

## Addiction of Violent Video Gaming among Pakistani Players: A Case Study of Pubg Game Zaheer Khan<sup>1\*</sup>, Babar Hussain Shah<sup>2</sup>, Saqib Riaz<sup>3</sup>

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### Abstract

*Time and again PUBG game is alleged to have problematic addiction. It has been having negative impacts on those who play too much. Even the American Psychiatric Association has acknowledged the addiction to and problem caused by online gaming in its fifth edition. It's frequently claimed that gamers lose track of their time management. The condition is sometimes accompanied by many issues, such as violent behaviour and avoiding social interactions. Since the release of PUBG, many people have expressed concern about the compulsive gaming habits of Pakistani youth. The current study used quantitative methodology to examine to what extent Pakistani youths become addicted to PUBG gaming. The results of the study show that among Pakistani Players, the independent variable (PUBG Game Exposure) has a significant association with the dependent variables (Addiction).*

**Keywords:** PUBG Play; Addiction; Violent Video Games

### Introduction

More people play games on smartphones these days than on traditional consoles. When Android was introduced, more game developers embraced this platform to profit by developing creative games with impressive graphics that would captivate people, especially kids and teenagers who own Android smartphones or have access to them at home. This indicates that people are addicted to playing violent video games without time limits, which would not only result in health issues but developing antisocial behaviour.

This study investigates how the popular game PUBG (Player Battle Undergrounds) affects young people in Pakistan. The online multiplayer game PUBG borrows its premise from the Japanese film Battle Royale (2000). The game's basic foundation is that 100 participants form four-player teams and join online using or without their real names. These groups are parachuted onto a virtual reality (VR) battlefield. Each team strives to be the final squad standing as they seek out and attempt to kill one another. If their team wins, the teammates can "VR chicken meal" and offer each other life (Kim, 2021).

Players brag about their victories and kill totals on social media sites (WhatsApp Status, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat stories, etc.) as a matter of prestige. Teams of four players pool money as well, and the victorious team keeps the entire pot. PUBG competitions are frequently held as part of the events and activities of tech and Facebook groups used for the invitation of the yearly festivals held by colleges and universities. The fundamental fabric of a sane, social life has been torn apart by PUBG addiction, according to various incidences that have been published in Pakistani media, especially among young people.

On December 22, 2020, a report about a 3000-person in an outskirt village of Faisalabad Pakistan that is completely addicted to the PUBG video game was broadcast on television. The media became aware of this when a 17-year-old lad tragically died after playing the game nonstop for 24 hours. When the reporters questioned the locals, they revealed that the adolescents in this area have become heavily obsessed with PUBG and they are spending a heavy amount to upgrade the game (Cheema, 2020).

A youngster named Zain was taken into custody on January 19, 2022, after he was accused of killing his mother, brother, and sister. According to preliminary investigations into the matter, the child was driven to extreme measures by his intense PUBG obsession and frequent losses in the game. He admitted during the initial interview that his mother had been berating him for playing the game too much (Shahzad, 2022).

In light of the dire scenario and several real-life incidents in Pakistan, youth are possibly imitating the actions of the game in real-life situations. This study aims to document Pakistani youths' PUBG experiences. The literature review, research methodology, participant information, survey results, discussions of the results, implications for adults who care for children, and future research directions are covered in the parts that follow.

Youth are therefore more likely to imitate the actions and movements they witness, readily transitioning from playing to practising. Given the foregoing, the researcher believes that PUBG game has a significant impact on the younger generation. As a result, this study sought to determine the addiction of PUBG game in a sample of Pakistani users by addressing the following questions:

- What percentage of Pakistani PUBG players play video games?

- Is there any relationship between PUBG Playing and Addiction?

### **Study Objectives**

This investigation sought to:

- Determining the extent of PUBG usage among Pakistani users.
- Investigating the relationship between PUBG Playing and Addictive Behaviour.

### **Literature Review**

The literature review in this study is titled under the following head.

- Video Gaming and PUBG
- Addiction of PUBG
- Theoretical Foundation
- Synthesis of literature

### **Video Gaming and PUBG**

More than 30 years ago in the US and Japan work on different collaborative media-related activities was started to attract game lovers, these activities range from graphics enhancements and creation of the games in which interactive elements are introduced and these are referred to as “video games”. Ivory (2008) defined that this industry is flourishing as video games have been developed by a variety of specialised teams, most notably in the following areas:

1. Displaying game-based design, such as rules, images, and a beautiful setting requires skilled designers.
2. Visual content producers are skilled at creating characters for mobile games, such as heroes, monsters, balls, and cars.
3. The game engine, the steering wheels, and other sorts of controllers were made by technical programmers who were professionals in their field.

In the development of video gaming, many people are involved in its creation, promotion, development, and professionalisation as journalists, advertisers, owners of the internet, owners of television studios, and editors of periodicals. In the end, it is exchanged for cash to produce a video game that is "a true social phenomenon" (Falak, 2009).

The use of video games by the younger generation is very important. They help him in many areas of his social life and act as a tool for his recreation, education, and awareness (Alowash, 2007). A gamer's academic skills are strengthened, his self-confidence is boosted, his capacity for problem-solving is improved, his coordination and speed noticeably improve, and his memory, strength, and determination are activated, according to the characteristics of video games. However, the negative effects of violent video games cannot be ignored. Along with other negative effects of gaming, one of the biggest is addiction which is the root cause of the entire related problems.

Almost 400 million people worldwide play Player Unknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG), making it the most popular video game ever. It is free to play, available to everyone, and doesn't require any prior gaming experience. This game allows players to interact with each other using voice chat in real-time. This game has gotten a lot of bad press because of the violent incidents, self-harm, and suicide incidents that have been reported while playing it (Kim, 2021).

### **Addiction of PUBG**

Al-Qahtaniet al., (2020) investigated that PUBG is becoming increasingly addictive, and its user base is large. They investigated game addiction and several bad outcomes due to game addiction. The study concluded that eye strain, weariness, headaches, obesity, poor sleep, insomnia, withdrawal symptoms (anger and irritability), and even drug usage are due to side effects of playing the PUBG video game. The study recommended that to take urgent action since the game craze is regrettably encouraging the young people of the world to invest their hard-earned time, money, and effort in a non-returning enterprise.

Kumar et al., (2020) studied the health problems associated with PUBG addiction among young people. They investigated the consequences of PUBG on young people in the city of Erode for this they sampled 158 responses from the maximum age range of 15 to 40. An online questionnaire was used to find out how many young people are playing PUBG games, how much time they spend doing so, and what amount of impact those games have on their daily lives. The research concluded that the majority of young people play PUBG for fun with no negative impacts on their lives.

However, the study conducted by D'Souza (2019) presented a different picture of the findings. The objective of this study was to investigate the levels of PUBG addiction among Tibetan and Indian students. A total of 272 players of PUBG made up the sample, of which 162 were students from India and 110 from Tibet. In the survey questionnaire,

the respondents were asked to fill out the PAT to measure addiction. Respondents in the study found addicted users of PUBG.

Another study by Yasir (2021) explores the relationship between gaming addiction, game loyalty, and player motivation on the intention to buy online mobile in-game features using PUBG Mobile as a case study. By analysing responses from 298 Indonesian players of PUBG Mobile who completed a quick survey that asked them about five different factors—addiction to online mobile games, social motivation, hedonic motivation, loyalty to online mobile games, and intention to buy in-game features—and 298 players' responses. Findings revealed that addiction to online mobile games had a significant positive relationship with not only loyalty to these games but even affecting the intentions to purchase items.

Ahmed et al., (2022) investigated the gaming effects on Pakistani users of the PUBG game. They were interested to study gaming addiction and its negative effects like social ineffectiveness, suicide and mood disorders etc. The result of the study shows that addictive gaming has a strong effect on several outcomes like aggression and stress etc. The study recommended cognitive behavioural therapy for gaming addiction in the users.

Bajwa et al., (2022) conducted a study to examine and assess the behavioural and social repercussions of online gaming addiction among young people in Pakistan, specifically in one of Lahore's most populous districts. Based on the survey research strategy, 200 students who frequently play online games were surveyed. The results of the study show that among the educated youth of Pakistan's district Lahore, the independent variable (online gaming addiction) significantly influences the dependent variables (social and behavioural consequences).

Akbar (2022) investigated PUBG's effects on University of Sargodha Pakistan students. He had chosen 100 pupils using a practical sampling technique and used a Google form for the responses. The study concluded that playing PUBG is unhealthy and a waste of time. Sleep patterns are disturbed while playing PUBG, and the player feels frustrated while doing so. Due to the use of the PUBG app, academic performance is also impacted, and some people spend more time playing PUBG than studying. Due to the use of PUBG, the student's behaviour and physical health are also impacted. Students' personal lives are also impacted by PUBG use, which has significantly increased their hostility.

Hikmah et al., (2021) conducted the study to gather empirical data regarding the motivation behind online gaming's influence on PUBG addiction. This study is quantitative in design and uses the causality method. In this study, 40 women and 60 men participated. In this study, multiple linear regression was employed, the research's findings demonstrate the motive of online gaming's influence on PUBG addiction.

Chandrima et al., (2020) investigated adult Bangladeshi students for problematic internet usage (PIU), internet addiction, and excessive internet use. They used 350 high school students in Dhaka who participated in the structured interview study and looked into Bangladeshi adolescent PIU and its associated socio-demographics, internet use behaviours, and the parental mediation role. The findings revealed that a great majority of 84 adolescents were categorised as having PIU (cut-off score of 50 on the Internet Addiction Test).

Khan (2014) examined the incidence of problematic online gaming among teenagers and young adults in the study. A sample of 357 online multiplayer game players, including 298 men and 59 women, was compiled. According to the findings, 190 participants were troublesome gamers, while 165 were not. The study recommended that future researchers should consider the consequences of the finding.

Shabih et al., (2021) investigated the study to ascertain the impact of video games on the mental health and physical activity of adolescents from Karachi who were not video game addicts (NVGA) and those who were (VGA). A cross-sectional survey was carried out in public colleges and universities in Karachi, Pakistan, with students from various socioeconomic backgrounds. a total of 321 students, teenagers, from both sexes, between the ages of 15 and 19, who had previously played video games but were classified as either non-video game addicts (using fewer than four hours per day) or video game addicts (using more than 5 hours per day). The study concluded that adolescent video game addiction (VGA group) causes problems with both mental and physical health in the study population.

### **Theoretical foundation**

We investigated the theoretical foundation that guides our comprehension of the various facets of video game addiction. The theoretical foundation for this study was developed using a variety of theories related to media, communication, and motivation. The Uses and Gratification Theory and Social Learning Theory serve as the theoretical foundation for this study.

According to UGT theory, users are motivated to utilise media because it satisfies their varied demands (Katz et al., 1974). This hypothesis has been used extensively to understand why people use media, especially video games (Funk J and Buchman D, 1996). The second SLT is a crucial theoretical foundation for the investigation. This approach places a strong emphasis on the watching, modelling, and replicating the actions, attitudes, and feelings of the users

(Bandura, 1977). Thus the use of video gaming by Pakistani youth to fulfil their gratification and imitating the violent characters presented in their real life is crucial to study.

### **Synthesis of Literature**

Referring to the aforementioned earlier investigations, the following has been noted:

Previous research in the domain of video game addiction includes.

Al-Qahtaniet al., (2020) pointed out the need for further studies. Kumar et al., (2020) used only 158 participants as study samples and found no negative impact, possibly it was due to the limited sample. D'Souza's (2019) study took only a sample of 272 in which their further demographic was divided into Tibetan and Indian. Yasir (2021) conducted only 298 Indonesian players of PUBG as a sample study but he was more focused on other variables along with addiction. Ahmed et al., (2022) found a strong effect of addiction and recommended further study in this domain. Bajwa et al., (2022) sample of the study was 200 and the study was limited to Lahore city only. The same issue with the study of Akbar (2022) as this study was limited to Sargodha university students. Hikmah et al., (2021) used only 40 women and 60 men as a participant in the study. Shabih et al., (2021) study was limited to the Karachi-based educational institute study with a limited sample size.

The instrument and software employed in earlier research analyses varied. Regarding the advantages of earlier research, the researcher believes that past studies provided a wealth of crucial knowledge that influenced decision-making for the current study's choice of problem, methodology, and proper procedures to meet its goals.

This field is being expanded by the current study, which is anticipated to improve upon the findings of earlier research. In terms of its goal and sample, the current study was distinct from earlier ones since it examined the connection between PUBG Playing and addiction in Pakistani PUBG Players having a broader sample size including all the age categories.

### **Methods**

The survey research method is used in the research paper to examine survey respondents' video game addiction. Cross-sectional research is an observational research method that analyses data from a population or a representative sample at a particular time.

### **Instrument**

D'Souza et al., (2019) established a specific scale for measuring PUBG Addiction. This scale was adopted and modified according to the current research study objectives to see the PUBG addiction among the respondents.

### **Sample for the study**

To investigate the impact of PUBG on aggressive behaviour, we included a sample of 1000 Pakistani PUBG players for improved accuracy and in light of the country's increasing number of aggression cases. After receiving the players' responses, we divided them into different gender and age groups.

### **Study variables**

The study included the following variables:

#### **Independent variables**

PUBG Play

#### **Dependent variables**

Addiction

### **Data Collection**

The Google Form link was used to launch a questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale, and the snowball sampling technique was applied to collect the results. It was requested that players share it with their PUBG-playing buddies in Facebook PUBG Groups. Utilizing SPSS 21, obtained data were statistically analysed.

### **Results**

This part includes the results reached and discussed following the study questions.

Results related to the answer of the Percentage of PUBG players using game

**Table 1.**  
*Gender of the respondents*

	Gender	
	Frequency	Percent
Male	804	80.4
Female	128	12.8
Prefer not to say	68	6.8
Total	1000	100

The gender-specific traits are displayed in Table 4.1 in terms of frequency and percentage. The sample was made up of 804 men and 128 women, while 68 players preferred not to disclose their gender. In the gender category, men respondents outnumbered female respondents by an 80.4% to 12.8% margin. 6.8% of all respondents said they would rather remain anonymous.

**Playing PUBG (Daily Basis)**

On daily basis, how much time do the respondents play the game? They were asked to tell about the time in a single day they are playing the PUBG game.

**Figure 1. 1**  
*History sheet of Hourly Data of Playing PUBG (Daily Basis)*

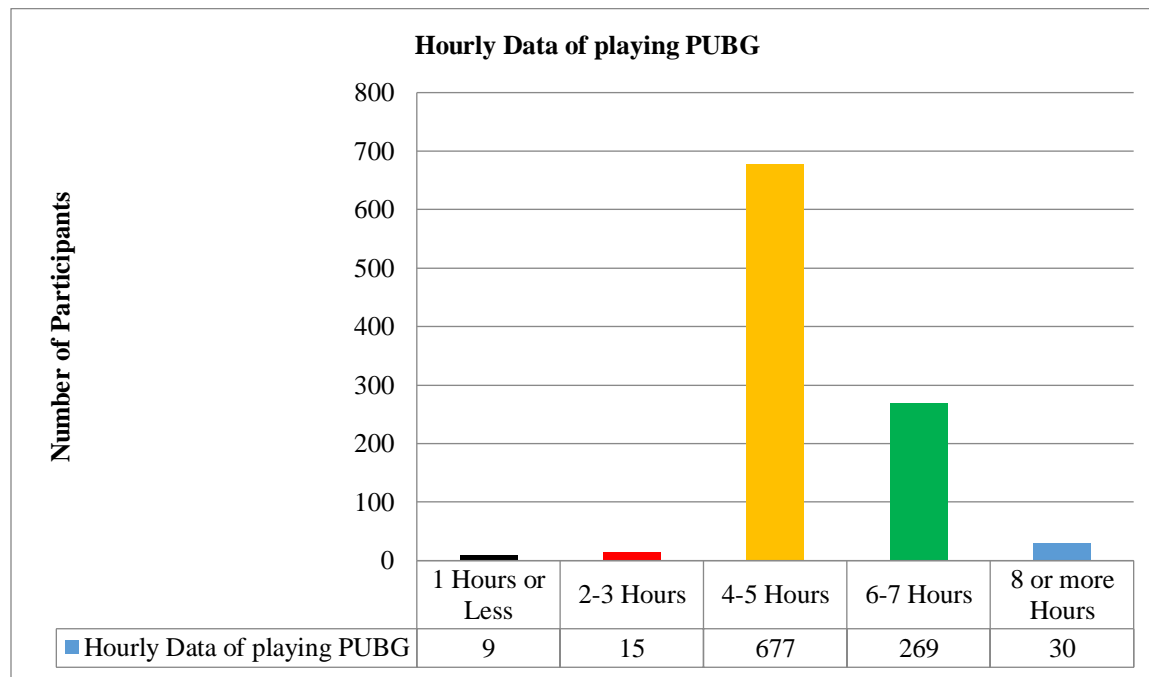


Figure 1.1 shows the results of our questions regarding how much PUBG time these gamers spend each day. Results show that 68% of the population in our sample plays video games for four to five hours per day, whereas only 3% of players log eight or more hours per day. Another startling statistic (27%) reveals the players who spend six to seven hours every day playing PUBG. Only a tiny minority (2%) of users played PUBG for two to three hours, and only 1% played for an hour or less. The bulk of users, according to the findings, utilise the service between 4 and 7 hours every day.

**Results related to the answer of game addiction in playing PUBG among Pakistani players**

Initially, the data of each item of the addiction scale was presented and finally, the correlation between PUBG Play and Addiction measured with statistical test Pearson correlations was presented.

**Table 1.2**  
*I spend more time on playing pubg*

		<b>I spend more time playing PUBG</b>			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	42	4.2	4.2	4.2
	Disagree	154	15.4	15.4	19.6
	Neutral	366	36.6	36.6	56.2
	Agree	371	37.1	37.1	93.3
	Strongly Agree	67	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	1000	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.2 shows the results of our questions asked regarding spending more time playing PUBG. Results demonstrated that 37% of the population in our sample admitted that they are spending more time playing PUBG, whereas only 4% strongly disagree. Another surprising statistic (36%) reveals to be neutral about this statement. Disagree was 15% and the strongly agree answer was 6%. Overall the result shows that the majority of users acknowledged that they spend more time playing PUBG.

**Figure 1.2**  
*Play longer than intended*

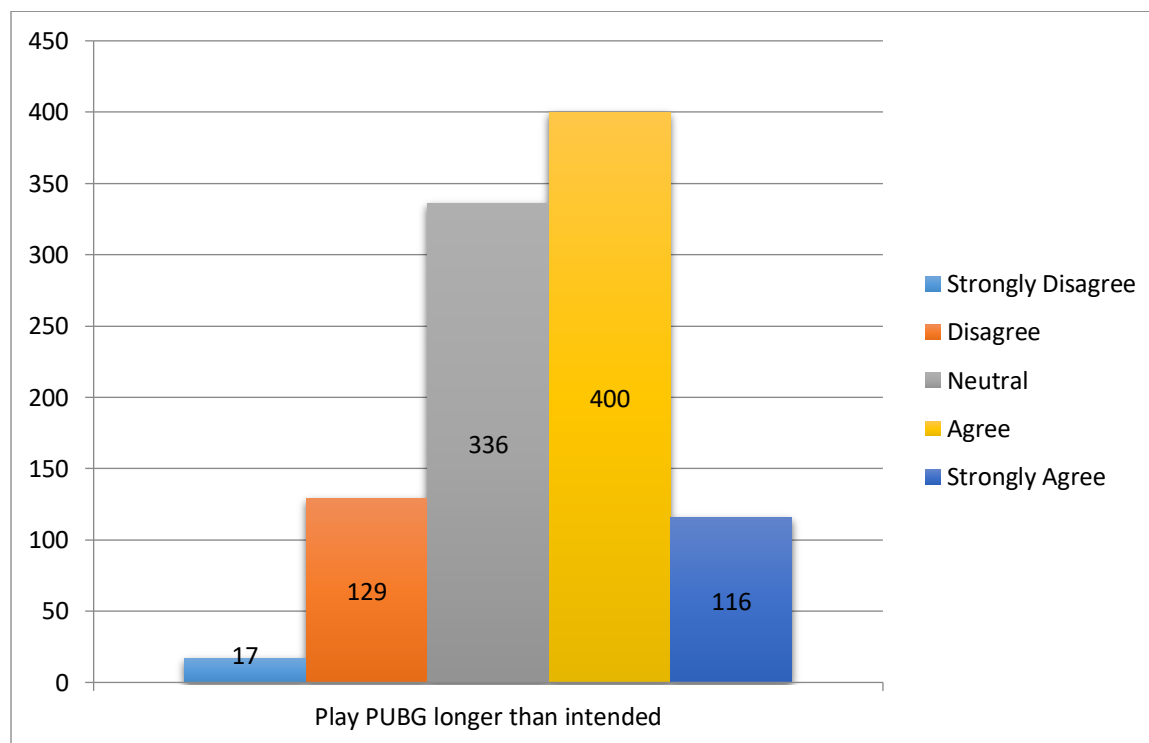


Figure 1.2 demonstrated the results of our question asked Play PUBG longer than intended. The result shows that 400 respondents in our sample admitted that they play PUBG longer than intended, whereas only 129 disagreed with the statement. 336 reveal to be neutral about to tell that they play longer than intended. Disagree was only 17 participants and strongly agree answer was 116. Overall the result shows that the majority of users admitted that they play PUBG longer than they intended.

**Table 1.3**  
*I forget about real life while playing PUBG*

<b>I forget about real life while playing PUBG</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	30	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Disagree	167	16.7	16.7	19.7
	Neutral	316	31.6	31.6	51.3
	Agree	334	33.4	33.4	84.7
	Strongly Agree	153	15.3	15.3	100.0
	Total	1000	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.3 show the results of our question asked to know whether the players forget their real life while Playing PUBG. The result shows that 334 respondents in our sample admitted that they forget their real life while playing PUBG, whereas only 167 disagree with the statement. 316 reveals to be neutral that they forget about real life while playing PUBG. Disagree was only 167 participants and the strongly agree answer was 153. Overall the result shows that the majority of users admitted that they forget about real life while playing PUBG.

**Figure 1.3**  
*I feel upset when not playing PUBG*

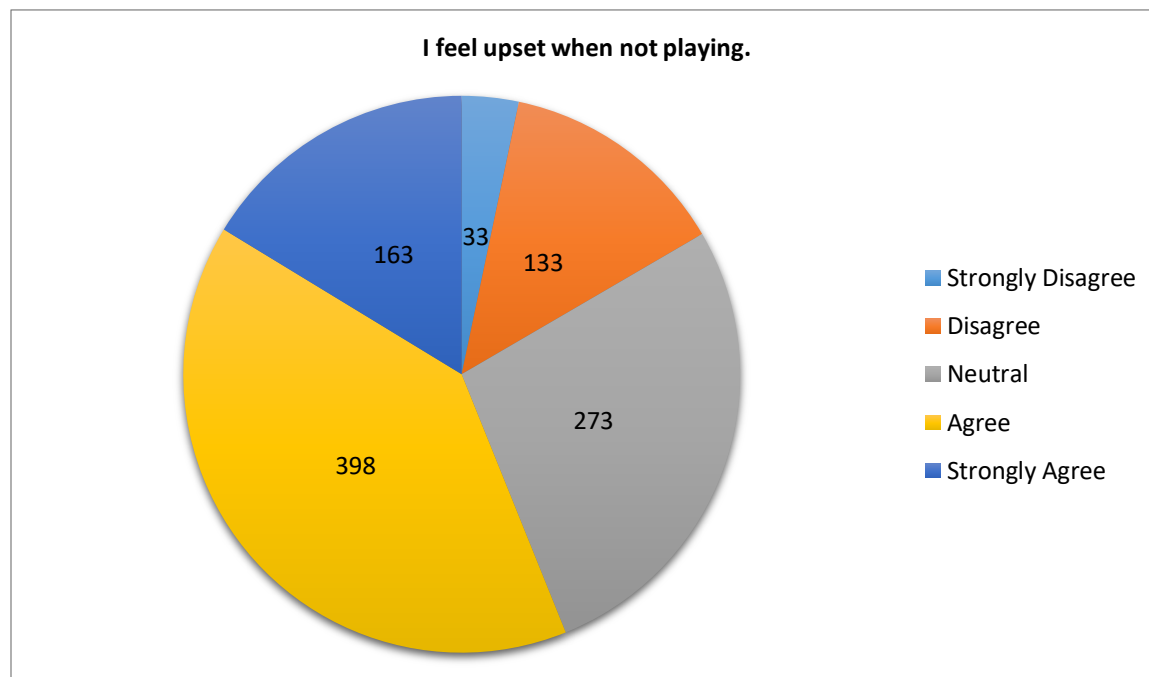


Figure 1.3 show the results of our question asked the respondents that they feel upset when not playing PUBG. The result shows that 398 respondents in our sample agree that they feel upset when not playing PUBG, whereas only 133 disagree with the statement. 273 reveals to be neutral about that they feel upset when not playing PUBG. Strongly disagree was only 33 participants and the strongly agree answer was 163. Overall the result shows that the majority of users admitted that they feel upset when not playing PUBG.

**Figure 1.4**  
*I get angry when someone forced me to stop PUBG*

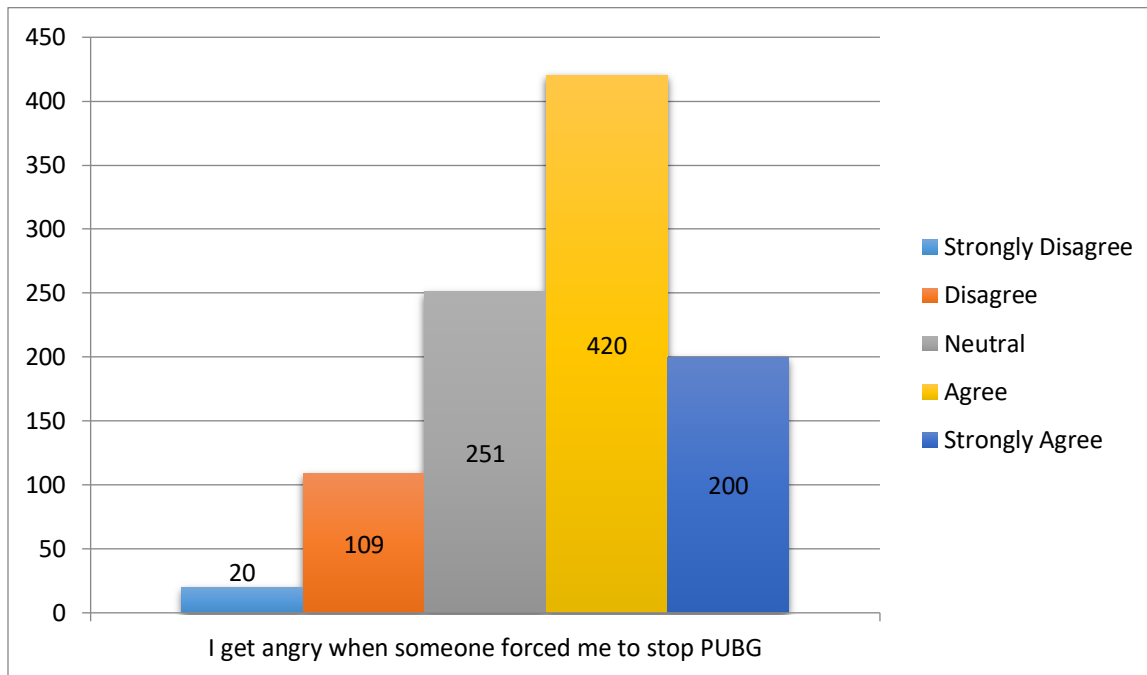


Figure 1.4 show the results of our question that I get angry when someone forced me to stop PUBG. The result shows that 420 respondents in our sample agree that they get angry when someone forced them to stop PUBG, whereas only 109 disagree with the statement. 251 reveals to be neutral about the question to answer. Strongly disagree was only 20 participants and the strongly agree answer was 200. Overall the result shows that majority of users; get angry when someone forced them to stop PUBG.

**Table 1.4**  
*I neglect important activities while playing PUBG*

I neglect important activities while playing PUBG					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	34	3.4	3.4	3.4
	Disagree	114	11.4	11.4	14.8
	Neutral	291	29.1	29.1	43.9
	Agree	370	37.0	37.0	80.9
	Strongly Agree	191	19.1	19.1	100.0
	Total	1000	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.4 demonstrated the results of our question that I neglect important activities while playing PUBG. The result shows that 370 respondents in our sample agree that they neglect important activities while playing PUBG, whereas only 114 disagree with the statement. 291 reveals to be neutral about the question to answer. Strongly disagree was only 34 participants and the strongly agree answer was 191. Overall the result shows that majority of users; neglect important activities while playing PUBG.

**Results related to the answer of the PUBG playing and Addiction**



**Table 1.5**  
*Test of the Correlation Playing PUBG Game and Addiction*

		<b>Correlations</b>	
		PUBG	Addiction
PUBG Play	Pearson Correlation	1	.077*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<b>.015</b>
	N	1000	1000
Addiction	Pearson Correlation	.077*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>.015</b>	
	N	1000	1000

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 1.5 show that a correlation among the variable existed in the above relationship as it is found significant, hence the PUBG Play develops the addiction holds and is supported by the above results.

### **Discussion**

This study was an endeavour to explore PUBG Play and addiction among Pakistani Players. 1000 PUBG Players participated in the study as a sample. Results revealed that males are in majority among players than female players. Daily usage of the PUBG explored revealed that most of the players use the PUBG for four to five hours a day which shows their level of addiction in frequency. As far as the result of addiction among these players is concerned they were investigated through multiple questions to respond to the best choice suit to them. First of all the majority admitted that they spend more time playing PUBG. A great majority also admitted that these players use the game longer than they intended.

Players in a high number admitted that they forget their real life while playing this video game and when they were asked about whether they feel upset when they are not playing the game so in this case the majority also agree with this statement. The majority of the players tells that they get angry when someone forced them to stop this game. And in the last item, a great majority responded that they neglect important activities while playing PUBG. In the last analysis, the association of correlation between playing PUBG and addiction was checked and found that the relationship is significant supporting that playing is associated to develop addiction among Pakistani PUBG Players. Moreover, as revealed the theoretical foundation UGT and SLT, that people use the media particularly video games and this usage have certain effect on their behaviours so the result of this study validate the theoretical foundation of the study.

### **Conclusion**

PUBG Game is made for fun and entertainment purposes but a great majority using this game are among those who are becoming addicted. These players are spending more and more time than they are intending and by doing so they are developing aggression as they are feeling upset and angry when someone forced them to stop the game. Moreover, these players neglect important activities while playing the game. To sum up, players are experiencing certain antisocial problems as a result of playing so much every day. Set a daily time restriction for PUBG play and stick to it to prevent such problems are required.

### **Recommendations**

- We all understand that having too much of anything is harmful, including video games. So players must be aware that by adopting the right techniques they can control the addiction.
- Players should attempt to play the game for shorter periods of time. Setting aside a definite time and attempting to play it during that particular one is preferable to leaving it all of a sudden.
- Preference should be given to outdoor activities rather than remain always indoors.
- Players are recommended that they make wise use of the time instead of heavily playing PUBG.

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