study, the scale demonstrated a reliability of $\alpha = .78$.

Social Media Use Integration Scale (SMUIS) was developed by Jenkins Guarnieri, M. A., Wright, S. L., & Johnson, B. (2013). This scale was used to measure engaged social media usage, the emotional attachment to using social media, as well as how integrated social media is into the social habits of users. This scale has ten items. Six of the items represent Social Integration and Emotional Connection (SIEC), while the other four represent Integration into Social Routines (ISR) (JenkinsGuarnieri et al., 2013). The ten items were operationalized using a five-point Likert type scale format, anchored 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. High mean values would therefore represent high levels of social media use integration. The SMUIS was found to have good internal consistency ($\alpha = .82$), suggesting that the items on the scale are highly correlated. the SMUIS was found to have good test-retest reliability ($r = .78$) over a period of 6 weeks, suggesting that the scale produces consistent results over time.

The Conspicuous Consumption Scale is a measure of consumers' desire to consume goods or services for the purpose of displaying their wealth or social status to others. It was developed and validated by O'Cass and McEwen (2004) who wanted to differentiate it from status consumption, which is the desire to consume goods or services for the purpose of achieving or maintaining a certain social status. The eighteen items were operationalized using a five-point Likert type scale format, anchored 1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neutral, 4= agree, 5=strongly agree. The total score of the scale can range from 6 to 42, with higher scores indicating higher levels of conspicuous consumption desires. The scale has good reliability, as indicated by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87, and good validity, as indicated by evidence of discriminant validity from status consumption, and convergent validity with self-monitoring and

interpersonal influences. The scale was tested on a sample of 215 college students aged between 18 and 25.

Procedure

This study at Punjab University in Lahore began with selecting a topic under supervisor guidance: exploring narcissistic traits, social media use, and consumption patterns among students. Permission for established scales (Narcissistic Grandiosity, Social Media Usage Integration, and Conspicuous Consumption) was secured. Ethical considerations included informed consent emphasizing voluntary participation and confidentiality. Purposive sampling gathered data from diverse university departments. Participants completed demographic sheets and scales with clear instructions. After data collection, statistical techniques analyzed correlations. This research aims to deepen understanding and inform future studies in psychology and related fields.

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 23.0. Following this, a series of inferential statistical analyses were conducted. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships among the main study variables. To explore predictive relationships, linear regression analyses were performed. Additionally, independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare mean differences between two groups, and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to assess mean differences across more than two groups based on selected demographic variables. A significance level of $p < .05$ was used for all statistical tests.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical Guidance by IRB (Institute of Review Board) was followed in research study in the following human being codes of conduct include following ethical consideration:

- Prior Permission was taken from the author and the respective institute under which research conduct study.
- The importance and purpose of the research and nature of the measures to be used in this study were elaborate to the participants.
- The informed consent was obtained for the study and participation was voluntary.
- Participants were assured for the confidentiality of the personal information.
- They have privilege to withdraw from the research whenever they want.

- Participant was ensured for no psychical, social, psychological harm during involvement in the study.

Results

This chapter presents the statistical findings of the study, which aimed to investigate the relationship between narcissism, social media usage, and conspicuous consumption among young adults. A series of analyses were conducted to test the proposed hypotheses and explore group differences. Descriptive statistics were computed to understand the distribution of the data. Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships among the key study variables. Multiple regression analysis was employed to determine the predictive role of narcissism and social media usage on conspicuous consumption. To test the mediating effect of social media usage in the relationship between narcissism and conspicuous consumption, mediation analysis was carried out using the appropriate statistical procedures. Additionally, independent sample t-tests were conducted to explore gender differences in narcissism and conspicuous consumption, while one-way ANOVA was used to assess variations across different age groups. The results of these analyses are presented in detail below.

Table 1

Pearson Product Correlation among Studied (N=180)

Variables	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3
1. Narcissism	180	7.85	3.81	-	.31**	.51**
2. Social Media Usage	180	31.88	5.28		-	.28**
3. Conspicuous Consumption	180	59.56	12.9			-

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

The results indicated that Narcissism has significant positive correlation with conspicuous consumption. The results also indicate that Social media usage has significant positive correlation with both Narcissism and Conspicuous Consumption.

Table 2

*Regression coefficient of Narcissism on Conspicuous Consumption
(N=180)*

Variable	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>
Constant	46.50***		1.80
Narcissism	1.66***	.51	.20
R ²	.26		

Note. CI = Confidence Interval. , *** $p < .001$

Table 2 shows the impact of Narcissism on Conspicuous Consumption in young adults. The R² value of .26 revealed that the predictors variable (Narcissism) explained a 26% variance in the outcome variable (Conspicuous Consumption) the findings revealed that Narcissism positively predicted Conspicuous Consumption.

Table 3

*Mediation Analysis to find the Mediating Effect of Social Media Usage
between Narcissism and Conspicuous Consumption in young Adults
(N=180)*

Variable	<i>B</i>	β	R ²	ΔR^2
Step 1			.26	.26***
Constant	46.50***			
Narcissism	1.66***	.51***		
Step 2			.28	.02**
Constant	37.27***			
Narcissism	1.52***	.47***		
Social Media Usage	.32**	.14**		

Note. CI: Confidence Interval, LL=Lower Limit, UL=Upper Limit. ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3 shows the mediating effect of social media usage on Narcissism and conspicuous consumption. The ΔR^2 value of .02 revealed 2% change in the variance of model 1 and model 2 with $\Delta F(1,177) = 60.33$, $p < .01$. The regression weights for Narcissism subsequently reduced from Model 1 to Model 2 (.51 to .47) but remained significant which confirmed partial mediation. Narcissism has direct and indirect effect on Conspicuous Consumption. The Sobel z test value is 2.70, p-value: .007 ($p < .01$)

Table 4

Conspicuous Consumption in Men and Women of Young Adults (N=180)

Variables	Men		Women		<i>t</i> (178)	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Narcissism	7.22	3.62	8.47	3.91	-2.23	.02*
Social Media Usage	31.42	5.28	32.35	5.27	-1.18	.23
Conspicuous consumption	56.41	10.54	62.72	13.14	-3.55	.00*

Note. CI = Confidence Interval; *M* = Mean; *SD* = Standard Deviation, LL: lower limit, UL: upper limit

The results indicated that there was a significant difference between Narcissism of men and women young adults. The Narcissism in men was lower than women. The mean difference was statistically significant women tend to show higher Narcissism than men. Similarly, the results revealed that there was a significant difference between Conspicuous Consumption of men and women in young adults. The Conspicuous consumption of women was higher than men. The mean difference was statistically significant. Women tend to show higher Conspicuous Consumption than men.

Table 5

One ANOVA comparing Narcissism, social media usage and Conspicuous Consumption in young Adults with Monthly Income (N= 180)

	10-50k		51-100k		101-150k		151-200k+		
Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i> (3,176)
Narcissism	7.90	4.17	7.33	3.71	7.42	3.66	8.37	3.90	.96
Social Media Usage	28.10	7.78	30.64	4.94	32.90	5.28	32.57	5.28	3.72
Conspicuous Consumption	53.80	12.65	55.52	8.59	58.97	10.70	63.02	13.94	4.90**

Note. *M*=Mean; *SD*= standard deviation; η^2 =eta square, * $p < .05$;

** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

The results indicated significant mean difference across Monthly Income on Narcissism. Results also indicated non-significant mean difference across monthly income on social media usage. Furthermore, results indicated significant mean difference across monthly income on conspicuous young adults with higher monthly income shows higher conspicuous consumption. η^2 showed effect size and findings revealed low effect size in conspicuous consumption and negligible effect size in Narcissism and Social media usage.

Table 6

One way ANOVA comparing Narcissism, social media usage and Conspicuous Consumption in young Adults with Birth Order (N= 180)

	First Born		Middle Born		Last Born		Only Child		
Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i> (3,176)
Narcissism	9.44	4.10	7.4	3.59	7.14	3.58	6.75	3.59	3.72**

	4.68	32.17	4.94	28.91	6.02	36.0	2.44	6.01**
Social Media Usage	33.22							
Conspicuous Consumption	65.22	14.1	58.70	10.7	55.57	5.74	51.5	5.74 5.52***

Note. *M*=Mean; *SD*= standard deviation; η^2 =eta square, * p <.05; ** p <.01; *** p <.001.

Table 6 results indicated significant mean difference across birth order on Narcissism. Young adults with first born order show higher Narcissism. Results also indicated significant mean difference across birth order on social media usage. young adults with first born order shows higher Social media usage. Furthermore, results indicated significant mean difference across birth order on conspicuous consumption. Young adults with first born order shows higher conspicuous consumption. η^2 showed effect size and findings revealed low effect size.

Discussion

The first findings of the study revealed that there was significant positively correlation between narcissism and conspicuous consumption in young adults, people with high narcissism have higher level of brands consumption behavior. This finding was also supported by previous literature. The findings of a study indicate a favorable correlation between narcissism and conspicuous consumerism, which is seen to be a way for narcissists to satisfy their need for dignity by flaunting their position (Zhu et al., 2021). The second findings of the study reveal that social media usage mediated the relationship between Narcissism and conspicuous consumption in young adults. The findings are consistent with literature as a study found that since narcissistic people are more self-centered on social networking sites like Facebook, they tend to consume conspicuously more often(Niesiobędzka & Konaszewski, 2022). The third findings of the study revealed that there was significant gender differences in Narcissism and Conspicuous consumption in young adults. Females are more narcissistic and have high tendencies to conspicuous consumption behavior. These results are also supported by previous literature i.e, there is a study conducted by Mumtaz, Zafar and Kausar in 2019 in which It was looked at if narcissistic characteristics and extravagant brand consumption are related. The findings indicate that women are more likely to exhibit narcissistic traits and brand-related consuming inclinations. The fourth findings of the study revealed that there were significant birth order differences in Narcissism in young adults. Study findings revealed that first

born children have significantly high narcissistic tendencies than later born. These results are evident by previous literature. A study was conducted by Shafti in 2017 reveals that found that all narcissistic personality traits except one were significantly more prevalent among first-born children, and conjectural narcissistic personality disorder was also more common in first-borns. The fifth findings of the study revealed that the young adults who belongs to higher monthly income families shows more conspicuous consumption behavior. These findings are also consistent with literature. A study found that individuals with higher incomes are more likely to engage in conspicuous consumption to enhance their image and improve their social status (Mi et al., 2018). Another study reveals that young adult perception and attitude towards conspicuous consumption found that mass media portrayals can influence consumption habits. young adults from higher income families may be more susceptible to these influences, leading to a higher propensity for conspicuous consumption (Muhammad, 2012). The sixth finding of the study reveals that number of dependents on family income correlates with conspicuous consumption in young adults. Those who have more no. of dependents on family income are less involved in conspicuous consumption. This study is not consistent with previous literature because these findings have no literature evidence. These findings may play a part in filling literature gap through this study.

Implications

This study reveals how social media mediates between narcissism and conspicuous consumption, while also exploring the influences of gender, birth order, and family income. Understanding drivers of conspicuous consumption can guide marketing strategies for luxury brands targeting narcissistic consumers, suggesting tailored social media campaigns. Policy implications include addressing social media's impact on consumer behavior, promoting healthier habits among young adults and reducing materialistic values. Insights into birth order and family income can inform family counseling, helping understand their influence on children's consumption behaviors. This study highlights that narcissistic young adults active on social media are more prone to conspicuous consumption, offering valuable insights for marketers, educators, and mental health professionals. It emphasizes the need for targeted advertising, digital literacy programs, and therapeutic strategies to address validation-seeking behaviors. Future research should explore diverse populations, additional personality traits, and cultural or platform-specific influences.

Conclusion

This study investigated how narcissism, social media use, and conspicuous consumption are interconnected among young adults. It found that narcissism positively correlates with conspicuous consumption, mediated by social media use. Gender differences showed higher narcissism and consumption in females. First-borns exhibited more narcissistic traits, and higher family income was linked to increased conspicuous consumption. Interestingly, families with more dependents spent less on conspicuous items, suggesting future research opportunities. These findings imply the need for targeted marketing strategies and educational programs to promote healthier social media use and reduce materialistic values among young adults.

Limitations

- The study was conducted on a sample of 180 university students from Lahore, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other regions and age groups in Pakistan.
- The research employed a correlational and cross-sectional design, which prevents the establishment of causal relationships between the studied variables.
- The use of self-report questionnaires may have introduced social desirability and response biases, especially in reporting narcissistic traits and consumption behaviors.
- The measurement tools used were originally developed in Western contexts, which may not fully capture the nuances of narcissism and consumption in Pakistani culture.
- Other relevant psychological factors such as materialism, self-esteem, and impulsivity were not considered, which may have influenced the results.
- The study did not differentiate between various social media platforms, despite their varying features and potential impact on user behavior.

Future Recommendations

- Future research should adopt longitudinal designs to examine changes over time and better establish cause-and-effect relationships among the variables.
- Future studies should include participants from different age groups, educational backgrounds, and geographic regions across Pakistan to improve representativeness.

- Integrating variables like self-esteem, materialism, impulsivity, and cultural orientation could provide deeper insights into consumer behavior.
- Analyzing the effects of specific social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, Facebook) could help identify which platforms most strongly influence narcissism and consumption.
- In-depth interviews, focus groups, or case studies may offer richer and more culturally grounded perspectives on how young adults perceive and experience these phenomena.
- Conducting comparative research across different cultures (individualistic vs. collectivistic) could highlight cultural influences on narcissism and digital consumerism.
- Future studies should explore the impact of educational or therapeutic interventions aimed at promoting digital literacy, emotional regulation, and non-materialistic values among youth.

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